

DTO National Retreat 2026

We are looking forward to our upcoming retreat at Mariandale! Please find the essential details and schedule below.

Retreat Costs and Payment

- Thursday – Sunday: \$435.00
- Friday – Sunday: \$310.00
- Saturday – Sunday: \$155.00
- Individual Days: \$50.00

Please provide payment via cash or check to Konrad Sheehan. Checks should be made payable to Dharma Teacher Order, Inc.

Accommodations

Room assignments are posted in the elevators. All rooms are single occupancy and include a single bed, sheets, blanket, pillow, towel, sink, desk, and chair. Bathrooms with showers are located on each floor. At the end of your stay, please place your bedding and towels inside your pillowcase and leave it outside your door. You may also consider leaving dana for the cleaning staff.

Dining

Meals are vegetarian and served buffet-style in the cafeteria. We will wait for everyone to be seated before beginning with The Five Contemplations, coordinated by Pam Hausner. Coffee and tea are available throughout the day. If you require gluten-free options, please notify Elena in advance. As special dietary choices may be limited, you are welcome to bring personal food items to store in the cafeteria refrigerator.

Practice and Silence

Most sessions will be held in the Wellspring Room. We ask that you observe Noble Silence during the following times:

- Thursday 10:00 p.m. – Friday 4:00 p.m. Friday: Day of Mindfulness
- Friday 10:00 p.m.-Saturday 12:30 p.m. (after second bell at lunch)
- Saturday 10:00 p.m. – Sunday 8:30 a.m. (after the second bell at breakfast)

-All meals are silent until the second bell is rung. Sunday lunch is social

Ordinations and Ceremonies

We are pleased to celebrate several milestones this Sunday:

- Richard Downey (Lay Priest Ordination): Please bring a bowl, candle (provided), robe, and teacher neck sash. A Sanghati and new neck sash will be provided.

- Holly Ketchum and Konrad Sheehan (Dharma Teacher Ordination): Please bring a self-created Gatha and a bowl. Black robes and candles will be provided.

- Ellyn Varela-Burstein: Will receive her certificate for the four-year class.

Bodhisattva Vows, Precepts, and Refuge will also be offered.

What to Bring

Please bring comfortable clothing suitable for variable April weather and your preferred meditation cushions or benches (chairs and a limited number of cushions are available).

We will also collect dana for the monastics attending, Ven. Thich Tri Hoang, Giac Vien, and Sister Phap Lan, and our cook, Anthony.

****The door code for April is 5614# (include the hashtag).

Thank you, as always, to the tech team: Mike, Jon, and Craig.

If you have any questions or need support during the retreat, please reach out to Fernando, Elena, or Maeve. All conversations will remain confidential.

Schedule:

Thursday, April 23, 2026

We ask that you arrive at approximately 4:00 p.m.

From 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.: Take time to acclimate yourself to the retreat center, finding your room, settling in.

6:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.: Dinner (silent

Dinner is silent until the second bell is rung.

7:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.: Personal time

7:30 p.m.-9:00 p.m.: Practice in the main meditation room

Incense Ceremony

Chanting the Heart Sutra

Reciting the 5 precepts

20 minutes of sitting

10 minutes of walking (instructions will be given)

20 minutes of sitting

Reciting Beginning Anew (Elena)

Introductory Remarks and time for questions

Sitting until 9:00 p.m.

9:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.: Free time: Good time to meet in the cafeteria to chat, have a hot beverage before bed, or relax into bed.

10:00 p.m.: Begin Noble Silence

Friday, April 24, 2026: Day of Mindfulness Begins: Noble Silence until 4:00 p.m.

6:00 a.m. to 7:00 a.m.: Practice in the main meditation room

Sitting for 20 minutes

Walking for 10 minutes

Sitting until 7:00

You are always welcome to sit longer if you feel moved to do so.

7:00 a.m. to 8:00 a.m.: Personal time in silence.

Personal time is peppered throughout the day and may be a good time to take a shower or tour the grounds. There is a beautiful labyrinth and a natural circular walking route by the river. Consider journaling, reading contemplative/spiritual literature, or just spending time without watching the news, television, or being on the phone. You might join one of us sitting on the benches by the river, enjoying nature.

8:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m.: Breakfast/Personal time

9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.: Practice in the main meditation room.

Incense ceremony

Chanting the Heart Sutra

Reciting the 5 Precepts

Sitting 20 minutes

Walking 10 minutes

Sitting until 10:00 a.m.

10:00 a.m.: Dharma Talk (Giac Vien): Taking Refuge and the Five Precepts

11:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.: Personal time

12:00 p.m. to 1:00 p.m.: Lunch

1:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m.: Personal time (meetings with Sister Phap Lan)

2:00 p.m. to 2:45 p.m.: Walking meditation: Meet at side door (Craig Hannah)

(meetings with Sister Phap Lan 2:00 to 3:00)

Gather at the side door by the Evergreen Room.

3:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.: Formal Tea Ceremony (Holly Ketchum)

Sitting until 4:00 p.m.

A few words to break the silence

4:15 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.: **Day of Mindfulness Ends.** New retreatants begin to arrive

Personal time

6:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.: Dinner

7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.: Practice in the main meditation room

Sitting for 10 minutes

Presentation on the DTO, BSI, and BCC (Richard Z, Fernando, Elena, Sister Phap Lan, Thay)

Questions/Discussion

9:00 p.m.: Personal time

10:00 p.m.: Silence begins

Saturday, April 25, 2026

6:00 a.m. to 7:00 a.m.: Practice in the main mediation room

Sitting for 20 minutes

Walking for 10 minutes

20 Prostrations

Sitting until 7:00 a.m.

7:00 a.m. to 8:00 a.m.: Personal time or optional teaching on inviting the bell and playing the mokugyo (Teo and Minh Khong)

8:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m.: Breakfast

9:00 a.m. to 9:30 a.m.: Personal time

9:30 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.: Practice in the main meditation room

(Meetings with Thay and Phap Lan 9:30 to 12:00, sign up available in main room)

Incense ceremony

Chanting the Heart Sutra

Reciting the 5 Precepts

Sitting 20 minutes

Walking 10 minutes

20 Prostrations

Touching the Earth (sangha members with Minh Khong chanting the first line of each reading)

Sitting until 11:00 a.m.

11:00 a.m. to 11:45 p.m.: Teaching on taking the Bodhisattva Vows (Richard Zipoli)

12:00 p.m. to 1:00 p.m.: Lunch

1:00 p.m. 1:30 p.m.: Free time

1:30-2:00: Simple tea ceremony (Ellyn Varela-Burstein)

2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.: Dharma Festival

Sit for 10 minutes

Teaching on how the Dharma Festival works (Fernando)

Festival offerings from students/Comments or questions from Sangha

4:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.: Free time

6:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.: Dinner

7:15 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.: Practice in the main meditation room

Sitting 10 minutes

Dharma Festival for people who didn't have a chance earlier in the day to speak

Update on what is happening in each Sangha (members from each Sangha)

Update on Dharma Teacher Training (Bobbie, Fernando, and Maeve)

Move into the cafeteria for a cake to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the DTO

9:00 p.m.- 10:00 p.m.: Personal time

10:00 p.m.: Silence begins

Sunday, April 26, 2026

6:00 a.m. to 7:00 a.m.: Practice in the main meditation room

Sitting 20 minutes

Walking meditation

Sitting until 7:00

Silence ends

7:00 a.m. to 8:00 a.m.: Pack rooms/cars, volunteers needed to prepare the Wellspring Room for the ceremony. May want to consider a shower as there will be no time later.

8:00 a.m. to 8:30 a.m.: Breakfast (silence until the second bell is rung)

8:30 a.m. to 9:00 a.m.: Assemble for ceremony in Wellspring Room. (Fernando and Minh Khong will be in the Wellspring Room kitchen area to help with Sanghati wrapping.)

9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.: Ceremony

11:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.: Packing up/Being with each other

Break down the Wellspring Room (Those with family and friends present are excused...weather permitting, time on the grounds before lunch might be well received.)

12:00 p.m. to 1:00 p.m.: Lunch and farewells. (Everyone is welcome. Not silent)

The Retreat comes to an end.