

Reflections on the 19th DIAKONIA World Assembly Durham, July 2005.



Labyrinth Reflections

The Labyrinth was laid with sand in the Cloister Garth of Durham Cathedral. It was opened in early morning before breakfast and in the evening before the Cathedral closed, as well as at other times during the day. The invitation was to walk the labyrinth to reach the well at the centre and lay a stone in the water. The way of leaving was to step across the sand tracks from the inside directly to the outside. Walkers were invited to write reflections as they left. Some of these are printed here.

How wonderful, at the beginning of this day, to walk with our Lord, meeting with him, and sharing with him the joys and sorrows of life. Thank you for this opportunity within these ancient cloisters.

Thank you so much for this opportunity to walk the labyrinth in this sacred location. I felt connected with the ancients, the mediaevals who built this Cathedral, believers and seekers throughout the ages. In God's time we were together today.

The stones were an addition that was a new experience for me. I started thinking of the cloudiness of sin, and the clarity I seek as I held one cloudy, rough stone and one smooth and clear. By the time I reached the centre there was no duality as God loves me wherever I am, and perhaps I'm closer to God in the cloudiness than in the clarity (the clarity that often has pride in it). This was very moving. Thank you again.

First I didn't feel quite safe in the open air. When I sat at the well and close my eyes, I feel the wind, like I felt when I was sitting on a mountaintop after a long climb. It was good.

Having watched this labyrinth being made it was good to walk it in peace and quiet and to take time for me and God – it was special.

Thank you for the labyrinth. "Jesus is the Resurrection and the Life. his is my strength. Give me life in you, Lord."

And then....there is love.

Misaolna an 'Amohiamanitra noho ny fisian'ity toerono ity izay ahafohana mivavoka sy mahafantatia izy blebe koba.

An experience of letting go of fear and vulnerability and letting God. God with me - Love.

So peaceful, with only the sounding of the bell, dropping of stones into the well and birds singing. God truly was here watching over us.

Dank Herr, fur du sielle auf deiu lues. Eumal dialue id,diu Widdrog midi zu fiuda, aler po ist, Die ust das liel Daule fur alle iniea, dezirole fur das fluck, ais Der zu eileu,dauk fur ols kesdi Wasou, fier du Eiguiolez daule fur diu Auftag aine Du legledest - Wasser su den lieis oben su hiuper lekudifis passu.

The coolness of the morning and the sun breaking through the cloud were the presence of God in special ways as more and more people joined the pilgrimage. How holy is the journey when it is in the company of others who also seek to know God.

Stirred up many emotions, all kinds of feelings, questions, challenges, hope, encouragement, doubt. A feeling of the enormity of God's love for me, an awareness of safety of walking with Jesus. Need to return to find something, not sure what. A very special experience.

I walked my own life, from the beginning to after my own death. I feel that the experience makes me stronger and to walk the same path, but "later" in life it hurts- but I am not that lonely. After my death I was not alone, I had someone on both sides of me. I could also carry other burdens for a while - but I could give them back to Jesus, and it was alright. I will carry these memories in my heart.

Der demkst, du bist so weil weg, aber gabt schaus immer nach dir, er ist nci'hir als du denkst feebler gebargen und giliebs.

Thank you Katie and the builders. I seemed to walk my vocation. My delight was in watching others slowing down , quickening and walking with deep affection.

Danke für die Hinführung zu einer lisefreien fofalruns. Gott rojll mies mid seinem kahesein besdenken.

As I kept walking the labyrinth I had concentration of mind and I felt very calm. It was a wonderful experience.

Walking the labyrinth gives great assurance of God's timeless guidance and care and God's love for all the world. What an amazing place to have this experience.

May each one of us who has walked, prayed the labyrinth journey here, and each one who happened upon it whilst visiting the Cathedral and stopped to read the posted words about our presence, expand the fervent praying for God's intended calm centre and best will on earth!!

Thank you for taking the time to create this wonderful labyrinth in such a beautiful and historical setting. It provided a much needed time and space for reflection in the midst of our busy Assembly. May the peace of God continue to dwell with you.

Es ist wunderbar diesen Ort der Stille zu erfahren labyrinth- uraltes Symbol, das eins mifnimujnt zum Geheunnis der Mitte- nhier fuhlbar. Danke deuen, die eins für die Konfercuz diakonia diese erfahrungen ermojlischen.

This is a place of peace, of drawing close to God. Thank you, Jesus for loving us.

As I paused and looked up, the wear and tear on the stones of the Cathedral fabric spoke to me of the areas of renewal needed and also spoke of the way in which God takes out damaged and worn lives and repairs them as needed and continued to use them for his witness, service and glory.

I was amazed that the World DIAKONIA took the time and patience to create such a large meditation field, the battlefield for our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. There were so many things I meditated on as I walked. The birds sang but most of all I remembered the woman who had no name standing at the well.

Thank you for this wonderful opportunity. Many thoughts came to mind as I walked the path. Wonderful sense of God's presence – a source of strength and power. Prayer abound.

It is beautiful to walk the labyrinth with the sounds of the organ, of worship in the background compared to the quiet of the morning.

Praise him upon "the loud sounding cymbals" organ. I had done this, and needed the quietness and stillness to slowly walk with him; and take all that I am and all that I have to him, especially people. Thank you.

A moving experience. God spoke to me in new ways and reminded me of old promises. He is with me through all the turns of life. Thank you.

Ich wate genie un den Kreis eine den Bruker en gekoummen. Die Begrenzung- Saud-zeinen Bruinen reinpte ich ubersilureiten.

Ein klar begrenites Labyrinth, sehr angenehm barfuss zu gehen es vermillelte Ruhe u. Besinnung. Ein Zentrum des Energief plusses, allerdings mit machtigen Glodungelaute Kaum zu er tragen
Trotzdem, es lohnt sich mehrmals zugerem.

A journey that only worked when I was obedient to the pathway! A journey that lead me to give thanks for all that was past and reminds me to trust for all that is still to come. And a journey of thanksgiving for the way I am held in the love of God every step of the way.

You only have us, filled with your blessings to us. Use us, take us, help us to bring the peace to this beautiful world, your creation.

Vater, du bist die Mitte- hab dank das ils imine wieder zu dir zerundfinden Kaun- Herr danke das I L aus Deine Fulle employen, lebur eund weiterjeben dorf.

Vater, Du gibst mir Tag fer Tag neue Moglichkeiten noch Deinem Wort mit Dir und fur Dich zu leben.

It is a good memorial to God's people.

Ich Danke der mein Gott, dass du so gutig Cist. Du lassl mich nicht aus den Augen, ich bin in deinen Gedamsem.

God is good. God is so good. Continue to bless this place and these people O Lord. Show us your will, grace and mercy. Thank you, thank you, thank you.

Danke leiber Gott, dass einen Hand mich sageich leisel nich ne mich iss deinem schust weiss. Stihe mir anis weiserburi cis.

It is a good way for worship, also a good memorial to God.

A pilgrimage of patience and peace.

In the quietness, stillness, O Lord you spoke.

A journey just begun.

Just when you think you're lost, you find the centre - just a closer walk.....

A good way of meditations.

Danke Herr Jesus Christus, Du seist ko lepeguet auch hie u biente.....

Denre!

Wonderful peace.

Thank you my first experience of a labyrinth - wish I had discovered this earlier.

For this moment we have shared the path on life's journey

Danke fur dieTaufe- und einmal fur Aukommien

Frope ll eji fur di Eibpang

At first I felt a quiet resentment at the number of people quietly walking the labyrinth - I wanted to be alone. Then in the quiet of eventide I felt a wonderful ebb and flow of movement.

I am very grateful for the opportunity of being here today.

Thank you Lord for this day reminding me of the sacredness of walking. Help me to be attentive to you, and to others as I walk out of this place on my continuing journey.

Genke, O Gott!!

I give God honour and praise for he alone is worthy. This is my first time walking a real labyrinth and it is marvellous.

Connection.

I walked giving thanks - for my life, the special people in it, this visit and time at the Assembly. I prayed the Lord's Prayer and that his will be done – in this World and in our lives.

Lasst eins dum leben traunen, went wire s nicht alien zu leben haben, souden Gott es unt mis lebt.!

Thank you for all your love O Lord, walking to the well it was a hard journey. While I was at the well you gave the water, living water, quenching water and promise to be there always!

Thank you for building the labyrinth.

This labyrinth has meant so much for me on my spiritual journey. For this time in Durham, thank you.

This labyrinth has been my source of peace and stillness to take of the living water. Thank you.