



HOLY ASSUMPTION MONASTERY

Guidelines and Frequently Asked Questions for Pilgrims (Day or Overnight)

Revision 2, Dated 11/5/2025

Purpose

The purpose of *Guidelines and FAQs for Pilgrims*, be it day visits or overnight stays, is to help the pilgrim transition from worldly cares to a monastic lifestyle, and to maintain peace and tranquility suitable for prayer, reflection, and/or meditation. Love one another for the salvation of all.

Length of Stay

In Orthodox tradition, pilgrims are received at a monastery for retreats of up to three (3) days. Those who stay for a longer period assist with various monastery chores and/or make a financial contribution to the community, as determined by the Abbess.

Monastery Decorum, in general

- Mondays are observed as Desert Day, a time set aside for the sisters' personal retreat. On this day:
 - The monastery grounds are kept quiet
 - Interaction with the nuns is minimal until after Vespers
 - No meals are scheduled
- Behavior and language befitting a monastery
- Speak quietly while on monastery property, especially indoors
- Work assignments, as blessed by the Abbess
- Observe silence between 9:00 p.m. until after breakfast the next day; during this silent time, speak when necessary
- No alcohol, drugs, or smoking

Frequently Asked Questions

Prayer services, liturgies, and Holy Communion?

The Abbess blesses and encourages pilgrims to attend services with the nuns. All services are open to the public. For a schedule of services, please visit our website at <https://holyassumptionmonastery.com/schedule>

Holy Communion is reserved for Orthodox Christians who are in good standing with the Church and have properly prepared through fasting, prayer, and a recent confession. If you have questions about your preparation, please speak with your parish priest or the Abbess.

Meals with the nuns?

Scheduled meals: The Abbess blesses and encourages pilgrims to join the nuns for meals, which are typically served immediately following Matins, Sixth Hour, and Liturgy. Meals are simple, nutritious, and in keeping with



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the monastery's regular fasting schedule. Pilgrims with food allergies or special dietary needs are kindly asked to notify the monastery when making their reservation. Please note that meal times are subject to change.

Exceptions to the meal schedule: There are NO scheduled meals with the nuns in the evenings, on Mondays, or on Saturday mornings. Food will be available (see your Guest Mistress).

Hospitality: The Abbess blesses pilgrims to enjoy hospitality (coffee, tea, water, nuts, fruit), which is available throughout the day in our Trapeza (main dining room).

Eat/drink in room?

As a general rule, please confine eating to the Trapeza in community or outdoor eating areas. Non-alcoholic beverages are permitted in guest rooms.

Attire?

Although our monastery does not have a strict dress code, we request modest clothing and shoes or sandals. Generally, wearing layered clothing is recommended to easily adjust for the hot days and cool evenings.

Fragrance?

Our monastery is a fragrance-free facility.

Several of the sisters have extreme chemical sensitivities. We therefore request that pilgrims not use perfume or scented products.

Head coverings?

For women, wearing a head covering is optional while on monastery property, including the church; extra head coverings are available in our church for the convenience of pilgrims.

For men, if wearing a hat, please remove it prior to entering our church.

Children?

For liability reasons, children must remain under parental/adult supervision at all times.

Tours?

The Abbess blesses pilgrims to go on guided tours around the monastery, if they wish. Guided tours are available on-demand based on availability of the nuns or by appointment. Please see the Guest Mistress for details.



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Pictures?

The Abbess blesses pilgrims to take pictures of the monastery church, including inside, and monastery grounds and animals. Before taking pictures of any nuns or other pilgrims, please ask their permission.

Pets?

We are unable to accommodate pets to stay overnight.

For pilgrims with allergies to animals, please inform the monastery when making your reservation. The monastery zoo is home to cats, birds, and koi, all of which reside on the property and are cared for by the nuns.

Library?

The Abbess blesses pilgrims to use our library. Please see the Guest Mistress for details.

Parking?

Park in the neighborhood (first come, first served), unless instructed otherwise by the Guest Mistress. Avoid parking in construction zones; otherwise, you risk getting a parking ticket.

Parking is prohibited within 20' of a stop sign, whether or not the curb is painted.

Vehicles may be considered "abandoned" after 72 hours in the same spot leading toward towing.

Parking downtown Calistoga is limited to 3 hours in the same spot.

Wi-Fi?

Wi-Fi is available for pilgrims to use with the blessing of the Abbess. Please see the Guest Mistress for Wi-Fi network name and password.

What are the needs of the monastery?

Please see our online Wish List at <https://holyassumptionmonastery.com/visit>

Exceptions

Exceptions will be handled on a case-by-case basis, as blessed by the Abbess.