

OUR LADY OF MERCY CHURCH

837 Bartlett Road • Harborcreek, PA 16421 • www.ourladyofmercychurch.org



MASS SCHEDULE

Saturday Vigil: **6:00 p.m.**

Sunday: **8:30 a.m. & 11:00 a.m.**

Weekday: **8:30 a.m.**

Holy Day of Obligation: **8:30 a.m. & 7:00 p.m.**

PARISH STAFF

Msgr. Gerald T. Ritchie, *Pastor*

Donna Clark, *Pastoral Minister*

Irene Lucas, *Director of Lifelong Faith Formation*

Brandon Vogt, *Director of Liturgy & Music*

Marsha MacKinnon McKinley, *Admin. Assistant*

Geri Hadlock, *Youth Minister*

Kirk Mientkiewicz, *Maintenance Coordinator*

Andrea Maille, *Lifelong Faith Formation Secretary*

CONTACT INFORMATION

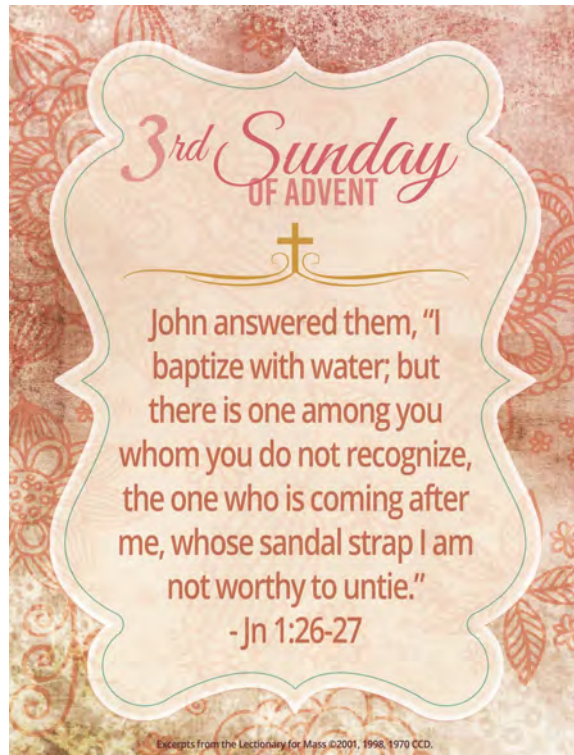
Parish Office: 814-899-5342

Office of Lifelong Faith Formation: 814-899-6132

Fax: 814-898-3306

Email: info@ourladyofmercychurch.org

DECEMBER 17, 2017



MISSION STATEMENT

We are a Eucharistic, Catholic Christian Community of Communities formed by the Word of God and the teachings of the Church.

We are empowered by the Holy Spirit to live the values of Jesus Christ in a prayerful, welcoming and nurturing environment.

THE WEEK AHEAD

For a complete calendar of events, please visit ourladyofmercychurch.org/calendar

Mon. 12/18	11:00 a.m.	Centering Prayer
	7:00 p.m.	Grief Support Group
Tue. 12/19	9:30 a.m.	SCC– Steel Magnolias
	2:00 p.m.	Prayer Shawl
	4:00 p.m.	Rel Ed Gr 3-6
	5:30 p.m.	Children’s Choir Rehearsal
	6:30 p.m.	Choir Rehearsal
Wed. 12/20	8:30 a.m.	Food Pantry Distribution
	1:00 p.m.	SCC–Diamonds in the Rough
Thur. 12/21	9:00 a.m.	Painting Class
	6:00 p.m.	Prayer Shawl
	6:30 p.m.	Choir Rehearsal
Fri. 12/22	1:30 p.m.	Legion of Mary
Sat. 12/23		
Sun. 12/24		Fourth Sunday of Advent
	8:30 a.m.	Mass
	11:00 a.m.	Mass
		Christmas Eve
	6:00 p.m.	Christmas Eve Mass
	9:20 p.m.	Christmas Music with Choir & Instruments
	10:00 p.m.	Christmas Eve Mass
Mon. 12/25		Christmas Day
	10:00 a.m.	Christmas Day Mass

MASS INTENTIONS

Mon. 12/18	8:30 a.m.	
Tue. 12/19	8:30 a.m.	
Wed. 12/20	8:30 a.m.	
Thur. 12/21	8:30 a.m.	Dennis Hollarn (Lois & Bill Struchen)
Fri. 12/22	8:30 a.m.	
Sat. 12/23	8:30 a.m.	
	6:00 p.m.	Helen Hemmis (Norman & Barbara Schlosser)
Sun. 12/24	8:30 a.m.	Joseph Wenzel (Family)
	11:00 a.m.	For the People of OLM
	6:00 p.m.	For the People of OLM
	10:00 p.m.	For the People of OLM
Mon. 12/25	10:00 a.m.	For the People of OLM

SCRIPTURE READINGS

Mon. 12/18	Jer 23:5-8	/	Matthew 1:18-25
Tue. 12/19	Jgs 13:2-7, 24-25a	/	Luke 1:5-25
Wed. 12/20	Is 7:1-14	/	Luke 1:26-38
Thur. 12/21	Sg 2:8-14	/	Luke 1:39-45
Fri. 12/22	1 Sm 1:24-28	/	Luke 1:46-56
Sat. 12/23	Mal 3:1-4	/	Luke 1:57-66
Sun. 12/24	2 Sm 7:1-5, 8b-12, 14a, 16/ Rom 16:25-27/ Luke 1:26-38		

OLM PARISH OFFICE REMINDERS

Due to the publisher’s filing deadlines for the Christmas and New Year’s Holidays, bulletin content is due as follows: **December 20—content due for the Jan. 7 bulletin**



The OLM Parish Office will be closed **Monday, December 25 through Monday, January 1, 2018** in observance of the Christmas and New Year’s Holidays.



IN LOVING MEMORY

We remember Thomas Vogel, father of Denise Lewandoski; Robert MacGurn Sr., grandfather of Scott MacGurn; and Bob Vargo. Please keep them and their families in your prayers.

PRAYER LINE

9:00 a.m.—4:00 p.m. Call **Donna Smicker** at 899-9108
4:00 p.m.—9:00 p.m. Call **Gerri Extein** at 899-6875
The **Hospital Visitors** for the week are Tom & Linda Bleil.

THIS SUNDAY’S REFLECTION

John 1:6-8, 19-28



The Prophet Isaiah announces glad tidings to the dispirited and brokenhearted. God who is mighty does great things for us! God frees all those bound in physical, emotional, and mental prisons. God is a faithful bridegroom. God is a gardener who makes justice spring forth from the barren ground.

“Rejoice always and in *all ways!*” Paul entreats. As we await the Lord’s coming, we should never stop praying and giving thanks to God. The Spirit invites us to grow and change, perfecting us in every way to make us a holy and *whole* people so that we can greet the Lord with joy when he comes.

John announces the glad tidings of the coming of the Lord. John is not the Messiah, nor Elijah, nor the prophet. He is simply a “voice” crying out in the wilderness: “Prepare the way of the Lord!” Like John, we are called to be messengers of good news. To a sad and weary world we proclaim: “My soul rejoices in God my Savior.”

For Reflection: Am I a messenger of good or bad news? In what ways can I bring joy to someone today?

© Kay Murdy



May Peace & Joy fill your hearts and your homes at this most blessed time of the year!

Fr. Ritchie and the Pastoral Staff

The Season of Christmas 2017-2018 at Our Lady of Mercy

Christmas: The Solemnity of The Nativity of The Lord

Christmas Eve Masses

Sunday, December 24 at 6:00 p.m.
(music by the children's choir)

Music Selections at 9:20 p.m.

Christmas Night Mass at 10:00 p.m.
(music by the choir and instruments)

Christmas Day Mass:

Monday, December 25 at 10:00 a.m.

Feast of the Holy Family

Saturday, December 30 at 6:00 p.m.
Sunday, December 31 at 8:30 a.m. & 11 a.m.

The Solemnity of Mary, The Mother of God

Monday, January 1 at 10:00 a.m.
(Note: There is no evening Vigil Mass on
Sunday, December 31)

Solemnity of the Epiphany of the Lord

Saturday, January 6 at 6:00 p.m.
Sunday, January 7 at 8:30 a.m. & 11 a.m.

Epiphany Concert of Christmas Music:

Sunday, January 7 at 3:00 p.m.

FINANCIAL SUPPORT

Offertory for the weekend of December 10, 2017

Envelopes sent:	399	
Envelopes returned:	118	\$4,449.00
Faith Direct Deposits:	106	\$2,851.75
Loose Change:		\$113.00
TOTAL OFFERTORY:		\$7,413.75

Praying for Our Loved Ones Who Have Passed

The Grief Support Group meets on Monday, December 18 at 7:00 p.m. in the Parlor for a special session for the Holidays. We will focus on the gifts of the person who has died. How can we make our loved ones present to us as we move through the Christmas Season? This can be a particularly difficult time when we feel the loss more acutely. Questions? Contact Donna Clark in the parish office at 899-5342. This support group meets the third Monday of the month at Our Lady of Mercy.

Nursery Available Christmas Eve

Children are always welcome at Mass. If for some reason, they need a break during any of the Christmas Masses, the Nursery is available. There are toys, a changing station and rocking chairs for your use. The Mass will be televised in the nursery so you won't miss a thing. There are no scheduled babysitters for the Christmas Masses, but parents are welcome to use the facilities. The Nursery is just down the hall from the parish parlor as you head toward the classroom area.

Follow the Star

Come and enjoy a wonderful family Christmas experience TODAY, Sunday, December 17 at 4:00 p.m. at St. Gregory in North East. This event features Tennessee Backporch, Chris & Julie Moore, and students from St. Gregory and McDowell High Schools. Cost is \$15 for adults. Tickets are available in the St. Gregory parish office or at the door. There is also a performance on Tuesday, December 19 at 7:00 p.m. at St. John Parish in Girard. This concert will feature the Westlake School vocal ensemble. Tickets available at the door.

The Question-Of-The-Week Contest Winner

The winner for the week of December 3 was **Dakota Pohl Grade 3**, who knew that the Church uses purple for the Season of Advent.

Young Adult Adoration

Married and single young adults (18-39) are invited to spend intentional time with Jesus in the Eucharist on Friday, December 29 at 7:00 p.m. The evening will include Eucharistic adoration, confession, live praise and worship music, and benediction. Around 8:00 p.m. we will make our way to the Fiddle Inn for food and fellowship. Join us for as much or as little of the evening as your schedule allows. Bring a friend!

Winter Scripture Study

A Scripture Study on the minor prophets will be held Wednesday, January 17 to February 7 at 9:00 a.m. in the Conference Room. We will study Hosea, Amos, Micah and Zechariah on consecutive weeks. There is no cost and no registration. Because each week we will look at a different biblical prophet, you do not have to commit to attend every week.

Food Pantry Report

The Ella Cochran Food Pantry thanks the community of Our Lady of Mercy for its generous support. In the past year the food pantry completed the walk-in freezer project and has been using it since March. After selling off the 7 old freezers, we purchased a commercial refrigerator. The pantry received \$12,100 in regular donations (outside of the "Fund the Freezer Drive"). The total food orders from Second Harvest were \$44,330 but our costs were only \$ 11,070. The rest of the costs were covered by federal, state and county grants. Other pantry expenses came to \$358 for supplies. We served an average of 123 families per month – gave out 125 Easter dinners and 135 Thanksgiving dinners. Our Lady of Mercy also contributed 90 gifts for the giving tree. Thank you!

The Letters of Stewardship

I: Identity – We are God's. Everything we are and all we have comes from God and is destined to return to God.

We have Electronic Giving Available

Our Lady of Mercy uses the company Faith Direct to manage our electronic giving. You may have your donation deducted from your checking or savings account. You may also use a credit card. Simply go to our web site: www.ourladyofmercychurch.org and look for the Faith Direct icon on the left hand column.

Parish Alive

Our annual Parish Alive retreat will be held Friday, February 16 and Saturday, February 17. It is a wonderful way to kick off your Lent, to renew your faith, to deepen your connection to the parish. Apply online on the parish website, by paper using the form in the November newsletter or find applications on the bulletin tables. The retreat is free but space is limited.

Sunday Morning *C*A*F*E*

Our next Sunday Morning CAFÉ will be on Sunday, January 14 from 9:45-10:45 a.m. Mary Nelson, OFS and Candy Henry, OFS will introduce us to the Order of Secular Franciscans, an 800 year old lay order in the Catholic Church with about 12,000 members in the U.S. along with many more around the world. Mary Nelson is the Regional Formation Director for Western PA and the leader of the local group. Candy Henry, a member of OLM, is its secretary.

Special Thanks from The Youth

Thank you for supporting our amazing trip to the National Catholic Youth Conference in Indianapolis, Indiana November 16-18! Here is a picture of our youth carrying in the banner at the beginning of the conference. From the left Gabe Devore, Andrew Kightlinger and Andrew Dalton and 2 other youth from our diocese.



Newsletter Deadline

The deadline to submit items for the February issue of **For Mercy Sake** is **January 15**. Items can be sent electronically to ilucas@ourladyofmercychurch.org or hard copies can be brought to the Office of Lifelong Faith Formation.

Mardi Gras

Mark your calendar for the annual parish Mardi Gras celebration on **Sunday, February 11**. We are collecting items for our Chinese Auction, so consider re-gifting those unwanted Christmas gifts to OLM. We also need chili or soup cook-off teams. More information and sign-ups will be available in the new year.



OLM Book Group

Our January title is "The Boys in the Boat" by Daniel Brown.

New Video Series

A new biweekly video series for young adult Catholics, is now available on YouTube. Designed with the young-adult Catholic in mind. Catholic Central features chat about faith, the Bible, Catholicism, and prayer (with tons of puns, costume changes, and sketches thrown in).

Knights of Columbus News

The Knights are pleased to announce that we have a winner in our parish from the recent C.O.A.L. drawings held by the State Assembly of the Knights of Columbus. Audrey and Dick Miller are the winners of an eight day trip through the South titled "Elvis and the Southern Sounds." Congratulations Audrey and Dick! They join Joanne and Frank Cargioli as parish winners. The Cargiolis won a car several years ago.

Our Neighbors' Place

St. John the Baptist is hosting the overflow shelter for the homeless on January 17 through January 30 and February 28 through March 13. The shelter is open from 7:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m. daily. Fifteen volunteers are needed each night for 3 shifts. A breakfast and dinner is needed each day, enough to feed 60 people. If you would like to provide food, money or volunteer your time to the shelter, please contact Mary Hoffman at 873-2981 or mymary14@gmail.com or Mary Ellen Lieb at 873-1284 or melieb4@gmail.com. Make checks payable to "St. John the Baptist Outreach."

2232 Men 2018 Conference

Enjoy three nationally known speakers on Saturday, March 3, 2018 at Our Lady of Peace, 2401 West 38th Street, Erie from 9:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. The speakers are Steve Wood, Fr. Larry Richards and Mike McCoy. Register online at www.2232men.com.

Social Justice Committee News

Fr. Carlo Casalone SJ, Physician, Surgeon and Theologian, explains that euthanasia is not considered when a terminally ill patient decides to interrupt a treatment because he is agonizing, since in this case, he does not do so with the intention to die, but to halt a form of therapy that causes pain without obtaining results.



Up-Coming Events

The Erie Pro-Life community has three events in January 2018 that provide you an opportunity to speak out on behalf of unborn children and the unalienable right to life.

Pro-Life Breakfast: Saturday, January 13 at 9:00 a.m. Erie Bayfront Convention Center. Cost \$16 for adults and \$8 for children 3-12 years of age. The featured speaker is Ann McElhinny, author of "Gosnell."

DC March for Life: Friday, January 19, 2018. Annual bus trip sponsored by People for Life. \$55 per seat, \$50 if registered by December 1.

Go to People for Life at: www.Peopleforlife.life or call 882-1333 for information/reservations. You can also call Phil Legler at 504-1048.

Youth Board Application Deadline Extended

Youth interested in participating in the Diocesan Youth Board and adults interested in joining the DYB's adult team now have until Dec. 31 to apply. Students in grades 8 through 12 may apply at <http://www.onthevine.us/2018-diocesan-youth-board-information-and-application/>. Adults interested in becoming a team member may apply at <http://www.onthevine.us/2018-dyb-adult-team-member-application/>.

Mission Art Contest Deadline January 1

The Mission Office of the Diocese of Erie is still accepting submissions for a Christmas art contest sponsored by the Missionary Childhood Association of the Pontifical Mission Societies. Winning artwork will be displayed at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, D.C., during Advent and Christmas 2018. Contact the Mission Office for entry forms.

Ink Jet Fundraiser

Please donate used black or color ink jet cartridges to the Religious Education ministry. Your donation of used printer cartridges helps to support our ministry to the children of the parish. Previously refilled and remanufactured cartridges can not be redeemed.



The Music Ministry of Our Lady of Mercy presents the 2018

Epiphany Concert

SUNDAY, JANUARY 7, 2018 AT 3:00 P.M.

Join the combined adult choirs, children's choir,
and instrumentalists as we sing and celebrate the sounds
of the Christmas season.

A light social will follow.

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