

THE THREEFOLD SPIRITUAL PATH

What is the Threefold Spiritual Path?

First stage of this path, until you reach the center, is shedding or *Purgation*. It means to let go of details of life. It quiets the mind. It happens walking the path.

The **second stage**, *Illumination*, is found in the center of the labyrinth. After quieting the mind and opening the heart on the path, the center is a place of meditation and prayer; a place to receive what is there for you. Spend as much time here as you feel is right for you.

The **third stage**, *Union*, begins when you leave the center and retrace the path that brought you in. Union is the joining with the Divine, your Higher Power, to bring your new insights and discoveries out into your world. You are invited to become more authentic and confident in sharing.



Indoor Labyrinth

Indoor Labyrinth Rental

Knowles Mercy Spirituality Center has a portable Labyrinth available for groups to rent. Labyrinth Rental is \$30/day (1 day before and after allowed for pick up and return). The size is 24' x 24'. Be sure you have an indoor space large enough to accommodate the size of the labyrinth. Pick up times are available Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. To reserve call 402.359.4288. Payment is due the day you return the Labyrinth.

KNOWLES MERCY SPIRITUALITY CENTER

2304 Campanile Rd.
Waterloo, NE 68069-6838
Phone: 402.359.4288
Fax: 402.359.4843
E-mail:
kmscenter@mercywmw.org
Website: www.kmscenter.org



KNOWLES MERCY SPIRITUALITY CENTER

THE LABYRINTH



*A Means of Prayer
Using Movement*

Phone: 402.359.4288
www.kmscenter.org

WHAT IS A LABYRINTH

A labyrinth is a pathway that assists people in centering themselves, finding balance and wholeness, and in connecting oneself to the spiritual or Divine. It is an ancient tool that is found in a variety of cultures as early as 2500 BC.

The patterns used by these early civilizations are very similar. They are all **unicursal**, that is they move forward by turning equally right and left creating multiple circuits that always lead to the center. In its simple pattern, the labyrinth captures many aspects of life—journey, rhythm, search, discovery, change, trust and our movement inward to sacred space.

The labyrinth was adopted by Christianity as a means of prayer using movement and as a mini-pilgrimage commemorating and celebrating the mysteries of Christ's life. It symbolized the true path to external life, a contemplative way of following Jesus who journeyed as we do through life and death to resurrection

OUR CHARTRE LABYRINTH

Our labyrinth is modeled after the one in Chartre, France. From the outer

circumference, there are 11 circuits or rings plus the center. This equals 12, a number that signifies completeness or totality, being a multiple of 3 (God) and 4 (the earth with its 4 directions). The center is a six-petal rose, a symbol of Mary. Entering the center means entering the place where God comes into our world and our lives. The rose symbolizes the Holy Spirit and the petals stand for the 6 days of creation. The Chartre Labyrinth contains 10 labrys—double axe-head shapes visible where the path makes a complete turn on itself. These are symbols of creativity and power. The placement of the labrys was purposely designed to form a cross, a sign that the human journey is the Christ journey, filled with blessed surprised and painful meanderings. It passes through death to a rebirth into new life.



HOW DO I WALK THE LABYRINTH?

Before entering the labyrinth, take a few moments at the entrance to reflect on where you are in your life right now. Set aside the busyness and need to rush. Breathe deeply and approach the sacred path in one or more of the following methods:

Gracious Attention: Quiet your mind. Release thoughts and let the gracious energy flow. Do not analyze, question or understand. Gently be with your feelings and sensations.

Asking a Question: Focus on a question. Walk with a listening heart.

Use of Repetition: Use a word, mantra, or phrase over and over.

Reading Scripture or Spiritual Text: Slowly and meditatively read from these writing as you walk.

Engage in Prayer as You Walk: Bring to mind persons or intentions you wish to commend to God. Or name gifts, people, experiences for which you are thankful. Recite your favorite prayer. Just talk to God.

Body Prayer: Move spontaneously as your body wishes. Move your arms and legs, bend and sway. Dance the path.

As you leave, turn to the center, pause and pray a brief prayer.