

Listening:

Following the Path
of Sacred Conversation

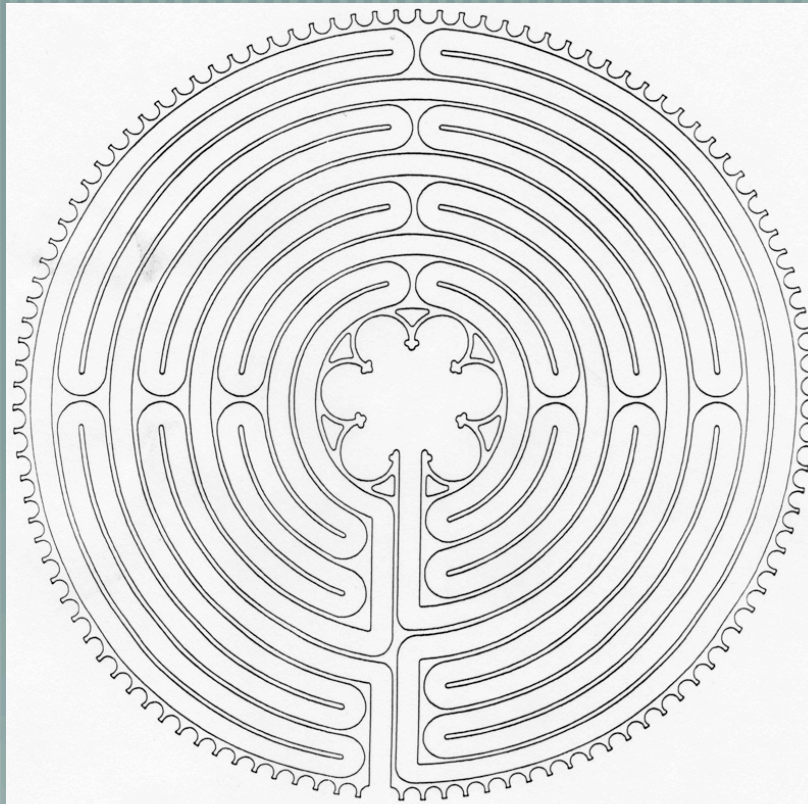


Introduction to CPE MIT January 2009

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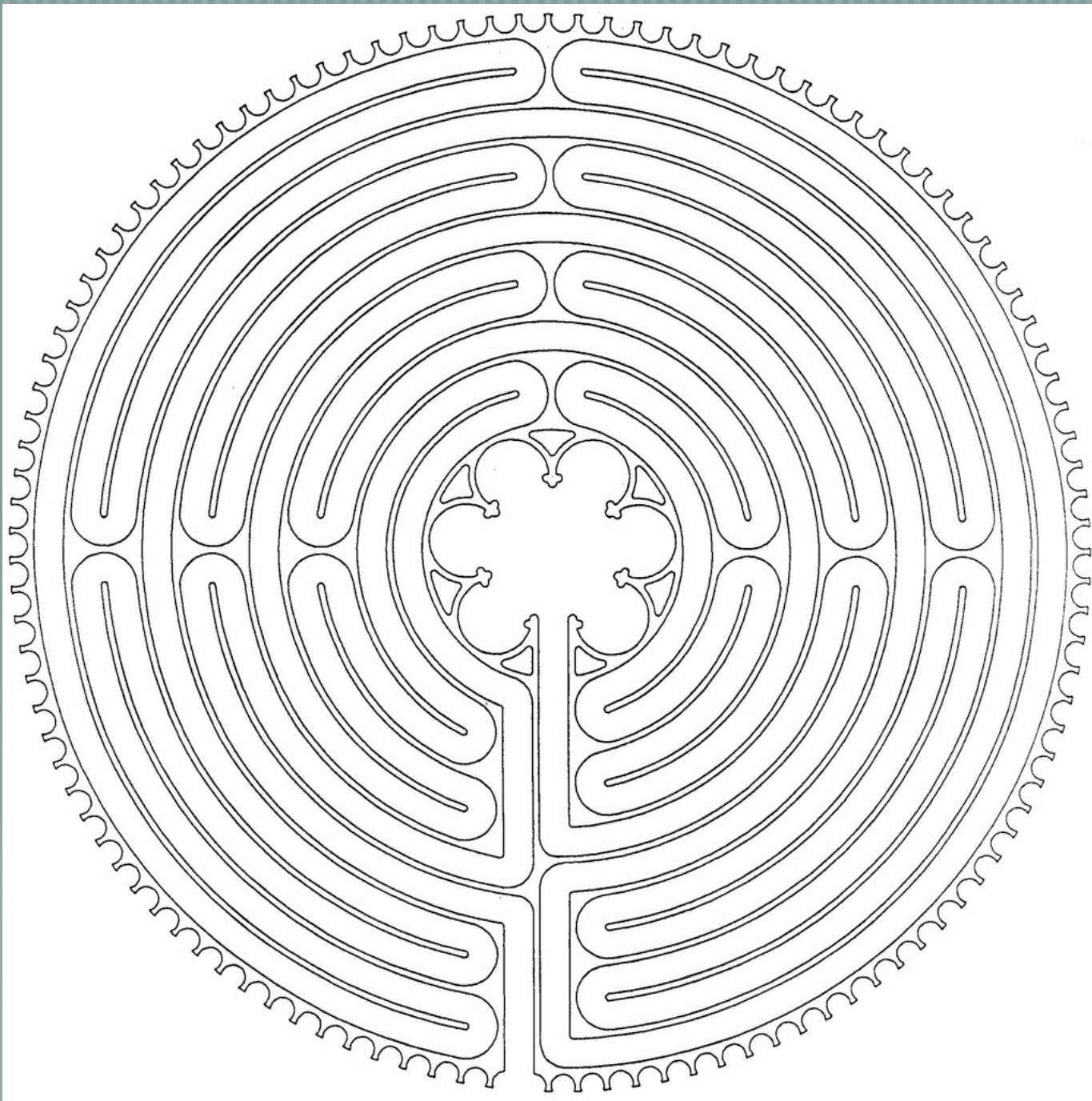




Experiencing the Labyrinth Through Your Hand or Eyes

***Use your finger, a pen, or your eyes
to follow the pathway
to the center
and back out.***

Praying the Labyrinth on Paper: An Introductory Experience
Pray the question, "God, how can I listen better?"



What did you discover about listening better?

Listening: A Labyrinthine Journey of Pastoral Care





Preparing at the Threshold: Getting Ready to Listen
(How do you prepare yourself to care by listening?)



Never forgot that listening is a very sacred activity.



Beginning on the Path

Entering the Conversation: Bringing All of Yourself to the Encounter



The First Surprise: Follow Where You Are Invited To Go
(No conversation will unfold in the way you expect!)



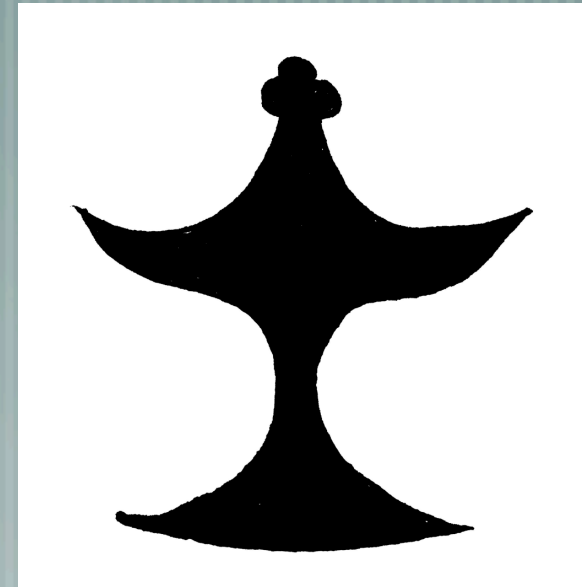
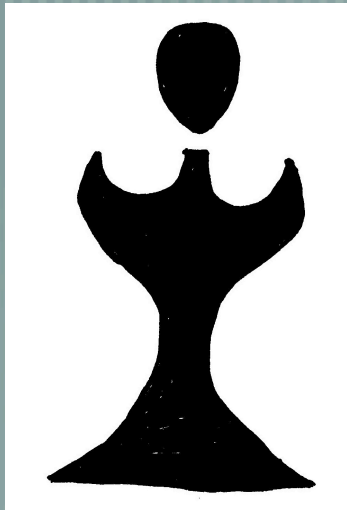
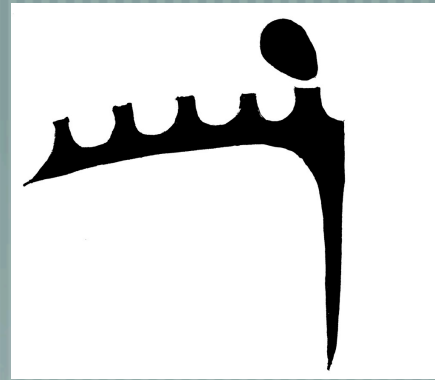
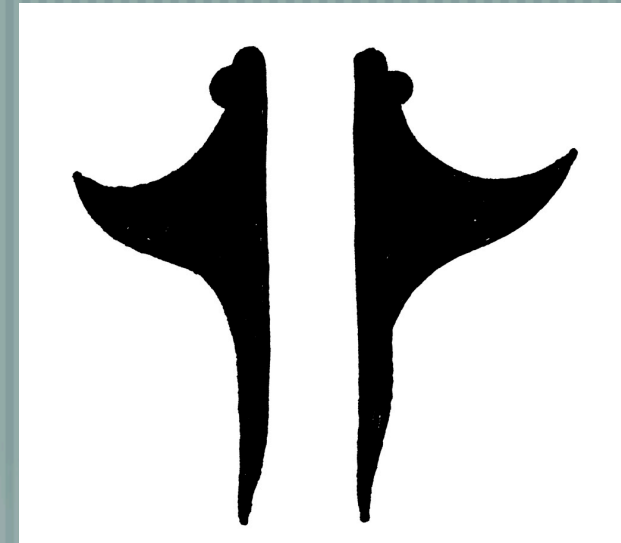
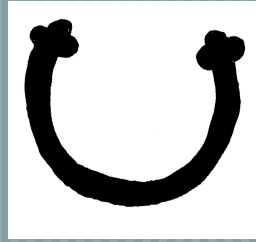
No Time to Catch Your Breath: Stay Alert and Go With the Flow!
(Just when you think you know where the conversation is going,
you will be surprised again!
Let go of how you want this conversation to unfold.)



Don't let yourself be distracted
by whatever else is going on around you. Keep the focus
so that the person you are listening to can focus.



Listen for the main story or question that is being asked.
Listen “below the surface.”



As you get more experienced, look/listen beyond what is being said:
you can always broaden your understanding of the situation.



Listen for/perceive the essence of the story that is being shared.
In your own mind simplify.



Make the most of being close to the center.
When it is helpful, point out where you are.
(Example: What you just said seems really important...")



Stay sensitive to the rhythm of the encounter.
Don't resist the way in which the conversation
may seem to "be going nowhere."
Stay present to wherever you are led as you listen.



Trust that you are on the way to the center,
especially when you wonder, "Are we lost?"
It may take longer than you would like, but; you will get there!



When you arrive “at the heart” (center) of the conversation,
rest in the experience.

Don't hurry away.

Sharing meaningful silences can be very beneficial.



During your time in the center,
when it is appropriate, offer to pray
with and/or on behalf of the person you are with.



Your listening role for one encounter might conclude “in the center.”
From the center, the person you have been with will take the path
back into the “rest of the story” of his/her life without you.



Your way out from the center
will include your own prayerful reflection about what you have heard
and the effectiveness of what you have said and done.



Concluding Comments

While conversations may seem unexpected, random, or uncomfortable, there is a larger pattern that you can trust as you listen actively.

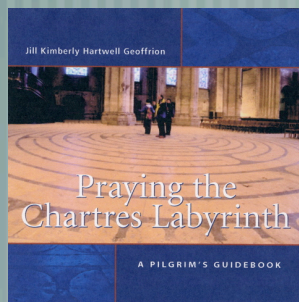
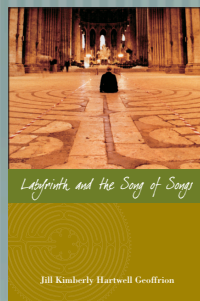
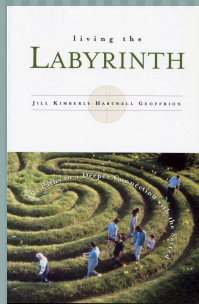
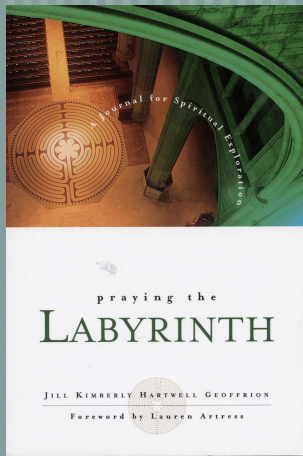


Although the conversation has an end,
as God brings a person to your mind/heart, pray for him/her.

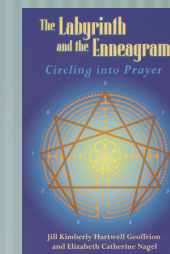
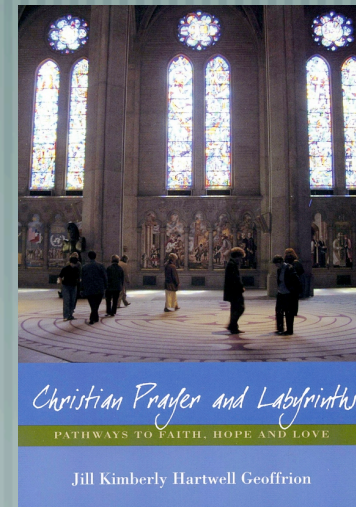
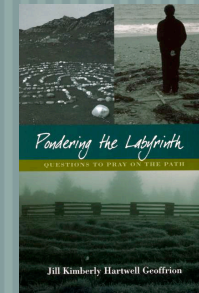


What questions do you want to ask?

“May my teaching fall like rain, and my words, distill as the dew,
like showers on new grass, like abundant rain on tender plants.” Deuteronomy 32:2



The labyrinth of Chartres Cathedral, France



Feel free to contact Jill

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