

Lifting our souls, Trusting in God

LENT AND EASTER COURSE FROM THE
DIOCESE OF ABERDEEN AND ORKNEY

Psalm 32

I will confess my transgressions to the Lord.

In the Christian tradition, Psalm 32 is counted among the seven “penitential psalms” (6, 32, 38, 51, 102, 130, and 143), however, it is a call to confession - a penitential primer of sorts.

The Psalm begins with happiness, and the happiness that comes with being forgiven. The Psalm suggests that we need to contemplate and acknowledge our sins before coming to confess them. This resonates with the Lenten penitential season where we’re asked to examine ourselves. However, verse 8 reminds us we’re not alone - God is there to teach and instruct us. The importance of trusting the Lord in verse 10.

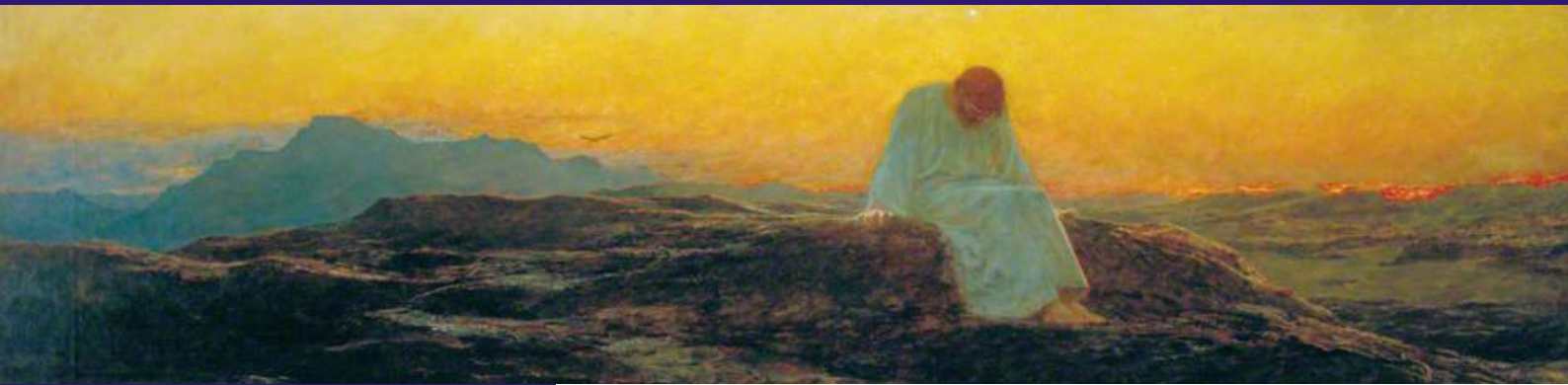
Labyrinths are a form of contemplation act and prayer.



Moyers, Mike. Lenten Labyrinth, from Art in the Christian Tradition, a project of the Vanderbilt Divinity Library, Nashville, TN. [retrieved March 19, 2025]. Original source: Mike Moyers, <https://www.mikemoyersfineart.com/>.

COLLECT

Almighty God, whose Son fasted forty days in the wilderness, and was tempted as we are but did not sin, give us grace to discipline ourselves in submission to your Spirit, that as you know our weakness so we may know your power to save; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.
Amen.



Briton Riviere (1840-1920) *Temptation in the Wilderness* (1898) Guildhall Gallery London

“Lenten fasts make me feel better, stronger, and more active than ever.” – Saint Catherine of Genoa

“Let the mouth fast from foul words and unjust criticism, for what good is it if we abstain from birds and fishes but bite and devour our brothers?” – Saint John Chrysostom

“Lent is a time of grace, a time for conversion, a time to come home to God.” – Saint Maximilian Kolbe

A Contemplative Action to Try

A labyrinth is a path to walk which twists and turns but unlike a maze you can not get lost and the single path always leads to the centre and then out again. A labyrinth is simply a place to walk and pray. It is intended to give you freedom to walk (yourself or your finger) around whilst focusing your mind on God and not having to worry about getting lost on the way. You can put one foot in front of the other without having to think about where you are going.

Labyrinths can be mown in grass, painted on the floor, marked in gravel or you can trace a labyrinth with your finger. A finger labyrinth can be found on the next page, you may wish to print it out to try walking the labyrinth.

One way to look at walking a labyrinth is three stages: releasing, receiving and returning. As you begin your journey towards the centre of the labyrinth you release your concerns and thoughts, when you reach the centre you remain a while, meditating and then you return on the same path back.

“A labyrinth is not a maze. A maze is a symbol of life without meaning, it is an agent of confusion, deception with dead ends that lead you nowhere. But a labyrinth is a symbol of a life of deeper meaning, an on-going sacred journey leading us inward, outward and to greater wholeness.” –Carrie Newcomer

To Listen:

God Bless Every Step by Ruth Cunningham

O For a Closer Walk wiht God by William Cowper

A playlist of music suggestions for the course can be found at <https://open.spotify.com/playlist/3pJcG5xA1xzhL2Aolau0Q4?si=582cd1f921ae4fb1>



Your labyrinth prayer time can be as open or as focused as you would like it to be. You might want to simply enter the labyrinth and walk with the Lord... or, before you enter the labyrinth, you might like to take time to:

- Read and reflect on a line or two from Scripture
- Hold a memory or a photo of a loved one you wish to pray for
- Consider an experience in your life where you are seeking healing or forgiveness
- Think about a key celebration in your life and walk a prayer of thanksgiving in the labyrinth.