

Following the Labyrinth

The first part of The Serenity Prayer, written by Reinhold Niebuhr during the darkest days of World War II, may be familiar; the second part is not so well known. You may therefore wish to follow the whole of the labyrinth path with your finger as you pray the prayer right through to begin with. Give yourself a few moments to take in the meaning of the words.

- Is there a part of the prayer that particularly strikes or speaks to you?
- Is there something affecting your serenity, your peace of mind, that you wish to bring to God now?

Next, slowly retrace the first part of the labyrinth with your finger, to the centre where we are reminded of the Peace of the Lord.

Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid. *(John 14: 27)*

Rest in that Peace and share your thoughts with God. Don't worry if it is difficult to find words to express exactly how you are feeling – his Spirit is with you and will interpret for you.

Once you have shared with God, wait a while in the peace and quiet for him to communicate with you. Draw on the wisdom and strength of his Spirit. Feel yourself surrounded, supported and uplifted by God's infinite love for you.

When you are ready, leave the peaceful heart of the labyrinth as you follow the rest of the path which leads back out and pray the remaining part of the prayer, but as you go, take his Peace with you in your own heart.

The LORD bless you
and keep you;
the LORD make his face shine on you
and be gracious to you;
the LORD turn his face toward you
and give you peace. *(Numbers 6: 24 – 26)*

30 Minute Serenity Prayer Finger Labyrinth

Introduction

In centuries gone by, pilgrims made their way from one holy site to another, often walking hundreds of miles. Some of the famous ancient pilgrim routes such as El Camino de Santiago have become extremely popular again recently, with over three hundred thousand people walking at least part of the almost five-hundred-mile route in 2018. But even at the height of their popularity in the Middle Ages for many people going on a long pilgrimage was not an option, so praying as they walked around labyrinth paths enabled them to capture the idea of a spiritual journey.

There are some beautiful examples of labyrinths marked out on the floors of certain mediaeval places of worship. Finger labyrinths take the idea a step further in that it is possible to go on a micro pilgrimage, following a labyrinth path of a size you can hold in your hands as you pray. This finger prayer labyrinth includes the words of a famous prayer.

Preparation

You may wish to follow the labyrinth on screen or print a copy. Spend as long you feel appropriate on the meditation – thirty minutes is suggested as being a comfortable length of time to allow. If you choose to print the labyrinth, there is the option of mindfully colouring in the labyrinth as an extension of your period of reflection and meditation.

Settle yourself in a comfortable position with the labyrinth in front of you and take a few relaxing breaths, consciously dropping your shoulders and releasing any tension you may find yourself holding in your body or limbs, then breathe normally. Just rest quietly for a minute or two, concentrating on your breathing, noticing the cool air entering your mouth and nose as you inhale and the warmth of the air as you exhale.

