

MAYAN CROSS

THE MAYAN CROSS explained

The adjective Mayan is sometimes used to refer to the indigenous peoples of south-eastern Mexico and parts of Central America, including their culture, language, and history.



The Mayan Cross typically has four arms of the same length. The jeweled Cross pictured above is a good example of the syncretism between the Mayan and Catholic traditions.

The Mayan Cross is the human embodiment of the Tree of Life, also known as the World Tree. The four points of the cross are the same as the four directions. The Maya refer to these points as the Heart of the Heaven (head), Heart of the Earth (feet), Heart of the Wind (right arm) and Heart of the Water (left arm). The human heart is in the centre.

Mayan Cross Prayer

Reconciliation with God, oneself, with others and the Cosmos

All gather standing or sitting in a circle. At the four points of the compass and in the centre candles are placed:

East – red

West – purple

North – white

South – yellow

Centre – Blue and green

1. All turn towards the east, the place of sunrise, the origin of life (red candle)

Invitation:

We light the red candle and turn towards the place where the sun rises; let us listen to the reflection and then raise the candle and our hands in prayer towards God, the origin of life.

Reflection:

From the East comes the dawn, the day, hope, strength.... We are made sun, light, heat, wisdom and growth.

Let us pray

All: Sun of our lives, original energy, you have brought forth within us the uncontainable desire to be in communion with the life that keeps on giving and does not end. Give us the courage to defend life wherever it is threatened, even at the cost of our own life. (Make some kind of reverential gesture.)

2. All turn towards the west, a sign of reconciliation with human history and the cosmos (purple candle)

Invitation

We light the purple candle and turn towards the place where the sun sets; let us be aware of the destructive steps that we have taken towards every form of life, and the times when we have remained indifferent when it was destroyed. Then let us listen to the reflection and then raise the candle and our hands in prayer.

Reflection:

The west reminds us of the sunset, the onset of night, silence, intimacy, rest, and sleep as an anticipation of death. The day draws to a close, an era ends, and night comes creeping in. It is the time to think, to evaluate, and to reflect on our actions.

Let us pray

All: Fount of life, author ever new of the centuries, we thank you for the time that you give us to live, work and rest, time to spend and renew our energy. Help us to give freely that which we have received free of charge. Give us the opportunity to overcome the evil that we have caused, and to recreate our life and restore our energy. May all creatures return to your friendship. (Make some kind of reverential gesture.)

3. All turn towards the north, asking pardon for those who kill and compromise life (white candle)

Invitation

We light the white candle, listening to the reflection while we turn towards the north, lifting the candle and our hands in prayer.

Reflection:

The cold winds coming from the north cause the freezes that destroy the harvest. From the north came the oppressive currents that enslaved us. We do not accept this injustice. But we are ready to forgive, to work together to restore wounded humanity and creation, to re-establish justice and right relationships. We will continue in our pledge to the life, freedom and dignity of all peoples.

Let us pray

All: Enigma of the centuries, mystery of history that keeps silent in the face of the suffering of the innocent and denies humanity's historic responsibility for all its crimes, give light to our conscience, voice to denunciation, energy to struggle, the strength of union, the opportunity to contemplate justice and peace embracing eternally. (Make some kind of reverential gesture.)

4. All turn towards the south, which today seems to offer a future of solidarity and justice (yellow candle)

Invitation

We light the yellow candle, listening to the reflection while we turn towards the south, lifting the candle and our hands in prayer.

Reflection:

The south is the land of abundance, of great plains and mountains, a sign of abundance and prosperity; the wind from the south brings the fragrance of hope for the poor, strength for the suffering, the union of the little ones, the utopia of the rebels, the dream of the poets and the message of the prophets.

Let us pray

All: Utopia of all peoples. universal solidarity, you who shake the cowardly, wake the resigned and lift up the poor, help us to create with you a world without masters—neither lords, nor servants, nor oppressed—a world of freedom and dignity of new women and new men; help us to sow the seed of a future with justice and dignity for all. (Make some kind of reverential gesture.)

5. All turn towards the centre, symbol of fidelity to unity and universal fraternity (blue and green candles)
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We light the green and blue candles, listening to the reflection while we turn towards the centre, lifting the candles and our hands in prayer.

Reflection

In the cosmic centre is life, the life of man and woman, of our ancestors and those who are now living. The green represents the abundance of the harvest, while the blue represents the cosmos and the plenitude of life. Looking inside the circle, we become more aware of ourselves; looking at the others, we are enflamed with love and solidarity because now we know that we are not alone, we are many, and we are journeying together.

Let us pray

All: You who are the before and after, the most “there” and the most “here” of death, draw us together in universal fraternity so that we feel we are in the same boat with all creatures, joined in a common adventure, living in a common house, one immense family of the new world.

6. Sign of Peace

A sign of peace is exchanged, according to the culture – a reverential bow, flower petals, a sign on the brow, an embrace.