



Walking A Reconciliation Path

Welcome to the summer issue of the *Labyrinth Journal*, with our theme of reconciliation. This coincides with my trip to South Africa, the details of which I've written about elsewhere in this newsletter.

I had a photo moment with Archbishop Desmond Tutu on Friday after a Eucharistic Service. This is the third time I've had time with him. My first time was in a class at General Theological Seminary. Someone asked him "What is the most painful thing you have ever experienced?" He said, "to have people hate you and judge you simply by the color of your skin." It was very fitting when Archbishop Tutu retired from the diocese of Cape Town in 1995 to lead the Commission on Truth and Reconciliation. This commission was a two-year effort to begin the healing after the end of Apartheid in 1994. There was an amnesty period where anyone who committed crimes could come forward and admit their guilt and all was formally forgiven. I say formally because in the eyes of the law thousands of horrendous acts of violence and torture were dismissed. In the silence of the survivor's hearts lives on the pain, anger and loss of lives not fully lived – wondering what could have been had they been born elsewhere.

Already existing racial discrimination was formalized into "apartheid"

legislation by the predominantly Afrikaans speaking National Party when they were voted into power in 1948. It was then extended to apply to every aspect of life and laws decreed where you could live, what you would own, whom you would marry and at what and where you could work. It wound up being an institutionalization of unbridled racism that divided blacks (who always called Africa their home) from the colored (people from India, Asia and other locations who were not born in South Africa) and the whites (the Dutch who arrived in 1652 and the English who came later) who had the most privilege. The whole world knows about Apartheid and the huge victory on behalf of humankind to stamp its shackles into the dust. However, not many of us know about the suffering that continues because of it. Only limited and inferior education was offered to two,

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even three generations of blacks and coloreds. Hundreds of thousands of people live in what we would call Shantytowns struggling to feed their families at the

end of each day.

The pain is so great that the metaphor of one path leading to the center is too stark, too raw and, paradoxically, too exclusive. The divisions are so great few people feel they are walking the same path. And they certainly do not start in the same place given the poverty, violence and lack of education of so many citizens of South Africa. In searching for a way of portraying the tension between these different realities, Clare Wilson created a labyrinth with two entrances, sometimes called the Reconciliation Labyrinth. It is a contemporary labyrinth, as compared to an archetypal labyrinth which was created anonymously and was passed down in the collective mind through the ages. The person who begins on the right side will walk the entire right side and the person who begins on the left side will walk the entire left side. There is a point where the people meet and cross over to the other side. Then the person who began on the right – or left – is walking on the other side where the other person has walked. They literally exchange sides. This part is a mirror image. This space can be used to reflect on the different side of the issue that concerns you. It is the other side of the coin, the shadow side of consciousness, the unclaimed split within, the pale criminal – as Jung calls it – that resides in us all. Then there is a meeting place where the two people can meet and choose to



Lauren Artress

enter the center together and go out together, or exit directly without going into the center. In some sense, this is a "specialty" labyrinth. It addresses a unique situation in South Africa. It can also address what needs understanding and reconciliation within us as long as there are teachings and a process that accompanies it. Clare is doing the hard work to put this together so we need to wait to see how it unfolds from her core.

So many of us are working – and need to continue to work – with the other side of the paradox. We ARE all on the same path because we live in the human body, but South Africa is a very unique setting. My experience brings us to the broader issue of contemporary labyrinths, many of which are copyrighted. When contemporary labyrinths began to spring up I rejected them. I did not have a way of understanding them until the Labyrinth Society Gathering in Camp Courage last fall. Jim Buchanan, a land artist, and Robert Possehl are both creators of contemporary labyrinths. Through their work I began to see that if the contemporary

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Al Azar scholars in the lighthouse labyrinth.



Dancers on the labyrinth in Wynberg Park, Reconciliation Day 2002



Permanent Reconciliation Labyrinth at the base of famous lighthouse landmark in Kommetjie, South Africa

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labyrinth extends a metaphor in some meaningful way, then it makes sense. The two-entrance labyrinth extends the metaphor because we all have splits – to use a psychological term – within us. We are divided within ourselves to some degree and the task is to integrate the splits. To create a labyrinth design simply to create a labyrinth can be fun and community building, but may not produce meaning within the walker since it does not tap into the archetype behind it: Wholeness or splits, such as the two-entrance labyrinth does.

Why do I bring this up? Because those of us who are working with labyrinths need to educate the public as to which ones they are walking. There is an important truth here: Not all labyrinths

transform human consciousness. I am beginning to hear the voices of disappointed people who expected an important experience. Of course working with expectations is an important part of facilitating a labyrinth, but this is why the first-time walker should be informed about what labyrinth they are walking, where it came from and whether it is a contemporary or archetypal one.

Those in the public who are reading this need to learn to ask what type of labyrinth you are walking. Count the circuits – the number of times it goes around the center – and store the information if there is no one there to answer

these questions. If you want to dig deeper, go to the World Wide Labyrinth Locator at <http://www.veriditas.labyrinth>

[society.com](http://www.veriditas.labyrinth) and look up the

typology of labyrinths that Jeff Seward, Sig Lonegren and others developed. There are “tried and true” labyrinths such as the classical seven, the

medieval eleven, the Baltic wheel and others that

have been created and passed down through the ages. These labyrinths can transform our consciousness. They quiet the mind and open the heart. They allow the inner world to become transparent to us so new insights can

come through. Having said this, there is a place for contemporary labyrinths as well. They build community, offer an activity many people can do together and they are fun to create and walk. Those of us working with labyrinths want to create within all seekers a keen interest in labyrinths. We want to encourage people to walk every labyrinth they meet with curiosity, a spirit of adventure and openness to their experience. We need to educate ourselves and others to the different kinds of labyrinths. This way, we will all benefit from walking a variety of labyrinths and strengthen the labyrinth movement with each step.

Joyful blessings on the path,

Lauren



5-Circuit

Veriditas Facilitators

Reconciling Inner and Outer Journeys

Like many people around the world, I find the labyrinth's meandering yet purposeful twists and turns of deep symbolic comfort to my inner journey. Its sweeping reaches from left and right help me to gather my parts together, to remember myself into and with something bigger than the parts. In 2002 I found myself wondering whether the labyrinth could also provide me with a symbolic way of linking my inner world with the people in my outer world, to feel deeply connected with the bigger whole.

My outer world is this miraculous, wonderful post-apartheid "new South Africa": 'The rainbow nation' as Desmond Tutu dubs us. Many might even say, as Albert Luthuli (South Africa's first Nobel Laureate) suggested to us in 1960, that our goal is to feel 'at home' with each other. And, I would add, within ourselves. They go together. And now, with our new political dispensation, it is possible. Our Freedom Charter, celebrating its fiftieth birthday this year, says that this land "belongs to all who live in her."

But we are still divided. Our lives continue to be fundamentally influenced by the after-effects of apartheid. As Luthuli said, there is still a lot of work to do. Deep cleavage lines are painfully coming through to the surface as the freedom euphoria papering over the apartheid wounds wears thin. There is great inequality, great poverty, much suffering. Great wealth and privilege and unequal access to it. While we share a yearning for much the same things – safety, health, family, friends, education, work, things to do, things to hope for, goals to aim for – for some of us access to these things is still very much

harder than for others. That doesn't seem right. And we're not even really talking to each other about it because we aren't close enough to hear each other. So where does this labyrinthine journey towards tomorrow begin? Where do ordinary everyday people like me start?

Well, as with any journey, it can only start from where I'm at. (This may seem obvious but it's taken me some time to realize this.) Where I'm 'at' includes that I am white middle class with a good education, a privilege that went with my skin colour. Although my parents originated from South Africa and are of 19th Century English European settler stock, my siblings and I were born and grew up in Zimbabwe, Malawi, Zambia and then back to Zim-

my first twenty-five years in South Africa, I have been illegitimately privileged. And busy with raising a family. For the past ten years now – no thanks to me – I've been able to legitimately be proud to say I'm South African. To have been brought into the bigger South African family. And I am hugely grateful for our leaders who sacrificed so much to bring this about.

But where are our family occasions? Where are we to meet and build our relationships to the point that they are strong enough to handle differences that do exist and will continue between us? Because of our travels as children we didn't have relations nearby to congregate with on high days and holidays. From a

today There are many profound initiatives here focused on recognizing and healing wounds of the past. They tend to be focused on smaller contained groups or in therapeutic settings. Most public events seem to be organised by political parties or for particular constituencies and in that sense have an agenda. This is often divisive. I have begun to deeply realize that in 10 years we will be 20 years into our New Democracy and I'll (God willing) be 65 and I don't want to still be wondering where to start. So I'm starting my own journey now, from inside-out, and seeing where it leads. It is the journey and not the destination that is most important. And starting where I am – being a labyrinthist – means starting with a labyrinth.

From the start it was obvious that the design of the journey to South Africa's tomorrow couldn't have just one path leading from the past towards the future. Reaching our present dispensation was never a certainty. Yet to have reached a shared hope for its existence must have existed sufficiently in the hearts of our leaders, each coming from their different directions and experiences that shaped their beings. The reality is that I still live in a comfortable middle-class suburb that is still very white and that is very separated from other suburbs nearby that are still pretty much separated into racial groupings the way they were in the days of apartheid. We are in different places. But I want my grandchildren, yet unborn, to live in a different reality. How could this be depicted in a labyrinth?

The Reconciliation Labyrinth is designed with two entrances, recognizing that as South Africans, because of apartheid, we do not start the journey towards reconciliation from the same place.

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Clare Wilson with Square Hill Primary pupils.

After a year as an AFS student I came down to South Africa to attend the university, married and have stayed and lived in various places for thirty five years. Happily. And, in some sense, for most of this time, with a deep inner sense of homelessness. And illegitimacy. With our nomadic start I often wondered, "Where is home?" But it goes deeper than this. It hasn't really been possible to feel 'at home' inside myself with what was happening outside in the name of people with my skin colour. For

distance it has always seemed to me that a closer geographical presence is the glue that keeps families aware of themselves as 'families.' And now, as South Africa settles into being one big – but not so happy – family I have yearned for occasions when we could meet together on neutral ground and, at the very least, just 'be' with each other without words, searching mindfully for common ground. Or, with more time, learn more from each other about where the other is 'at' and has been 'at' on their journey to

Growing Labyrinthine Seeds in South Africa

It has been quite a demanding, yet wondrous time both at Veriditas and my life in general. My trip to South Africa, hosted by St. George's Cathedral in Cape Town, was fun, challenging and very enriching. The Rev. Rowan Smith, Dean of St. George's Cathedral, visited Grace Cathedral in 2000, learned about the labyrinth and trained as a facilitator. In 2004 a 45-foot eleven circuit labyrinth made with pavers was blessed in the courtyard of the cathedral.

Those of us in North America and Europe seem to have a fascination with South Africa. Now, having been there, I certainly understand more.

I was hosted by Clare and Rory Wilson throughout the trip. I spent the first few days in Kommetjie, where the Reconciliation Labyrinth is placed outside of the lighthouse that is a landmark for all travelers. A lovely welcome party occurred on Saturday night where I met the people who worked so hard with organizing my trip. Sunday was a day of sightseeing, but

unknown to all of us, it was also the beginning of the worst storm in 41 years. Torrents of rain over the next several hours provided some relief from the long-lasting drought that held Cape Town and the surrounding areas in its thirsty grasp.

Before the labyrinth workshops and public talks began I got a chance to go into the bush outside of Port Elizabeth. It was thrilling. Also, it was deeply humbling to be in the wild – albeit protected by a ranger in a large, open roofed land rover – among wild, peaceful animals such as giraffes, zebras, rhinos, dozens of different kinds of antelopes, hippos, water buffalo and, yes, even a lion. Just like coming to Chartres Cathedral, put this on your lifetime "To Do" list.

Two public talks were offered. They expected 20 and about 40 turned up. The weekend workshop was well attended and I trained 20 facilitators! My work with the eleven circuit labyrinth was complemented by Clare Wilson's work with her own design – the two-path labyrinth that is known as the Reconciliation Labyrinth.

Clare put one with ground flags outdoors for the workshop and then later we put her beautiful hand-made labyrinth – made with native printed cloth – inside the Cathedral to use during the training. It was enriching to everyone having an archetypal labyrinth experience as well as a contemporary labyrinth experience in the workshop and the training. I have done this as well in Kearney, Nebraska, with Nancy Brink's "Coming Out Labyrinth."

There are over 50 labyrinths in South Africa. There seem to be

two routes: One is through the seeds planted from Grace Cathedral to St. George's Cathedral; the second is through the energy-based therapies such as Reiki, Healing Touch and massage.

It was a joy to be in South Africa, to get to know Clare Wilson and her family and to watch with wonder and awe the application of the labyrinth work through the seeds planted by so many of us years ago.

Lauren



Lauren Artress (left) and Clare Wilson meeting in center of portable Reconciliation Labyrinth at St. George's Cathedral in Cape Town.

Reconciling Inner and Outer Journeys, continued from page 3

Like the 'person' embedded into the design, the journey starts from where one's feet are. In starting, we may seem far apart. However, with the intention to relate, recognize and reconcile our differences, to grow in the strength of our diversity, we can still guide our journeys towards that mythical place, a South Africa where people really care about each other and our life experiences.

Sometimes the path allows us to travel alongside each other and sometimes it takes us away and other times towards each other. But if we keep walking, when we are at the furthest point from our divided entrance we find

we are in the same path as each other. We then pass each other and walk the path that 'the other' has walked, gaining understanding along the way of how we were shaped to be where we are now. Eventually we reach our 'heartspace' where we need to make a decision whether we want to walk into the centre together, a centre that belongs to us all. When it is time to leave we find that there is a third path, a new path, by which we can exit. Incorporated 'through the body,' together and on our feet, walking into the future, still a place of 'not-knowing' but a place of hope. This is pretty much how our leaders enabled us to find

the common ground of 1994.

The Reconciliation Labyrinth evolved in a context (an important triggering step was the Reflection Labyrinth by Marty Kermeen) and has been used in a variety of places and contexts in conjunction with a variety of people: as part of a Home-to-All Campaign event on the Day of Reconciliation in Wynberg Park in Cape Town, 2002; the Recycle Labyrinth, which was a part of the Cape Town Earth Festival in 2003; workshops with schoolchildren during World Environment Week; and for the Reconciliation Day Beach Labyrinth on the famous and beautiful Muizenberg beach in Cape Town on the Day of Reconciliation,

2004. In 2005, it was used in Amsterdam as part of a church event focused on Reconciliation ceremonies marking the 60th anniversary since World War II. Increasingly it is being used in workshops with youth. And there are other plans continually evolving.

A permanent Reconciliation Labyrinth is sited at the foot of a famous lighthouse at Kommetjie near Cape Town as a symbol for the future of South Africa. The journey continues.

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Note: The design in its various incarnations is protected by copyright and registration but potential users are invited to contact Clare.

Reconciling to a Higher Vibrational Frequency

rec-on-cil-i-a-tion

[rɛkʔn sillee áysh'n]

the process of making two opposite beliefs, ideas or situations agree

Reconciliation may typically be identified as an act that occurs between two people or groups that have come together and resolved their conflict. However, for this labyrinth ritual, I will use reconciliation as it relates to the following definition: The process of making opposing beliefs or ideas agree.

When we are not in personal alignment, not centered, we are not reconciled with our own body, mind and Spirit. Our vibrational balance becomes skewed when there is conflict between our subconscious, who we believe we are as it pertains to our ego self and our spiritual essence: The Truth of who we really are. Reconciliation of these opposing beliefs about ourselves is the goal of this labyrinth walk. In this walk, we look at understanding that within each of us resides both darkness – negative emotions

– and Light – feelings of love and joy. Our primary goal is not to agree whether both exist, but to agree we are whole just as we are and allow the reconnection to that essence of ourselves that is the Light. When we allow the reconnection to heal, to reconcile our beliefs, we rediscover the ultimate source of Joy in our lives.

Preparation

Have participants sit outside of the labyrinth. A seven- or eleven-circuit labyrinth may be used. On a piece of paper, ask participants to draw a line down the middle, dividing the page in half, and one across the top of the

paper forming what would look like a "T." On the top left side create the heading: "I presently feel." Have the participants write below their heading, using the left hand column, what they are currently feeling emotionally. This can be positive or negative emotions or some of both. Afterward, ask them to go back and circle any words that appear negative (for some this may be every word!). Next, have the participants create a heading on the top right side: "I want to feel." This time, ask them to list the words that describe the emotions that they want to feel. For example,

if someone had the word "powerless" in the left hand column they may choose "powerful" to go into their right hand column and so on until everyone is complete.

Instructions for the walk

Releasing, Receiving and Returning. As participants begin their walk, moving along the pathways toward the center, have them focus their intention on Releasing the negative words and feelings they wrote in their left-hand column. Once in the center, instruct them to allow themselves to be open to Receive the feelings they want as described by the words written in the right hand column. Exiting the center, their attention focused on the feelings they have allowed themselves to receive, they are Returning to the outside world having reconciled the old opposing beliefs and ideas about themselves with thoughts and feelings of a higher vibrational frequency, our metaphor.

Blessings along the path,

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Global Love Day, New Smyrna Beach, Florida May 1, 2005

Little Miracles on the Path

When I was told that the theme for this issue of the *Labyrinth Journal* would be reconciliation, I thought back to all the stories we have shared in the 12-month history of "Little Miracles on the Path." One story, written anonymously, that definitely touched on this theme also touched me

very deeply. It gives us a whole new perspective on what reconciliation can mean. Here's the story.

Endings and Beginnings

My husband and I are separating after 40 years of marriage. Just as we had a ceremony to celebrate our marriage, I wanted to have some sort of ceremony to provide ending and closure. My husband had seen me walking the Stuy-

vesant Cove Labyrinth from our apartment window and asked if he could walk as well, so we decided to walk on our 41st anniversary. We walked in together and when we reached the center, we reminisced about and thanked each other for the good memories from our marriage and said some words of forgiveness and release and wished

each other well. We then walked out separately to symbolize our moving forward on our separate paths. For me, it was a meaningful and memorable little ceremony to mark the ending of our marriage. — Anonymous

Little Miracles on the Path
compiled by Linda Mikell
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Dream Quests on the Road

I have a vision of a community joined by the circles formed on labyrinths all over the world. It is a community of soul, linked by common experience and intention. There are practices, rituals, songs and stories shared in common. It is a community of spirit that can be accessed through memory and intention. It exists in a dimension beyond divisive dogma. The Women's Dream Quest is an important part of that community. Because of the moment of history in which we find ourselves living, it is the women who must lead this effort.

I feel strongly that the kind of world that we all dream of can be created, moment by moment, without reference to the dominant paradigm. There is an ancient/future aspect to the Dream Quest gatherings we have created in San Francisco for the past 18 years. It is as though we are remembering what it is like to come together as women, intent on exploring our inner lives in

the circle. Out of this experience comes great creativity, ideas for personal and societal transformation. Returning to the land of the soul enables the women to take seriously what they know in their feminine psyches, to share it, celebrate it and figure out how to take it into the world in useful and inspirational ways.

I have been taking the Dream Quest on the road for nine years now. Everywhere I have gone, there is a common experience of sisterhood and interest in exploring the feminine face of worship and spiritual practice. I've been to the South, the Northwest and

even to Prince Edward Island, and I find the same hunger for harmonizing and reconciling practices and relief at finding how simply we can come together. Each of these places has welcomed the labyrinth and the Dream Quest comes along as a way to use the powerful tool. In Memphis, Portland and now Spokane, the Dream Quest has become a yearly event. A community of small group leaders and participants has been established. I will go to New York State and to Nebraska in the autumn.

Some time in each Quest, I ask the women to imagine the other circles of Dream Questors standing around them. Often times there will be several women lighting candles and meditating on the fledgling quest. When I

close my eyes in this request, the faces of so many women around the country float into my consciousness. The community of my vision is forming.

Blessings,
Judith Tripp
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Getting a Dream Quest in Your Area

If you would like to host a Dream Quest in your area, call Judith Tripp at (415) 552-4546 or send an e-mail to Judith@circleway.com. You will need a sacred space, a spot for a 36-foot labyrinth or a labyrinth of your own, and seven or eight women from the community acquainted with small-group facilitation. Judith will supply a Dream Quest Planner, telephone assistance, training on the day of the event and leadership of the Quest.

Labyrinth Products from Veriditas



Clarity Labyrinth

The Clarity Labyrinth is a Lucite labyrinth with a black wrought-iron easel. It is 15 inches in diameter and is virtually unbreakable. This hand labyrinth is beveled and polished on both sides and has the look of expensive cut glass. It is engraved with the words

"The Willingness To Surrender in Trust and Openness Leads to A Peaceful Heart" in an arc around the top of the labyrinth.

Price: \$150.



Double Finger Labyrinth

This unique piece features two finger labyrinths on a 10-inch by 20-inch piece of light-weight, high-impact black plastic. This is believed to be the first labyrinth

of this design. The double labyrinths synchronize left and right hand; brain function and coordination. It is suitable for lap or table use.

Price: \$40



Labyrinth Finger Meditation Tool

This handsome wooden finger meditation tool measures 18 inches by 18 inches and is an

extension of the larger walking labyrinth. This beautiful portable labyrinth enables you to experience the same graceful path through the touch of your finger. You simply sit with it on your lap, close your eyes and allow your finger to move through the path. Experimenting with different fingers and your non-dominant hand will produce a variety of experiences. This labyrinth is available in walnut, natural cherry and maple. Each item is unique because of the natural wood grains and patterns.

Price: \$195

Facilitator price: \$145

The Veriditas Labyrinth Gift Store has all the latest labyrinth merchandise. Call 800-895-7030 or visit us online at <http://www.veriditas.net> for more information. Discounted prices are available for trained facilitators on select merchandise.

Listening to the Voice of God

Excerpt from "Way of the Winding Path: A Map for the Labyrinth of Life"

By Eve Hogan

I was called to facilitate a labyrinth walk for a church youth group in Lahaina, Maui. When I arrived to set up the labyrinth, several local children gathered to watch and ask us what we were doing. We did our best to explain it to them and realized that any efforts we made to save the experience for the older kids would be futile because the 2- to 10-year-olds were gathering quickly. We instructed them to take off their slippers, roller blades, and tennis shoes and to don a pair of the socks we had brought in an effort to keep the labyrinth clean. Soon

the labyrinth was swarming with running, laughing children as the teens for the youth group began to gather with curiosity.

When the youth group was to begin, we asked the little ones to step aside so the older kids could have a turn. They obediently left the circle of the labyrinth, only to stand patiently on the side, watching and waiting for their turn again, saying, "Auntie? When the big kids are done, can we go again? Can we? Can we?" The teens formed a circle in the center as I explained the process of the metaphorical pilgrimage to them. They then walked the labyrinth with a solemnity that was a marked contrast to the little ones' playful antics. After the walk, we sat in a circle to discuss

our thoughts and feelings. The younger children came and sat with us, quietly soaking up the "adult" experience.

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**Are you sure you
know your way?**

When the older kids moved off to the side to have pizza, a few of the younger ones asked if they could now, finally, have their turn again. This time, rather than running it as a game, the children walked it quietly as they had seen their older brothers and sisters do. With only two little ones left on the labyrinth – a handsome, 4-year-old boy with a shaved head and a beautiful, sparkly-eyed 7-year-old girl – I decided to take my turn as well.

As soon as I had stepped into the labyrinth, Malia, the girl, came running over from where she had been and began walking immediately behind me. She announced: "I am going to follow you." I laughed and said, "Okay," taking note to see what emerging metaphors were brewing for me.

We had walked silently for about thirty seconds when she asked: "Do you know your way into the lab?" as if it had occurred to her that she might be following the wrong person. I answered assuredly: "Yes, I know my way." After another minute of silence, again this sweet girl's voice rose up from behind me: "Are you sure you know your way?" I again assured her I knew what I was doing, but I had to laugh to myself at the metaphor mirror of my own inner child's voice – "Are

you sure you know what you are doing?" – that I so often wonder as I wander through life.

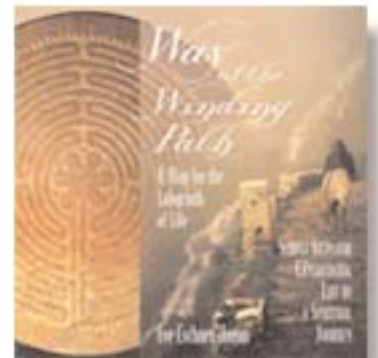
When the three of us reached the center, we all sat down crossed-legged and closed our eyes. All choosing to open our eyes at the exact same time, we greeted each other with giggles as we caught each other "peeking." As I looked across the center of the labyrinth at these two beautiful children, I felt as if I was sitting with the childhood version of the Dalai Lama and a young Mary or Holy Mother. Tears came to my eyes as I sat with them, humbled. Then Malia said: "Okay, close your eyes. Let's listen to God." We all obediently followed her instructions when, only seconds later she added: "Listen for Jesus!" After several minutes, as the two children got up to walk out, I whispered: "Did you hear God?" They both smiled and nodded. I asked, "What did he say?" Malia looked thoughtful as she prepared to leave the center, then answered sweetly, "He said, 'I am always with you!'" She then turned and followed the labyrinth path back out, knowing she was not alone.

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Eve Hogan on her portable labyrinth in Hawaii.



Eve Hogan's book, *Way of the Winding Path: A Map for the Labyrinth of Life*

Research and Reconciliation

Those of us intimately involved with labyrinths are convinced of the value of the labyrinth in our lives for such things as calming, healing, community building, inner and outer peace, problem solving, reconciliation and spiritual growth. We are often asked "Where is the proof?" Veriditas and The Labyrinth Society are now working together to promote research and share what is going on with scientific research in relation to the labyrinth experience.

Interested people from both groups held a conference call on March 9, 2005, to discuss ways in which Veriditas and The Labyrinth Society can collaborate not just on research projects, but in creating a database that will help respond to people's requests for research on labyrinths. A link to the TLS Research Forum is a first step that anyone can access: <http://labyrinthociety.org/forums/index.php>

Dr. Kay Sandor, Associate Professor, University of Texas Medical Branch School of Nursing at Galveston, Texas, summarized her medically based research on the labyrinth and stress reduction. The Veriditas research group she moderates is a list of interested people, and thus far hasn't posted resources, but is

open to time-effective ways of communicating information. Jane Wirth, Veriditas Facilitator and group moderator, also has done medically based research, and both are searching for venues for publication.

The interest in research on the labyrinth is alive and growing. The Labyrinth Society presented a forum on research proposals at its most recent gathering, and most specifically an "action research" survey instrument presented by John Rhodes, who needs labyrinth presenters/facilitators to "field test" this instrument, which would be minimally intrusive to the walk. Participants would be asked to rate various emotional states and their changes after their walk. These changes could then be measured in standard, professionally accepted ways. Lilan Laishley has done ethnographic research on the labyrinth and religious settings. TLS reports requests on their web site on research efforts, most particularly concerning the labyrinth and alcoholism. The Veriditas facilitators network recently had a query on research relating to labyrinths, spirituality and resilience, especially among adults and children with a history of abuse.

Our next step, after establishing

communication, will be to collectively develop a literature review, not so much of labyrinth research, as of research on meditation and stress reduction. Anyone who can contribute to a labyrinth-stress reduction and meditation bibliography/literature review is urged to contact me at bonniesophia@adelphia.net.

Here, I believe, is where "Reconciliation" comes in. If we make an intuitive association of the labyrinth to stress reduction, meditation and healing, and can demonstrate research to support that this is so, we can broaden usage of the labyrinth to bring peace within. Because the walk is an exercise in community, members can take first steps toward reconciliation, reaching farther out to the greater communities of which the walkers are a part. We realize, however, in correlating this practice to research, that we need to proceed with care, to maintain the authenticity of the labyrinth experience, most particularly the sacred space. Any space of reconciliation is a sacred space. As we determine our research vision – how it differs from and is complementary with The Labyrinth Society's and that of other labyrinth practitioners and participants – we want to offer resources unique to Veriditas. Our Mission Statement defines the labyrinth expe-

rience as: "A practice for personal healing and growth, a tool for community-building, an agent for peace, and a metaphor for life." Could there be a better definition of the search for reconciliation through research than this?

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Coordinator, Veriditas Interest Groups, and Veriditas Coordination of Research Resources with The Labyrinth Society

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For this summer issue and for those of us in warmer climates, this refreshing, serene labyrinth of George and Theresa Henke is a welcome sight. They reside in the high desert of Santa Fe, New Mexico.

*Photo by (c) George Henke
<http://www.Art-Exchange.com>*



Walking A Sacred Path

Chartres, France, October 17-29, 2005

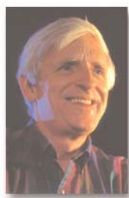
Walking A Sacred Path is a transformational program that is offered in two six-day cycles beginning Monday and ending on Saturday at noon. Each cycle features a different faculty person. Both cycles include one private, after hours labyrinth walk and one public walk in Chartres Cathedral. The cost includes all programs: morning seminars, a small group discussion, an opening reception, a closing dinner, a tour of the crypt in English, a tour with Malcolm Miller and leisure hours spent in the enchanting Medieval village that surrounds the magnificent Cathedral of Our Lady of Chartres.

Lauren Artress hosts both cycles of the Walking A Sacred Path program.

Cost:

- Early Bird Special: \$1450.00 ends July 15th, 2005
- Regular Rate: \$1,550.00 after July 15th, 2005
- Special for donors (\$1000) and above: \$1350.00

Visit <http://www.veriditas.net/programs/chartres2.html> for the WASP 2005 registration form.



Faculty: Matthew Fox
Cycle One:
The 12th Century Renaissance and the 21st Century Renaissance
October 17-22, 2005

Chartres Cathedral was part of that twelfth century renaissance that the great historian M.D.



Chartres Cathedral: Photo Houvet, Reproduction Cliche Valoire

Chenu called "the only renaissance that succeeded in the West." It was a grassroots movement that gave birth to a renewed culture with new institutions such as the Cathedral (to honor the goddess in the center of the newly formed cities) and the University. The commune movements also found expression in Saint Francis and Saint Dominic.

We will explore some of the energies behind the twelfth century renaissance in light of today's movements and spiritual needs including the return of the goddess and the Divine Feminine, ecological awareness (the "Green Man"), Wisdom and Cosmology as the sources of the University and a renewal of education and worship.

Visit <http://www.veriditas.net/programs/readinglista.html> for the recommended reading list for Cycle One.

This week is being approved as an Independent Study option for credit through the Doctor of Ministry Program at the University of Creation Spirituality. For details about the Doctor of Ministry Program contact Grace Hogan, Director of Admissions 510-835-4827 ext 14 or email grace-hogan@csnet.org.



Faculty: Lauren Artress
Cycle Two:
The Parable of the Labyrinth
October 24-29, 2005

The labyrinth can be understood as a living, experiential parable. This parable teaches us about our spiritual lives: that we are all on the Path together, that we need to be embodied to take the journey and how the feminine, through symbol, image and myth, nourishes the soul. Our Lady of Chartres Cathedral and her story will be included. We will explore these areas together in counterpoint to the naked truths that we cannot see through ordinary eyes.

The morning seminars will provide food for thought, poems, and spiritual reflection to nurture and empower us in our daily lives.

Visit <http://www.veriditas.net/programs/readinglistb.html> for

the recommended reading list for Cycle Two.

Facilitator Training at Chartres Cathedral

Lauren Artress will hold a two-day Facilitator Training session in Chartres following Cycle Two of Walking A Sacred Path.

Facilitating a Labyrinth as a Spiritual Path is the theme under which Lauren will teach the training.

This training is to prepare applicants wanting to present the labyrinth to their community or to do workshops, conferences and open walks. The training includes the Basic Presentation, different models for presenting, holding the space of the labyrinth, unusual experiences, construction and many more topics. For more information, please visit <http://www.veriditas.net/programs/training.html>.

Cost: \$600.00



Chartres Cathedral Labyrinth Photo (c) 2003 John Ridder

Mid to Late 2005 Programs and Events (as of 6/12/05)

- 6/24 - 6/28 **Vancouver, BC Cluster Event**, St. Paul's Church
Qualifying Workshop 6/24-25, Facilitator Training 6/27-28
Contact Bonnie McKinnon at 604-730-1612
- 7/8 - 7/10 **Keynote: The Way of Relationship** - Aspen, CO
Co-sponsored with The Spiritual Paths Foundation with Rabbi
Rami Shapiro, Kabir and Camille Helminski, Judith Simmer Brown,
Ed Bastian and others.
Info at 970-923-0370 or <http://www.spiritualpaths.net>
- 8/14 - 8/21 **Golden Door Labyrinth Week**, Escondido, CA
Info at <http://www.goldendoor.com>
- 9/30 - 10/4 **Louisville, KY Cluster Event**, Louisville Presbyterian Seminary
Qualifying Workshop 9/30-10/1, Facilitator Training 10/3-10/4
Info at <http://www.lpts.edu/>
- 10/6 **Public Talk and Workshop**, Tampa, FL, Franciscan Center
Contact Karen Davies, 213-229-2695 or
email francnr@tampabay.rr.com
- 10/17-22 **Walking A Sacred Path: Week 1**
Chartres Cathedral, Chartres, France. Faculty: **Matthew Fox**
The 12th Century Renaissance and the 21st Century Renaissance
<http://www.veriditas.net/programs/chartres.html> 415-561-2921
- 10/24-29 **Walking A Sacred Path: Week 2**
Chartres Cathedral, Chartres, France. Faculty: **Lauren Artress**
The Parable of the Labyrinth
<http://www.veriditas.net/programs/chartres.html> 415-561-2921
- 10/31-11/1 **Facilitator Training**, Chartres Cathedral, Chartres, France
Info at <http://www.veriditas.net/programs/training.html> 415-561-2921
- 10/20 - 10/23 **The Labyrinth Society Annual Gathering**, Lenox, MA
- 10/28-29 **Women's Dream Quest**, Grace Cathedral, San Francisco, CA
For women only.
Info at <http://www.veriditas.net/programs/women.html>
- 11/11-13 **Labyrinth Pilgrimage Retreat: Gathering Collective Wisdom**
Grace Cathedral, San Francisco, CA
Registration info at <http://www.veriditas.net/programs/grace.html>
- 11/14-15 **Facilitator Training**, Grace Cathedral, San Francisco, CA
Info at <http://www.veriditas.net/programs/training.html> 415-561-2921

2006 Events: Specific dates to be determined

- 10/13-17 **Santa Fe, NM Cluster Event**
Qualifying Workshop and Facilitator Training
- TBA **Colorado Springs, CO Cluster Event**
Qualifying Workshop and Facilitator Training
Contact Sharon S. Littrell 719-633-8888
- TBA **Quad City Cluster Event**, IA/IL
- TBA **Women's Dream Quest**, Grace Cathedral, San Francisco, CA
Spring and Fall Programs

Veriditas Vision

To activate and facilitate
the transformation of
the human spirit.

Veriditas Mission

Veriditas centers its work
on the labyrinth experience as:
A practice for personal healing
and growth, a tool for community
building, an agent for peace, and
a metaphor for life.

Veriditas Happenings

We recently added a "Donate Now"
button on the "Supporting Our
Work" web page allowing people
to make a secure
donation through the internet.
[http://www.veriditas.net/
supporting.html](http://www.veriditas.net/supporting.html)

The Early Bird special for Walking
A Sacred Path ends
July 15th. The Early Bird special
allows people to save \$100,
so it is well worth doing.

The Rev. Dr. Lauren Artress was
installed as Honorary Canon of
Grace Cathedral at the Feast of
Pentecost on May 15, 2005,
"...In recognition of her work in
deepening the spirituality of
thousands through her foundation
of the Labyrinth Project and for
her many years of ministry."
Congratulations Lauren!