

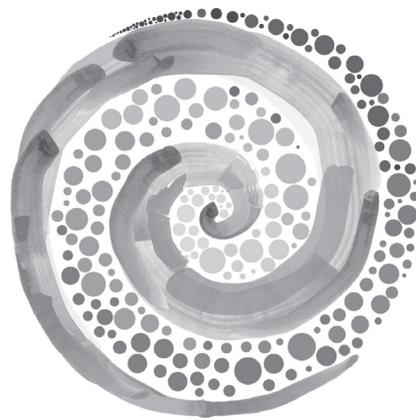
About this Journal

This journal contains reflections and prompts for the Lenten season.

The pages are designed for you to write or illustrate your responses on. There are no wrong ways to use this journal. It is simply a tool for you to reflect and record your responses and reactions.

The spiritual practices in this journal were contributed by Debra Weir, Associate Director, Spirituality and Lifelong Learning, at Columbia's Center for Lifelong Learning. If you are interested in learning more about the Spirituality Program, please visit www.CTSnet.edu/spirituality-program.

Deep peace to you in this Lenten season.



The Spirituality Program

Mortality, the Ultimate Surrender

On Ash Wednesday, the beginning of Lent, we consider our own mortality. It is from ashes that we came and to ashes we return. Consider death as the ultimate surrender of our lives into the hands of God.

Quiet your self.

Open your heart to the spirit of God.

Release your will to God's and invite God to show you something God desires you to know or to consider.

In an attitude of prayer and curiosity pick up a piece of charcoal, turn it over in your fingers or hand.

Take your time. Notice how it looks . . . how it feels . . . how it smells . . .

Remember that this was once living willow tree.

Give thanks for the tree it once was . . . life that it lived . . . the shade it provided . . . and the beauty it gave to the world.

Remember your own life and that one day you, too will die.

Give thanks for your life and all that it holds and represents.

With both hands, draw some circles in the air, make some dots, make some zigzags, make crazy patterns all around you.

Now begin to draw with no particular plan and without judging . . . Let the picture evolve slowly and gradually . . . Notice when it is finished and allow yourself to stop and rest.

In an attitude of love and prayer, look at your picture.

Turn it around and look at it from every direction.

Is there one direction that seems "right?"

Gaze at your picture.

What do you see?

What does it mean to you?

Does this say something to you?

Rest.

Mortality 2

In the dark of winter and Lent it is easy to “get stuck” in gloom and even to focus too much on our own fallen-ness and death.

While it is good to recognize this and be truthful that we are not perfect and that we will die one day, we as Christians always reflect in light of the Gospel, in faith and hope for what is not yet seen.

Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see.
Hebrews 11:1 (NIV)

Do not dwell on what is past for I am about to do a new thing. It is coming now. Do you not see it? Isaiah 43:18-19 (paraphrase)

Observe these things from nature. What do you see?

Reflect.

What does this say or mean to you?

You may write,

draw,

or simply reflect and pray in silence.

Repentance

Lent is historically a season of repentance. We often think of repentance as full of judgment and harsh treatment, but the word repentance means to turn around. We turn from our old ways of being and doing and turn toward new ways of being and living in the world.

The Labyrinth is an ancient walking prayer, used in earlier times as a form of pilgrimage when one was unable to embark on a long pilgrimage journey. There are three movements of the walk.

The inward journey is purgation or letting go of our own willfulness or anything which may hold us back or keep us far away from God. There is intent to open one's heart and spirit toward God. The Center is illumination or a time of prayer with open readiness to hear or receive a new word or gift from God, to indeed be changed. The outward journey is that of returning to the world taking what you have received with you willingly sharing this gift with others and the world.

These three movements are a wonderful physical prayer of repentance. On the way inward we drop our willfulness and pray to be open to God's will, we rest and receive in the center. Then we **TURN AROUND AND TURN OUTWARD**, intending with God's help to live this new word we have received.

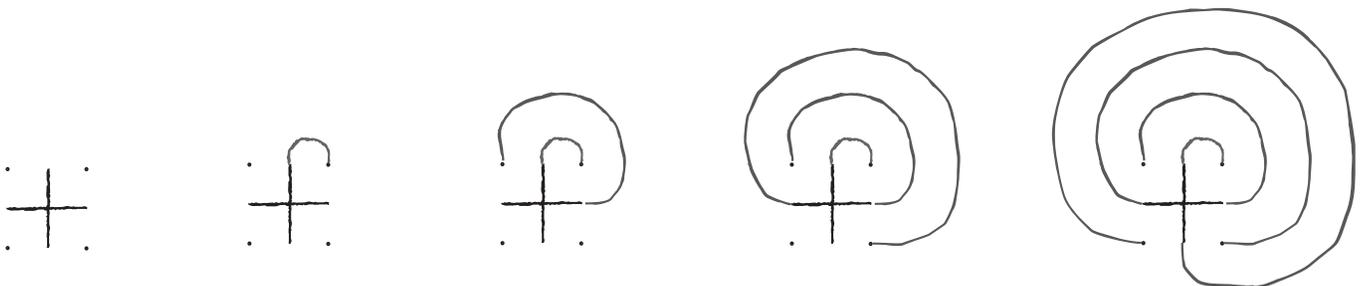
We, in fact turn from self-focus to an outward focus toward others and the world.

Walk the outdoor Labyrinth with these three movements of repentance in mind.

Or let your finger find its way through the finger labyrinth.

Or draw your own following the steps below.

Reflect on your experience



Temptation

Temptation is another Lenten theme.

The text often used is the story of Jesus after his baptism being tempted in the wilderness.

Mark 1:12-13

Matthew 4:1-11

Luke 4:1-13

If you are not familiar with this story read it.

What do you notice about the story?

What stands out to you?

Write this down

Reflect further through writing or art

What does this say to you?

Is there an invitation comes from this meditation?

Temptation Reflection 2

Write an acrostic poem as a way to reflect on Temptation.

Write a word or phrase for each letter of the word TEMPTATION.

T

E

M

P

T

A

T

I

O

N

Use this page or the gridded page.

Add color or artwork if you like.

