

## A Pilgrimage for Monday in Holy Week

As many of you may know, 2020 has been designated a Year of Pilgrimage by Durham Diocese. In the Durham North Team, during Lent, we have explored different types and aspects of pilgrimage. Today I thought we might use an ancient form of prayer walk – the labyrinth.

People have been using labyrinths for about 4,000 years and there are many different examples all over the world. They can be found inside /outside; in a field, cathedral, on a beach, in the grounds of a monastery or municipal gardens, in someone's backyard...

But we can also use a 'finger labyrinth'; trace the pathway silently, slowly and thoughtfully, creating a prayerful space in our head and heart. This particular design has 7 arcs to move towards the centre and then return through the 7 arcs, to come out again. There is a single point of entry and exit.

It differs from a maze because there is only one route in and out; so we can't get lost! And as we don't need to worry about which way to go, we can concentrate on drawing closer to God in prayer.

For today's activity, I have designed each arc to have a different topic for prayerful consideration... You can carry on using the labyrinth after today, in whatever way helps you, using your own thoughts and topics.

So today, I invite you to join me on this journey to the centre and back out again... You might like to play some quiet, reflective music during your 'walk'....

### References:

'Working with the Labyrinth', R. Sewell, J. Sellers & D. Williams, 2013, 2014, Wild Goose Publications, Glasgow

[www.labyrinthos.net](http://www.labyrinthos.net)

[www.labyrinthociety.org](http://www.labyrinthociety.org)

This particular labyrinth design was drawn by Jeff Saward



### A Labyrinth 'walk' for Monday in Holy Week 2020

**Arc 1a** As we begin our journey towards the centre of the labyrinth, we ask God to hold in his safekeeping our close family with whatever issues may be troubling them just now...

**Arc 2a** We think of our wider family and our friends. We bring before God any particular concerns that we have for them at this time...

**Arc 3a** The next turn takes us to the outer part of the labyrinth. We call to mind those who work in the NHS and the Care sector, who are putting themselves at considerable risk in order to help others...

**Arc 4a** We pray for all the other key workers, without whom our country would have ground to a halt by now...and for those working to develop a vaccine...

**Arc 5a** We remember all businesses which are facing challenging decisions... those who have lost their jobs, who are struggling to make ends meet and to provide for their families...and those working in factories to produce additional equipment for the front-line services...

**Arc 6a** We pray for local and national leaders, who have the responsibility of making wise judgements and effective decisions and who will, whatever they do, encounter criticism and complaint...

**Arc 7a** As we move towards centre, we remember the sick, the dying, the bereaved and all who are living in fear, because of the corona virus...

#### The Centre

Here we can pause for a moment...  
breathe in deeply...and breathe out slowly...  
sensing God's calming presence with us....  
holding the space for him to come to us, as we come to him....



**Arc 7b** As we begin our journey out of the labyrinth, we pray for those who had existing medical or personal issues, which have now become even more challenging...

**Arc 6b** We remember our schools, nurseries, child care providers, colleges and universities...those who will have to make decisions affecting the futures of so many students....

**Arc 5b** We call to mind our church buildings, where Christians have worshipped and witnessed down the centuries. They are empty of people just now, but are full of the prayers and memories of past generations...

**Arc 4b** Now we call to mind our church family and any special concerns that we have for them...for the clergy... and all those who are working hard to keep us in touch with one another...

**Arc 3b** As we approach the outer arc again, we think of those throughout the world who are struggling more than we are, because of a lack of resources, infrastructure, or the necessary funds to buy basic equipment...

**Arc 2b** We recall those who have inspired and encouraged us in our faith journey through the years...

**Arc 1b** As we return to the beginning of the labyrinth, we give thanks for the many acts of kindness and generosity, shown to those in need at the moment... And we ask that God will guide and strengthen us through the coming hours, days, weeks and months...

#### **A final thought and prayer**

Jesus said, 'I will be with you always...'

May God the Father hold us in the palm of his hands.

May God the Son come among us and walk beside us.

May God the Holy Spirit, guide and strengthen us,  
so that whatever the future holds,

we may have faith in the promise of eternal life  
and know that each one of us is loved by God.

Amen