



Introduction to Labyrinth

A Labyrinth is not a maze, you will not get lost in it. A Labyrinth is obtained by coiling a very long rope starting from the centre and spreading out in circles. Some think the rope resembles a snake. Snakes hibernate in winter, shed their skin and start a 'new' life. a process that symbolizes death and rebirth. The labyrinth centre is seen as the embryo of the Earth, indeed a powerful symbol of creation.



Labyrinth walking is similar to a pilgrimage. It is undertaken as a free choice. When life becomes meaningless and boring, people will subconsciously keep asking themselves, "Am I stuck? Did I forget the purpose of life?" posing these questions will help them gradually move out of their confusion, darkness and fear.

The **Labyrinth** walk achieves three goals: cleansing, inspiring and unifying body and spirit. Walking from the entrance to the centre, one will slowly learn to be humble and get rid of the baggage of the secular world. Occasionally it may cause one to cry for joy, vividly see one's limitations, heal one's inner hurts and cleanse and inspire one's soul. Through returning to the source of life, integration of body and spirit is achieved.



Labyrinth walking is an 'incarnation' journey. Since the first three alphabets letters of the Greek word [IHSOYS] are the same as the Latin alphabets letters [IHS], people relate the two languages and meanings. Here are examples, *Iesus Hominum Salvator*, Jesus saviour of mankind; and *Iesus Hostia Sancta*, Jesus Holy sacrifice. The centre of the labyrinth is an image of Jesus; it symbolizes the walker finding blessings in our Saviour Jesus Christ at the end of the labyrinth walk.

There are five stages of the labyrinth walk. Whichever stage it is, the main purpose is to lead the walkers into their inner being and (re) discover the meaning of life. Walkers can pause and mediate at any point of the journey.

1. Preparation

Stand at the entrance of the labyrinth, control your breathing until it is natural and smooth; you are now calm and quiet. At this time, your spirit will have a strong sense of your own being which is our natural instinct to life.

1. Ask yourself the reason for participating in the journey: what is the purpose?
2. Before the journey starts, reflect on how you feel and what your thoughts are.
3. What things (baggage) do you carry along in the journey about to begin?
4. Is there a Bible verse or a spiritual thought accompanying you?

2. Beginning and Moving

1. Did any feeling arise in your heart between pausing for inner quietness and beginning your walk?
2. At that moment, have your intention and way of thinking changed or were they enriched?
3. While walking, have you achieved inner freedom so that you can engage naturally in the journey?
4. Do you feel at peace?
5. Is there anything bothering you, consuming up your energy?
6. Is the Bible verse still with you? Where is the Lord?

3. Walking the Journey

1. What did you discover when you reached the centre (I.H.S.) of the labyrinth?
2. What was the immediate feeling you experienced once you stepped into the centre of the labyrinth?
3. What is the meaning of the centre for you?
4. Do you feel peace and comfort pausing in the centre?
5. Is there a difference between journeying towards and reaching the centre?
6. At that moment, have your motive and way of thinking change or were they enriched?
7. Have you still kept the Bible verse? Where is the Lord?
8. What is the difference between standing at the starting point and standing at the centre?

4. Walking with Christ

1. What are your thoughts as you leave the centre?
2. At that moment, have your motive and way of thinking changed or were they enriched?
3. Have you still kept the Bible verse? Where is the Lord?
4. Is there any difference between leaving and starting the labyrinth? Which is easier to do?
5. How do you feel when you take the last step to leave the labyrinth?

5. Reflection (At this stage, it is good to mediate personally, then discuss in groups)

1. What is your feeling for the whole journey?
2. What has happened during the journey?
3. As you journeyed, could you know yourself better? Did you find yourself changed?
4. Have your way of thinking towards others and the world somewhat changed?
5. Now, is there any specific decision you wish to make or action to plan?

Remarks:

A Labyrinth walk can be done individually or in groups. If you need a guide to maximize the effectiveness, the Salesian Retreat House can make arrangements. Groups might need 1 to 2 days to practice the walk.