

HOW TO USE THE LABYRINTH

Tracing the path of the Labyrinth with your finger is calming & relaxing.

It engages your rational, logical, analytical mind in following the Path. It simultaneously releases your intuitive, instinctual, and imaginative mind, balancing the two, inviting you to space to let go of worries and just 'be'.

Find a comfortable, peaceful place to sit and become still, pausing for a few moments to notice how your body is feeling. Taking a few deep, slow breaths in and out will help you with this 'stilling' process.

Hold the labyrinth on your lap or on a table or tray where you can be comfortable but attentive. Touch the surface of the labyrinth, close your eyes, and feel its texture. Notice the notches and the "speed bumps" at the entrance and exit.

When you are ready, slowly begin to trace the labyrinth's path. Use a finger of your non-dominant hand. Slowly follow and trust the path. There is only one way to the centre, both in and out. Take your time, go gradually, and do not hurry.

Release any tense feelings and thoughts that come to mind, making a note of them, but you don't have to engage with them for now; you can come back to them later. Remember that you are loved and unique. Breathe slowly and trace the path to the centre.

When you reach the centre of the cross, stop, **rest**, and **receive**. The Celtic cross labyrinth is unique in that it has three paths from the centre, symbolising the Trinity: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. See yourself going to whichever member of the Trinity you are feeling led to. It may be all three. Allow yourself to be fully present and rest in this moment, sharing your feelings, insights and prayers with the Trinity. You are loved just as you are, wherever you are.

When you feel ready, **return** to the beginning, still breathing slowly and following the path out again, taking any feelings or insights you have received. Take time to **reflect** and give thanks. You may feel lighter, stronger, and ready to engage with the world.

Journaling your experience is beneficial. To **record**, write or draw about it. How did you feel? Did any discernments come?

MAKING THE SIGN OF THE CROSS

In Western tradition, to make the sign of the cross, start by touching your forehead, then your chest or stomach, followed by your left shoulder to your right shoulder.

In Eastern (Orthodox) tradition, join thumb, index, and middle fingers to represent the Holy Trinity, fold the ring and little fingers onto the palm to symbolise Christ's two natures, touch your forehead, then your chest or stomach, and move from right to left shoulder while saying, "In the name

CELTIC CROSS FINGER LABYRINTH

Stand at the crossroads and look. And ask for the ancient paths, ask where the good way goes, and walk in it and find rest for your souls. Jeremiah 6:16

With its symmetrical design, the Celtic cross labyrinth offers a tactile path that guides the fingers and provides space for compassion and reflection, allowing connection with experiences through touch and sight.

A labyrinth, unlike a maze, has no dead ends. Each turn guides you forward, letting you enjoy the journey without worry.

For centuries, labyrinths have drawn seekers from all walks of life, offering a refuge for meditation, prayer, contemplation, and relaxation. Since the fourth century, the Christian faith has embraced labyrinths to support prayer and contemplation.

Today, as more people embark on a journey of inner exploration, labyrinths are being rediscovered as essential retreats for the mind, body and soul. They help us slow down and 'catch up with our souls' by engaging with our inner wisdom.

You are my God. Help me to do your will, and let your gentle Spirit lead me on the right routes. Show me Your ways, O Lord, teach me Your paths.

Psalms 143:10 Psalm 25:4

We shall not cease from exploration, and the end of all our exploring will be to arrive where we started and know the place for the first time.

TS Elliot

THE SYMBOLS CONTAINED IN THE CELTIC CROSS LABYRINTH

A Cross

represents Jesus: Love and hope of connecting the earthly with the Divine.

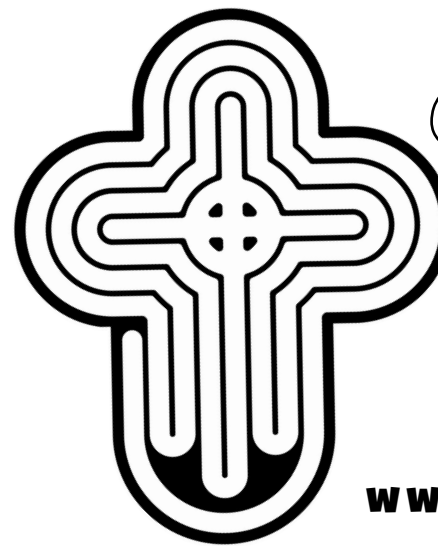
The **Seven** Paths rising upwards to the centre of the cross symbolise spiritual fullness.

The horizontal bar can symbolise the physical world and humanity, while the vertical bar represents the divine, linking heaven and earth.

The **four triangles** in the centre can symbolise many things: the four directions, four elements (earth, air, fire, water), four seasons, four stages of the day, aspects of the self (mind, body, soul, heart).

A circle symbolises wholeness; it has no beginning or end, reflecting God's timelessness, unity, balance, and inclusiveness.

The four Gospels, the four living creatures in Revelation, and even God's Hebrew name, YHWH, have four letters, representing completeness and eternity.



CELTIC CROSS FINGER PRAYER LABYRINTH

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Labyrinths are engaging, creative prayer pathways for people from all walks of life. Follow the labyrinth's path, trusting in the journey. There's no right or wrong way to use a labyrinth; embrace what resonates with you. Take a moment to pause, pray, and nurture a connection with your inner self as you trace the path around the labyrinth, letting your fingers do the praying.

"Labyrinths invite you to look harder and feel deeper... they enhance your life experience by gently encouraging you to 'mine your soul' and explore more, fully revealing new insights and perspectives along the way."

John (participant at a recent labyrinth retreat).

You may bring a question, a decision, or a prayer. This space enables us to reflect on and connect with our innermost feelings, to be still while still moving, and to take the time to explore the richness of our inner resources and discover meaning and/or solace as we saunter at our own pace.

"Listen to your life, see it for the fathomless mystery it is. In the boredom and pain of it, no less than in the excitement and gladness: touch, taste, and smell your way to the holy and hidden heart of it because, in the last analysis, all moments are key moments, and life itself is grace."

Frederick Buechner



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