

## St James News: Thought for the day - Saturday 13th June 2020

### Amazing - Rev John Marshall

What do Chartres Cathedral, Saffron Walden, Southwark diocese Youth resources, and Blackgang Chine have in common?

They all have labyrinths or mazes, which can be used for prayer, or exercise and prayer, or fun.

They are ancient; and you may remember the story of Theseus and the Minotaur, and how he escaped from the labyrinth with a ball of thread.

Sue Wallace writes in *Multisensory Prayer* (Scripture Union)

“Labyrinths were a feature of many medieval cathedrals, most famously at Chartres cathedral in France. They were probably adopted by the Church due to their cross like symmetry, which reminded people of the journey Christ made to be crucified.

People might walk the labyrinth on the eve of their baptism, confirmation or before Easter as an aid to contemplative prayer and reflection.”

I have walked the labyrinth at Chartres, and also at Saffron Walden, it is on the common by the river, and you can walk for a mile in the turf labyrinth. We have enjoyed watching the efforts of youngsters to escape the maze at Blackgang Chine on the Isle of Wight, there is a useful viewing platform.

I also used to construct spiritual mazes in RE at The Michael Tippett School, when we would explore multi-faith themes. (Ofsted quite liked it.) I used chairs and ribbons. But in Southwark diocese we can borrow a labyrinth rolled up and ready to go, to explore and pray.

In walking, we can walk with Christ and be amazed at the love of God.

Where have you found mazes or labyrinths? Did they help you to pray?

Bible Reading: On the road to Emmaus: Luke 24:13-35