

# Walking the Labyrinth as the Beloved in John's Gospel

**Individuals, retreat leaders and labyrinth facilitators will find this a useful and flexible resource adaptable for personal reflection as well as for both silent and themed retreats. This book is for beginners as well as the seasoned labyrinth walker.**

## What is this book about?

The affirmation of each person's belovedness to God is the unifying theme of the walks in this book. To this end, John's gospel has been used for all the scripture passages, because central to John's gospel is the concept of belovedness. This book is not intended to be an in depth commentary, but rather an opening up of some of the wonderful interplays of images, words, symbols and metaphors that John's gospel offers us. It is hoped that some of the richness of John's message is then made more accessible for the purposes of prayer and a deep encounter with Jesus.

Each chapter begins with a personal story illustrating a transformative experience based on a theme from John's gospel. Care has been taken to preserve the anonymity of people other than myself who are behind the stories. Each walk is preceded by an exploration of the passage from John as it relates to ways to pray through the labyrinth. The last walk suggested under each theme is a breath prayer walk, some of which are from scripture, early church fathers or mothers or later mystics, such as Theresa of Avila or Ignatius of Loyola, or modern mystics such as Thomas Merton. This seems fitting given that some of the methods of prayer suggested and the use of the labyrinth come from as far back as the early Christians.



## Read endorsements of the book:

***The author, a gifted and highly experienced spiritual director and labyrinth facilitator, gently guides us to experience the healing essence of the Gospel of John with all our senses. Walking the labyrinth physically or in our imagination aided by rich photography, moving personal vignettes, poetry and prayers opens us to a keen spiritual awareness. This integrated spirituality calms and encourages, anchors and frees, heals and fortifies as we “walk our story with John’s story.” The book is truly a full-orbed spiritual delight.*** (Dr. Vernon E. Jantzi, Professor Emeritus of Sociology and past Director of the Center for Justice and Peacebuilding at Eastern Mennonite University in USA, currently involved in the Center’s program on Strategies for Trauma Awareness and Resilience)

***A guide for the senses and the soul, this book offers a unique and inviting approach to prayer. As a wise and discerning spiritual director, author Sally Longley accompanies us on a journey to the center of a labyrinth, gently pointing the way and challenging us to open ourselves to a healing encounter with Jesus. In that liminal space, we are transformed. A rich resource for pastors, spiritual directors, retreat leaders, and anyone seeking a more vibrant life with God, this book, with its clarity and depth and captivating photographs, will become a treasured companion.*** (Rev. Dr. Marlene Kropf is Professor Emerita of Spiritual Formation and Worship at Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary Elkhart, Indiana, USA).

**This book is a walking companion for those who desire to pray the labyrinth, a companion who knows the Gospel of John intimately. Sally shares with us stories that reveal, break open, illuminate and entice our feet to risk the journey of the labyrinth into grace and joy, to find the centre that holds all desires before God. This is what makes this book a friend worth keeping for life.** (Michael P Hansen SJ, Spiritual Director, author and labyrinth retreat guide.)

***What is at the centre of my life? And how might I find this? Sally Longley very gently through life stories, the gospel of John and prayerful reflection helps you explore these life-giving questions in the timeless space and rhythm of the labyrinth.*** (Martin Scroope, Director Canisius Centre of Ignatian Spirituality, Pymble, NSW, Australia)



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Each book contains a removable textured finger labyrinth which enables anyone to have access to a labyrinth – those in hospital, sight impaired, or not able to walk a landscaped labyrinth for any reason.



**It is hoped this book will enable many people to benefit from praying with a labyrinth.**

