



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT CRAIG LODGE COMMUNITY

Craig Lodge Family House of Prayer, Dalmally, Argyll, PA33 1AR
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Find us on:



Why do people join the Community?

People join us for a variety of reasons, but first and foremost because they feel called to grow in holiness, through living in community. Other motivating factors maybe: a desire to serve in a Catholic ministry, a time to discern a future vocation, an opportunity to deepen our understanding of The Faith and to develop a prayer life.

What spirituality inspires this Community?

The Community has developed from a desire to answer Our Lady's call to holiness particularly by trying to live out the messages she gives through Medjugorje (more info at www.medjugorje.hr). We have a particular love for the Eucharist and Our Lady and all the rich traditions of our Church. Our life together is based around prayer, service and evangelisation.

How long can you stay in the Community?

After a trial period volunteers join our "House Community". Normally the expected commitment to this is for one year. We also have a "Permanent community" of members who are committed for the longer term.

Does it cost anything to join the Community?

No. You will have to cover the cost of your travel here and have sufficient funds to pay for your return journey home at the end of the year. On joining the community you are provided with board and lodging and all you need. We offer limited help with travel expenses for home visits at Christmas and a week's holiday during the year here.

Do I get paid while I am in Community?

No. People who come and live as part of the Community for a year are volunteers.

What is the prayer life of the Community?

The Divine office of Morning & Evening prayer, with the Holy Rosary, and Eucharistic adoration is the daily routine of prayer here. We also love to praise & worship God in song, using the Gifts of the Holy Spirit.

What work will I do in the Community?

Every day is different in Craig Lodge! However the majority of our work is in the house, and is all the cleaning, serving and hospitality jobs that one would expect in a guest house. It's not all hoovering though - sometimes we visit schools, sometimes we organise children's activities, sometimes we work outdoors. Sometimes people have special skills which enable them to do special jobs too.

Can I stay in touch with my friends and family?

Yes. We encourage people to maintain good family links, however we want our lives to be free to serve and to pray so we limit our phone/internet time - except for emergencies of course. There is a phone in the community house which you can use, and receive calls on in your free time. There is a computer which you have an allocated timeslot on during your day off. Stamps are provided free if you like to write letters.

Can I take my laptop or phone?

We invite people to give up these things during their year, so you are left more free to make the most of the year's experience. Mobile phones may only be used on your day off or if travelling away from Craig Lodge. They don't actually work very well on the premises (limited signal) so you might want to consider giving it up for the duration of your stay.

Will I have any free time?

House community members each get an evening off followed by one full day off each week. This is free to spend as you choose. Additionally, some evenings are free if the house is not busy. We try as much as possible to keep Sunday afternoons and evenings free to spend relaxed time together.

Will I have a spiritual director?

The community leadership provides spiritual direction for all House community members

Is counselling available?

This community is not a rehabilitation centre providing specialist care or therapy, but a year at Craig Lodge is often a very healing experience. Counselling may be available with our trained Parish priest at the suggestion of your spiritual director- but this may need to be in your free time as our daily life can be very full.

How is the Community governed?

The community was founded and is still led by Calum & Maryanne MacFarlane-Barrow, who are advised by an elected council of permanent community members. We have an independent Spiritual Director - Canon Fraser - and we are under the authority of the Bishop of Argyll & the Isles who has granted us permission to reserve the Blessed Sacrament in our chapel.

How do I join?

First of all pray and ask yourself "Is this what God wants me to do?" If so, potential members are invited for a "come & see" visit, during which they, and we, will discern if this is the right community for them. Having done so, there is a trial period of living within the community, before anyone is accepted to join and make their "consecration" - a commitment for one year.

In the first instance you should contact Ruth, and she will send you an application form which will help you and us, decide which step to take next. Email: mail@craiglodge.org

How do I know if God is calling me to this Community?

Community life is a calling and not everyone is called to it. God speaks to us in different ways; through our circumstances, through other people, through his Word and in the silence of our hearts. Generally speaking if the calling is genuine then the desire to follow up this call will persist over time. Then as you find out more about the Community it will speak to your heart and leave you feeling at peace. However we are all different! For some people they just know immediately that they are supposed to join Community. Others need more time to consider and test it out and that is why everyone, regardless of how sure they feel, is asked to spend at least one month living with the Community before they make a final decision to commit for one year.

I am interested in becoming a Catholic, would the Community help?

Time in this community will help you develop and further your Catholic faith, but if you haven't yet been initiated into the Catholic Church then you would need to be instructed through the RCIA course. It would be advisable to do this in your home parish before coming here.

Are there any age restrictions?

For those interested in coming for a spiritual gap year, the minimum age to join is 18 and usually the maximum is about 30. The Community is also made up of permanent members - families and single people who live independently, close to Craig Lodge and commit to our life of prayer, service and evangelisation as their family/work responsibilities allow.

Is there a certain time of year when community begins?

No, people can join us throughout the calendar year, though the prayer house is closed for holidays around Christmas/New Year so these times are best avoided for a new application.

What is a typical day like?

We begin our day with Morning Prayer and Rosary, usually at 7.30am, and then breakfast together. Work time begins around 9. We all get together for a relaxed coffee break mid morning. Some days there is Holy Mass at noon, followed by lunch at 1pm. Afternoons are generally taken up with our Adoration time, maybe Bible or Catechism study and of course, a good walk to work off lunch! Evening prayer is always at 5pm. Evenings are different depending on what day it is, but it may be our Prayer & Praise meeting, serving guests who arrive late, quiet time alone with a good book, or relaxed fellowship with other community members.

Can I come to improve my English skills?

First of all see FAQ "How do I know if God is calling me to community?" Your personal desire to join this community to grow in holiness must be your main reason for wanting to join. As our charism is serving all those who come to our door, and living in close fellowship with each other, then a sufficient grasp of English is required.

Our Lady Queen of Peace, pray for us!