I chose to build this labyrinth as my Eagle Scout project for several reasons. First, I wanted to give something back to our parish for helping me evolve into the person I am today. I received an excellent education here at the school which provided me with strong moral values and an understanding of God.

The Church has been a great source of inspiration to me and has allowed me to serve in so many ways from an altar server, to a Knight of the Holy Temple, and lastly an Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion. Because I am grateful for all the opportunities SMI has provided to develop my faith, I wanted to give this back to the Church.

The labyrinth is a place for one to meditate and clear their minds as well as the place where you can find solitude and peace. We are also busy in this world today that we often miss out on putting God first in our lives. As we fall away from God, we, in a sense, hide behind brick walls separating ourselves from Him. We need to find our way back to Him. To me, the bricks of this labyrinth symbolize those brick walls that may impact our lives and cause us to get off track. However, we must realize that there is a path back to God and we need to take the first step to get there.

The path back is not straight. There will be twists and turns and at times you may feel like you are going backwards. But we must remember that the path is there and if you follow it, you will reach the center point of your journey. To me, that point is centering my life around God.

Reaching the center is a joyful experience and as I exit, I know that I can walk the path back to Him whenever I fall behind the bricks again and knowing that as I exit the path, I can return and bring others with me on the path next time.

The building of the labyrinth would not have happened without the support of our Priests, my family, my friends, my fellow parishioners, and my Scout Troop. It took the manpower of so many Scouts and Leaders to help take 12 tons of crushed stone and just under 1000 bricks to make this project a reality. I thank all those who helped build this for our parish with their manpower, donations, and especially prayers.

I hope that you choose to walk around the bricks in your life and follow his path to find Him in everything you do. Thank you for allowing me to share this project with you.

In peace,

Niko Lighthiser

SMI Parishioner and Troop 19 Eagle Scout