



Hermitage of the Holy Cross

VISITORS' GUIDE

We are happy to share our monastic life with visitors. This guide contains important information for all guests of the monastery, with answers to commonly asked questions.

Holy Cross Monastery
505 Holy Cross Road
Wayne, WV 25570-5403
Ph. 304-849-2072

Directions to the Monastery from I-64 near Huntington

Note: The directions below correspond to the numbered circles on the map on page seven of this guide.

1. Take exit #8, Hwy 152, and head south for 13.3 miles. You will pass through the town of Lavalette. After this, you will pass a shopping center on your left (with a Wendy's and a KFC, and a Wal-Mart farther back from the road), then a saw mill on your right.
2. Take the first left turn past the saw mill (crossing a bridge). This is Wilson Creek Rd. Go 4.1 miles on Wilson Creek Rd, keeping to the left at the first fork (follow the double yellow lines).
3. Turn right at Miller's Fork Road. There is a sign which reads "Holy Cross Monastery." Drive 1.5 miles on Millers Fork Rd.
4. Take the Left Fork of Millers Fork Rd. (at the fork you will see another sign for the monastery). Drive 2.2 miles.
5. Watch for a larger sign: "Holy Cross Monastery." Turn right at the gravel road. Drive 1/2 mile, passing over the large culvert, then bearing left and following the gravel road up a large hill (you will pass another large sign with information for visitors and a large wooden cross at the base of the hill).
6. Coming to the top of the hill, you will pass several buildings to your left before coming to a gravel parking lot and another large wooden cross. You may park in this lot.

Before your visit, we ask that you please:

- Contact us in advance to schedule your visit. (For more information on scheduling, please see page 6 of this guide.)
- Tell us your expected arrival and departure time. (In general, only visits of up to 2-3 days are permitted.)
- Let us know how many men, women, and children will be coming, so we can plan for meals. Children (under 18) must be accompanied by a parent.
- Reconfirm the day before your visit and call us during your trip if your arrival time changes.
- Read this guide to find the answers to common questions.

During your visit, we ask that you please:

- Refrain from entering private buildings or rooms. Areas which are open to visitors will be indicated to you on your arrival, and as necessary according to any work you may be given during your stay.
- Abide by the monastery dress code in all areas of the monastery.

MONASTERY DRESS CODE

Orthodox Christian clergy and monastics:

Cassock or ryassa. Subdeacons and readers need only wear their cassocks in church and at formal meals; major clergy and monastics should wear them in all public areas. (If you are a priest who would like to serve, please bring a sticharion. Deacons who wish to serve should bring a full set of vestments.)

Men:

Pants (no shorts), long-sleeved shirt (no T-shirts). Short sleeves are permissible for outdoor work.

Women:

A head covering (scarf) should be worn at all times both in church and on monastery grounds.

Long, **loose-fitting** dress or skirt (below the knees), with long sleeves. No makeup or perfume.

Please note: This dress code applies in *all* public areas of the monastery, including the common area of the Guest House and the surrounding grounds.

****All able-bodied visitors should also bring work clothes and work and/or hiking boots.****

TRAVEL TO THE MONASTERY

If you are driving to our monastery, be sure to print the directions on page one of this guide and the map on page seven. GPS navigation devices (Garmin, Magellan, TomTom, etc.) are not reliable in our area. *Do not use them!* You will get lost.

You must arrive by 9 PM, and no later! For the safety and good ordering of the monastery, *without any exception we close the gates to our monastery entrance road at 9 PM sharp.* The gates remain closed for the night until before the church services the next morning. This means that if you arrive after 9 PM, you will need to find lodging for the night either in the town of Wayne or local Barboursville or Huntington. We regret to have to enforce this rule, but increased traffic through the monastery at night—both invited and uninvited—has brought about the need to do so. This is a very common monastic practice. If you will be arriving in Huntington or Charleston late at night please be prepared to stay at a hotel. We will pick you up in the morning.

LODGING

In general, only visits of up to 2 or 3 days are permitted. We have very limited accommodations for overnight guests (5 to 7 beds). The rooms are usually reserved a full month in advance, so please make arrangements with us as far in advance as possible.

GUEST HOUSE

Our Guest House has three bedrooms (four beds in one room and two in the other two), two full bathrooms, a kitchen, and a washer and dryer. In other words, it is a fully functioning home, which you are welcome to use during your stay. We ask that before you leave you help prepare the Guest House for the next guests. This includes putting clean linens on the beds and cleaning the bathroom. Please do not bring your pets. Also, please abide by the dress code (given on the first page of this guide) in the Guest House common area and the grounds surrounding the Guest House.

Transportation Stations

Local Airport (*45 minutes from the monastery*)

Huntington Tri-State (HTS)

<http://www.tristateairport.com/>

Charleston Airport (*1 hour 25 minutes from the monastery*)

Yeager Airport (CRW)

<http://www.yeagerairport.com/>

Local Bus Station (*1 hour from the monastery*)

Greyhound Bus Station, Huntington

<http://www.greyhound.com/>

Local Train Station (*1 hour from the monastery*)

Huntington Amtrak Station (HUN)

<http://www.amtrak.com/>

MEALS

The monastic brotherhood eats its meals in common and in silence, while one of the monks reads from the Lives of the saints. The monastery will provide you with three meals each day: breakfast, lunch, and supper. Lunch and supper are formal meals with the brotherhood. Breakfast is optional and informal and may be taken at the monastery trapeza (refectory) in silence, or on your own at the Guest House. Guests are expected to attend the two formal meals, to be on time for meals, and to help with clean up if asked. You may bring food and snacks (no meat) to the Guest House, but no alcoholic beverages are permitted. If you eat at the Guest House, please clean up after yourself. If you have any food allergies or special dietary needs, please tell the Guestmaster when you are scheduling your visit. **Please be sure to tell us how many men, women, and children will be in your group so that we can properly plan for the meals.**

DONATIONS

To help cover the costs of your meals and your stay at the monastery, we suggest the following minimum donations:

\$30 per night for individuals

\$40 per night for a family

You can place your donation in the donation box at the Guest House or in the monastery church. Please do not offer donations to individual monks. We do not keep money for ourselves, and if the monks need something, they ask for it from the Superior.

Sometimes our guests bring wine, olive oil, food, or other supplies as donations for the church and the brotherhood. These gifts are very useful and greatly appreciated.

If you have any special skills, e.g. sewing, cooking, farming, carpentry, electrical wiring, etc., and you would like to share your expertise, please tell the Guestmaster when you schedule your visit. There is always plenty of work at the monastery and your talents and knowledge may be very helpful. If you will be doing farm or construction work, please bring work boots.

Often, there are small projects at the monastery which require financing. If you would like to know about ongoing projects and how you can help, just ask the Guestmaster. In the past, guests have helped us buy fencing and agricultural supplies for our farm, equipment for our incense production room, equipment for our kitchen, and chairs for the refectory.

If you are interested in making large contributions, please consider donating to our church building and monastery development projects. Speak with Hieromonk Gabriel at (304) 638-1686 or send an email to frgabriel@holycross-hermitage.com. By participating in these large scale projects, you will be considered a founder of the monastery and will be remembered at each of our Liturgies and church services when we pray for our founders and benefactors.

We are extremely grateful for all of your support as we endeavor to firmly establish our monastery. We pray that God will reward you for all of your labors and contributions in behalf of the monastery. May He remember you and your family in His Kingdom.

OUR MONASTIC SCHEDULE

Weekdays		Sundays & Feast Days	
		<i>Evening before:</i>	
5:00 AM	Matins, First Hour, Typica, Veneration of icons		
7:30 AM	Quiet time for prayer rule & spiritual reading, optional breakfast	5:30 PM	Supper
9:00 AM	Third Hour & morning work period	6:30 PM	Vigil Service
12:00 PM	Sixth Hour & lunch	<i>Sundays & Feast Days:</i>	
1:30 PM	Afternoon work period		
5:00 PM	Ninth Hour & Vespers	9:00 AM	Hours & Divine Liturgy
5:45 PM	Supper	11:15 AM	Festive meal
6:30 PM	Compline		

CHURCH SERVICES

Guests are expected to attend all church services. The wooden talanton is sounded 15 minutes before services begin. The church bell is rung slowly for five minutes before the services. Please be on time.

CONFESSION & HOLY COMMUNION

For those who desire to receive Holy Communion please note the following:

- Only Orthodox Christians may receive Holy Communion in the Orthodox Church.
- Be sure you have gone to Confession within one week before Communion.
- Attendance is required at Vespers & Matins before receiving.
- Please fast from all food and drink from midnight the night before.
- Please read the Rule of Preparation for Holy Communion.
- Please inform the Guestmaster or one of the clergy if you would like to go to Confession or receive Holy Communion.
- When receiving Holy Communion: keep your arms crossed, and open your mouth to allow the priest to place the communion spoon into your mouth, close your mouth over the spoon and allow the priest to remove it from your mouth leaving the Precious Body and Blood. A deacon or server will wipe your mouth with the communion cloth, after which you should kiss the chalice (not the priest's hand). Do not cross yourself while standing before the chalice, and do not attempt to touch either the chalice or communion cloth with your hands or head.

PROPER BEHAVIOR IN CHURCH SERVICES

The rear section of the church is reserved for laymen (men on the right and women on the left), while the main section of the monastery church is reserved for Orthodox monastics and clergy only. Outside the time for church services, laypeople are free to enter the monastic section to venerate icons and relics. Only Orthodox Christian men who have a blessing may enter into the Altar behind the iconostasis. *Please leave your cell phones and electronic devices outside of the church in order to maintain prayer and silence.*

It is customary (for those who are able) to stand throughout the duration of the church services

except during the kathismata (Psalter readings). Please do so reverently. Do not stand with your hands in your pockets or with your arms crossed behind your back. Likewise, when sitting, do not cross your legs or spread your arms out across the back of the benches.

During the services, parents are asked to be attentive to their children—if they are too noisy please take them outside or to the trapeza (refectory) where you may hear the service from a baby monitor.

THE VENERATION OF ICONS

After Midnight Office and Compline, we have the practice of venerating all of the icons in church. The monastics and clergy venerate the icons in the monastic section of the church, and the laypeople venerate the icons in the back section of the church. After the veneration of icons, everyone receives a blessing from the abbot, if he is present, otherwise from the serving priest. Laypeople approach the priest for their blessing after the monastics. Usually there are laymen present who know the proper order, so you can simply follow them. To receive a priest's blessing: bow before them (without making the Sign of the Cross), put your right hand on top of your left hand (palms facing up) and hold them out in front of yourself. The priest will make the Sign of the Cross over you and put his hand in your hands. You should bow to kiss his hand (do not stand up straight and raise his hand to your lips). After you receive the blessing, return to your place in the laypeople's section.

SILENCE

In his *Ascetical Homilies*, St. Isaac of Syria says, "Silence is a mystery of the age to come, but words are instruments of this world." When we keep silence, we avoid frivolous words and thoughts, and our mind is not so distracted by external things. The silence of our mouth gives stillness to our mind and thus peace to our heart. We begin to know ourselves and behold the image of God in our soul. We see that God has given us the obedience of cultivating the garden of our heart in order to produce His likeness in ourselves. Then, we behold how distracting words turn us away from this cultivating work, and can lead us to sin and passion. So silence is a very important tool that can bring us peace and lead us to Christ.

In general, it is best for guests to maintain a quiet demeanor and speak to the monks only when they speak to you first. However, if you need help with something practical, feel free to ask a monk for help.

At 9:00 PM, Sunday through Friday, a bell is tolled twelve times. This is the beginning of the night time silence in the monastery and at the guest house. This night time silence is maintained more diligently than the general quietness of the work day because the night time is devoted to spiritual work. This silence is maintained until work begins the next morning at 9:00 AM when the bell is tolled again twelve times. However, if you need something you may quietly ask for help.

SPIRITUAL DIRECTION

If you need spiritual counsel, would like to ask questions about the spiritual life, discuss a monastic vocation, or go to Confession contact one of the monastery confessors. You may inform the Guestmaster of your desire to talk with one of the confessors, and he will help you arrange a meeting with one of them. Our schedule is full with services and work related activities, so please inform us as soon as possible if you would like to meet with one of the confessors.

GIFT SHOP

If you are stopping by just to visit the Gift Shop, please call in advance to check if it is open. Often the service schedule and work projects change the hours of operation.

Contact Information

(304) 849-4726

giftshop@holycross-hermitage.com

<http://www.holycross-hermitage.com/store>

Hours

Monday-Friday 9:00-11:30 AM & 1:30-4:30 PM

Saturday 9:00-11:30 AM

Sunday & Feast Days After services and morning meal, according to need

OTHER INFORMATION

- Guests are not allowed to bring pets to the monastery.
- No smoking.
- No drinking of alcoholic beverages (apart from formal festal meals, at which wine and beer are sometimes served).
- No secular music. Church music may be listened to using headphones.
- Guests are not allowed to enter a monk's cell, nor generally any buildings or rooms which have not been indicated as open to visitors (or where they have not been specifically invited).
- Women are not allowed into any monastic buildings after the evening services.
- Photography is allowed at the monastery and in the church, but ask when it is appropriate. Do not take pictures of the monks without asking their permission.
- No cell phones or electronic devices are allowed in church.

TO SCHEDULE A VISIT

(304) 849-2072

guestmaster@holycross-hermitage.com

You may contact the Guestmaster at the telephone number or e-mail address above. The guestmaster keeps office hours between 1:30 PM and 4:30 PM on regular weekdays, and is able to receive and reply to messages and phone calls during these times only. Therefore, please advise him well in advance of any changes in your travel plans once you have made a reservation.

In your initial contact, please include your phone number, the dates you would like to visit, and how many men, women, and children will be coming. This basic information is needed in order to schedule your visit. It is also helpful to know which parish you attend and your priest's name.

We count it a blessing to share our monastic life with you, and look forward to meeting you. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact us.

May God bless you,
Archimandrite Seraphim and the Brotherhood
Hermitage of the Holy Cross ✠ Wayne, WV

LOCAL MAP

Note: The numbered circles on the map correspond to the directions on page on of this guide.
See next page for a more detailed map of the monastery grounds.



