KORINJI RINZAI ZEN MONASTERY

臨済宗 • 祖的山光林禅寺

DAI-SESSHIN AT KORINJI – INFORMATION FOR GUESTS

Thank you for your interest in meditation retreats at Korinji. Our monastery is one of the few places in the West conducting Rinzai Zen sesshin in the traditional manner.

Please read the following information and then submit the sesshin application by email to info@korinji.org.

What is Sesshin?

Sesshin is a period of intensive cloistered meditation retreat, and among the most rigorous of Zen training forms. For a period of up to seven days (called dai-sesshin, or "great sesshin"), Zen students devote themselves single-mindedly to many hours of meditation practice, meeting frequently with the teacher for guidance. In this way they are able to deepen their spiritual training immeasurably, face their own limitations, and emerge with new insights for their lives.

General Information

• Sesshin is challenging: days are long and full, with many sessions of meditation and minimal sleep (4.5 hours) each night. A foundation of Zen practice experience will help you to successfully use this training. In general, before attending sesshin you must first receive formal instruction in zazen - seated meditation - and be able to sit unmoving in meditation for multiple periods of 45 minutes in a row. If you are a complete beginner, other events in our schedule will be better suited for you: please inquire. If you are unsure regarding your readiness for sesshin, please email Korinji and we will be happy to speak with you.

• Participants who have formal student-teacher relationships with other Zen teachers are requested to obtain permission from their teachers to participate.

• An adapted sesshin schedule with more sleep may be offered to seniors and other persons requiring it.

• Sesshin includes samu or periods of manual work practice. If you have physical limitations, you may be given work appropriate to your condition.

• Persons with physical conditions preventing them from sitting on the floor may use a chair or stool during meditation sessions. Please let us know beforehand if you require this.

• Our meals at the monastery are simple, traditional vegetarian cuisine. If you have food-related health issues or allergies, please inform us beforehand and we will determine if we are able to welcome you. Personal food is not permitted at sesshin.

Schedule and What to Bring

Sesshin begins on the first evening at 7:30pm and ends on the final morning at 9am. Please plan to arrive by 6:30pm on the first evening in order to have time to get settled.

Please bring the following:

• A sleeping bag and pad if you are sleeping as a guest at the monastery residence.

• Formal practice garments (gi, obi and hakama for laypersons, robes for ordained) are the norm at Korinji. But if this is your first sesshin with us, please just wear whatever practice clothing you normally wear…or else modest clothing (no shorts or tank tops) in solid neutral colors, without words or printed designs. If you'd like help obtaining formal clothing email us beforehand and we can suggest sources.

• Outdoor sandals or shoes that can be quickly slipped on and off, for walking between

buildings.

• Clothes and footwear appropriate for outdoor work.

• Warm clothing (long underwear, hat, rain jacket, etc.) and umbrella, depending on the season and weather forecast.

• Toiletries, bath towel, personal medications (if you take anything that might affect your clarity or level of drowsiness, please let us know).

• Flashlight or headlamp.

• Jihatsu (Zen eating bowls) if owned. If not, these will be available to borrow.

• Korinji Okyo book (for chanting) if owned. If not, these will be available to borrow.

What Not to Bring

• Personal phones, computers, and other electronic or entertainment devices of any kind. If you have brought these with you, you must leave them in your car. If you need to give an emergency contact number to someone, we can provide this to you; if you need to make an emergency call, our staff will have a phone you can use.

• Cameras. Taking photographs at Korinji is not permitted without prior approval.

• Books (other than standard texts used for training e.g. koan materials).

• Musical instruments.

• Personal food.

• Intoxicants or recreational drugs of any kind.

• Firearms and other weapons.

Sesshin Rules

We would like to stress that sesshin is a silent retreat and there is no "social" time. Talking is only done when necessary to accomplish some task or during permitted question/answer periods. Persons unable to observe this rule may be asked to leave Korinji.

Couples participating in sesshin will not be able to have private time together apart from the group. Please note that romantic display and sexual activity are not appropriate on the Korinji grounds.

In general, it will help to remember that Korinji is a monastery and therefore a place dedicated to Zen practice. All other concerns, relationships and activities should be set aside during sesshin.

Traveling and Arriving

Korinji's parking lot address is S470 Hirst Road, Reedsburg, WI. Google Maps or a similar service will give you good directions to Korinji.

When you arrive at this address you will not see buildings from the road; you will only see forest and a blue sign “S470”. Next to the sign is a short gravel drive opening up to a parking area. Please enter there and park your car in a manner that allows other vehicles to do the same. DO NOT park on the side of the road anywhere: you will be towed by the county.

After parking, walk to the trail which begins at the back of the parking area. This will take you through the forest to the Korinji gate and up to the monastery buildings. Follow the signs there to the residence entrance. Walk carefully, as the forest trail is sometimes uneven and can be slippery depending on conditions. If you arrive after dark you should use a flashlight.

If your physical condition prevents you from walking short distances, please let us know before you arrive and we will arrange to meet you at our service entrance.

Offerings

Korinji is a private monastic residence, not a business. We do not charge fees. We suggest that you instead make offerings to The Korinji Foundation—a not-for-profit charity—in the amounts below. No one will be turned away for financial reason: if you cannot make the suggested offering, please let us know.

• Sesshin Full Participation: $350 • Sesshin Partial Participation: $50/day

Offerings may be submitted via PayPal to info@korinji.org.

Questions?

Please contact us: info@korinji.org.