



Chiara Labyrinth

Walking the labyrinth is a spiritual practice embraced by those seeking to deepen their faith in the Divine. The labyrinth symbolizes a path to God.

The labyrinth is a great healer, a pathway that people have walked for thousands of years. The labyrinth opens you to the mystery of life and the Great One in whom all life is held.

Whatever one's spirituality, walking the labyrinth can clear the heart and mind and open you to receive insight, comfort and healing in the midst of life's transitions and challenges.



The labyrinth represents
a journey,
a pilgrimage,
a conscious taking
of time
to seek God.



May we be able to follow in the footprints of your beloved Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, and, by Your grace alone, may we make our way to You, Most High.

St. Francis of Assisi

May you go forward securely, joyfully, and swiftly, on the path of prudent happiness...

St. Clare of Assisi



A ministry of the Hospital Sisters of St. Francis

History

The labyrinth is one of the oldest known contemplative spiritual practices for more than 4,000 years. To the ancients, the circle was a sacred symbol of harmony, wholeness, integrity and grace.

Chiara Center's labyrinth is a replicated after the famous Chartres Cathedral labyrinth (Chartres, France) created in the 1200s. Christians who could not make the pilgrimage to the Holy Land and to sacred shrines would choose to walk a labyrinth in designated cathedrals since the path of circles was shaped like the Cross.

Labyrinths redefine the journey to God from a solitary vertical perspective that goes from earth to heaven to a horizontal perspective. One walks the path into the Divine.

Pilgrim, pilgrim, pilgrim

There is no way,

There is no way,

There is no way.

You make the way,

You make the way,

You make the way,

By walking, walking, walking.

Ancient Peruvian saying

How to walk the Labyrinth

While there is no right way to walk the path, you might find these guidelines helpful. Walking the labyrinth is as simple as following a spiraling path to the center and then following the path back out. Unlike a maze, there are no endings or puzzles to solve since you are always on the path. You can walk with a question or you can let go of your questions. Mindful that walking the labyrinth is a body meditation, let your body lead you. Walk barefoot if you wish. Give your spirit time. The labyrinth is a place of presence so be present to yourself and to God. The labyrinth is a teacher so let it teach you through the mysterious power of God. Each step of the journey moves you closer to God. Jesus said, "I am the way."

Three stages of walking the labyrinth

Stage 1: Walking in

Pause and wait at the entrance. Become quiet and be aware of your breathing. Ask yourself: What do I hope for? Am I willing to be present? Now enter with an open heart and walk into the labyrinth and follow the path. Find a pace that is comfortable for you and let your mind be at ease. Let go of distractions, cares and worries.

Stage 2: Entering the center

You may be surprised you have reached the center. Stay there as long as you like because it can be a place of clarity and insight. Be open to receive what is there for you. You may want to reflect on the six petals representing the fullness of God's love enveloping you. This is a place to listen to God's still, small voice.

Stage 3: Walking out

When you are ready, follow the path out. As you walk, bring the Spirit and peace with you. As you exit, turn and face the entrance to acknowledge the experience.