

GUEST GUIDELINES

St. John in the Wilderness is a living sanctuary of prayer, labor, stewardship, and silence. It is not a retreat center, a vacation spot, or even a typical parish. The residents have laid down the comforts of modern life to stand as "priests of creation" in the quiet of the Canadian forest. To preserve this sacred space, we ask all guests to honor our daily rhythms.

Common Prayer Life: Monday to Saturday mornings the bell is rung a few minutes before 9:00 AM for prayers in the chapel. Saturday evening the bell is rung just before 6:00 PM for Great Vespers. Sunday morning we begin the hours at roughly 9:15 AM and the Divine Liturgy begins at roughly 9:30 AM.

The Liturgy of Silence: The wilderness is a place of deep listening. We observe quiet hours from 9:00 PM until after the morning services. Please ensure all screens and audio devices are off and outdoor activities cease by 9:00 PM to honor the prayer and rest of the sanctuary.

Mindful Technology and Solar Sharing: Our electricity is a limited gift from the sun. To protect our solar battery banks, guests are asked to limit personal device use to essential communication. Devices may be charged and electrical appliances used only when the sun is shining and the solar panels are actively generating surplus power. We ask that all devices be put away by 9:00 PM. This ensures that guest quarters remain dark and quiet, preserving the stillness of the wilderness night for everyone.

Stewardship of Hospitality and Nourishment: The sanctuary operates on an extremely limited budget, and our hosts cannot provide meals for visitors. A pilgrimage here is a shared life of stewardship. Shared meals are a common enough occurrence but are pure gifts and cannot be taken for granted.

Self-Sufficiency: Guests must bring their own food and be prepared to cook independently. There are propane burners in the common kitchen and some simple cooking equipment. There are two small fridges and a very small freezer. *Note: from late spring until early autumn there is no oven.*

The Common Meal: On days of Divine Liturgy, we gather for a shared meal. We ask guests to bring simple food items to contribute to the common table, or to make a small donation to help cover the costs for the fuel for the boat, for propane, and other costs associated with hospitality.

A Place of Labor and Prayer: Visitors are invited to participate in the physical life of the sanctuary such as cleaning, cooking, wood-chopping and other work, using your own abilities—and to regularly attend the daily services. It is through shared, quiet labor and presence to each other that we experience true communion.

Respecting the Peace of the Residents: Father Nilos and M. Sheila live a life dedicated to intercessory prayer and productive labor. To preserve their health and spiritual labor, please be respectful of their time.