



For Mercy's Sake

A quarterly newsletter of the parish of Our Lady of Mercy Roman Catholic Church

837 Bartlett Road,
Harborcreek, PA 16421

814/899-5342

www.ourladyofmercychurch.org



May 2019

The Feast of Pentecost

~June 9, 2019~

*Pentecost, the coming of the Holy Spirit,
calls up the image of wind that rushes,
flames that leap,
and disciples inspired to go out from
the upper room fearlessly.*



Scripture tells us that this is the moment that gave birth to the Church. Pentecost brings the Easter season to a grand and fiery close.

The Holy Spirit lavishes us with gifts which empower us as followers of Jesus to take up his mission and make it ours.

Wisdom, Understanding, Counsel, Fortitude, Knowledge, Piety and Fear of the Lord are gifts which help us to continue Jesus' work in our world.

Pentecost is our Birthday.

As part of the Universal Church, the Community of Our Lady of Mercy will celebrate being Church.

To acknowledge our oneness in the Spirit
all parishioners are asked to wear 'red' on the Feast of Pentecost.

As included in our Mission Statement, may we be "empowered by the Holy Spirit to live the values of Jesus in a prayerful, welcoming, and nurturing environment".

Inside this Issue:

The Feast of Pentecost.....	Page 1	Asking the Big Questions.....	Page 7
Contribution Opportunity.....	Page 2	Vacation Bible School	Page 8
CSA 2019 Report.....	Page 2	Summer Play Time.....	Page 9
Graduates Congratulations	Page 3	Volunteer Thank You	Page 9
Pancake Breakfast.....	Page 3	Summer Bible Study	Page 9
First Eucharist.....	Page 4	Knightly News.....	Page 10
Evangelization	Page 4	New Members.....	Page 10
Technology Committee	Page 5	Knights Scholarship.....	Page 11-12
RCIA Profile.....	Page 6	Youth News.....	Page 12

LOOKING FOR WAYS TO LOWER YOUR TAXABLE INCOME?



If you are age 70-1/2 or older IRS rules require you to take a required minimum distribution (RMD) from your tax deferred retirement account.

To reduce the impact of RMD income investors may want to consider making a “Qualified Charitable Distribution” (QCD).

A QCD is a direct transfer of funds from an IRA custodian, payable to a qualified charity. (OLM qualifies). **Contributions can be excluded from your taxable income, thus reducing your tax bill.**

You could consider Our Lady of Mercy ...

There are several possibilities to consider with regard to your contributions:

1. You could transfer a lump sum from your IRA to satisfy your CSA pledge.
2. You could transfer a lump sum (or several lump sums during the year) from your IRA account to satisfy your weekly offertory amount. Those using Faith Direct can adjust their contributions accordingly.
3. You could transfer one or several lump sums to satisfy both of the above.

All that you need to do is contact your custodian and tell them what you would like to do. They will send a form to complete. It's very easy.

For further information or questions call Tom Palisin at 899-9268 or 572-5437.

CSA - 2019 Report

Thank you for your generous support of the 2019 Catholic Services Appeal. As of May 1, 2019, we have received 200 pledges in the amount of **\$81,190.**

This will go a long way to help meet our parish assessment of **\$66,459** and allow our parish to meet many needed extraordinary costs and start saving for future capital improvements.

If you have not yet made a pledge, it is not too late to do so. Forms may be found in the parish office. There is no gift too small.



Honoring our Graduates

Once again, Our Lady of Mercy community would like to recognize members of our parish family who are graduating from high school or from a post-secondary institution. It has become our tradition to use our Family Pancake Brunch as the time to mark these achievements. This year's Family Brunch will be held on Sunday, June 2 at 9:30. If you are graduating this year and will be attending our parish brunch, please RSVP to the Office of Lifelong Faith Formation (899-6132) by May 26 with your name and the number of guests who will be joining you.

A Note to the Parish Community

*This Family Pancake Brunch is a parish event. All members of the parish are invited to it. The Family Pancake Brunch is **not** a special event for our graduates. Rather it is a time when our family is gathered together to share a meal. This makes it a perfect time to recognize our graduates*



FAMILY PANCAKE BRUNCH

Sunday, June 2,

9:45-10:45 AM

For the Whole Parish Family



DONATION

\$1.00 per person

Sperry Hall

Please RSVP to 899-5342 by May 26.



GRADS FREE

Congratulations to all our young people who celebrated First Eucharist.

Maria Allegretto
Delaney Andrews
Cooper Benson
Amelia Bernatowicz
Samuel Camillo
Julia Chludzinski
Nathan Henry
Chloe Knepper
Addison Matusiak

Blake Nguyen
Dakota Pohl
Jordan Pohl
Zoe Redford
Madison Rizzo
Cain Rozenek
Isabella Tylman
Maddox Vaughn



“Preach the Gospel Always. And if Necessary Use Words”

These words, attributed to St Francis of Assisi, point to a form of evangelization. As Catholics, we do not often think of ourselves as evangelizers. You know, standing on the street corner and preaching to everyone about Jesus. To evangelize is to “share or communicate the Good News, the Gospel.”

We probably evangelize more than we think.

- Do you pray?(talk to God) - you are an evangelizer
- Do you pray about decisions that you have to make? - You are an evangelizer
- Do you offer to pray for another? - You are an evangelizer
- Do you attempt to change the subject when a group starts to gossip? - You are an evangelizer
- Do you rely on the message of the Gospel to determine your words and actions? - You are an evangelizer
- Do you periodically reflect on your day to identify ways to become more like Christ? - You are an evangelizer
- Do you share with others how you see God working in your life? You are an evangelizer
- Do you express gratitude for God’s gifts & blessings? - You are an evangelizer
- Do you think of yourself as a disciple of Jesus the Christ? - You are an evangelizer
 - Do you give of your time and talent? - You are an evangelizer
 - Do you invite people to attend events with you? - you are an evangelizer



Do you help those in need? - Then you are an evangelizer!

The Pastoral Council Goal of “creating a culture in our parish that helps people to take the message out to others” inspired this article. What is your definition of evangelization? Want to share? Send your thoughts to Donna Clark at dclark@ourladyofmercychurch.org



From The TECH COMMITTEE

The Tech Committee has given the parish webpage a face lift. The look is new with easier access to all the parish events.

Check it out at <https://www.ourladyofmercychurch.org/index.html>.

Now it is easier than ever to keep up on everything that is happening at OLM. Not only can you read the weekly bulletin at our website, but information about special parish events are posted on the home page with links to more information. Another link takes you to a complete parish calendar.

Our new website is not just informational, it is interactive. At our website, you can send emails to any of the staff, request a prayer shawl, register for parish events, sign up for FaithDirect and so much more. If you are not receiving our weekly email highlighting parish news, you can sign up at the website for it.

Our newest feature is a monthly video link, a way to learn a bit more about your Catholic faith from the convenience of your phone. Stop by the website each month to view what is new.

Our website also features links to other Catholic sites: daily Mass readings, the

Diocese of Erie page, Cursillo Movement information and so much more.

If you are not following OLM on Facebook, you are missing out. A new Social Media subcommittee has been formed and the result is a more dynamic, more visually appealing presence. Did you know, you can post to our FB page, not just a response to an existing post, but you can initiate a thread of your own? You can find us on FB at @ourladyofmercyharborcreek.



The Tech Committee and the Social Media Subcommittee are looking for new members with fresh ideas and additional skills. If you have an

interest in website design, in social media, in using digital forms of communication to promote our parish and our Catholic faith, consider joining this ministry. We usually meet bi-monthly on a Thursday evening at 7:00, but we can be flexible if our meeting would prevent someone from getting involved. Interested? Call the parish office at 899-5342.





A few weeks ago, on April 20 at our Easter Vigil, Steve Brainard entered into full communion in the Catholic

Church as he celebrated the sacrament of Confirmation and received the Eucharist for the first time. This joyous celebration was the culmination of nearly a year and a half of study, prayer and community. It was also the commencement of a life of ever deepening commitment to following Christ moment by moment.

Steve Brainard and his wife and sponsor Maureen are familiar to those who attend the 11:00 Sunday Mass. Last April, Steve was welcomed into the Catechumenate, a period of intense study and prayer that usually spans a year. Week after week, this community has held Steve in prayer as he has joined them for the Liturgy of the Word before leaving to reflect more deeply on those readings. Steve and Maureen are also familiar to the rest of the parish family. From social events like the parish Mardi Gras to serving the community as a lector, from opportunities for spiritual growth such as the parish mission to a generous and humble presence in the wider Harborcreek area, Steve, and his sponsor, have been eager to grow in and respond to the call of the Gospel.

Many people resist the annulment process, but it was this very process that Steve credits for sparking his interest in the Catholic Church: "I first became interested in the Catholic faith during the annulment process in preparation for marriage. I gained a respect for the Church. I also increased my interest during and after our marriage ceremony." Needless to say, journeys like this usually can cite multiple sources and this is true of Steve. "Of course Fr. Ritchie was and is a key part of my desire to become Catholic and join the Church."

Although Steve was recently welcomed into the

Catholic Church, his Christian life goes back decades. His parents planted the seed, raising him in the Protestant faith and nurturing that seed through Sunday school. The witness of friends, many who are members of OLM and his Cursillo weekend watered that seed over the years. And, in the past 18 months, that growing seed has taken on the specific colors and fragrance of the Catholic faith.

The Rite of Christian Initiation (RCIA) can feel like a huge commitment when first presented to a person inquiring. But, as the year unfolds, what initially felt overwhelming becomes a gift to be treasured. "At first it seemed like a long process but as we began the process we looked forward to the sessions and learning about the bible. We couldn't believe the time commitment of the RCIA team and all they had to share. We cannot think of a time we complained about coming. The process helped us to gain insight about ourselves separately and together regarding our relationship with God."

Those in the RCIA process are an inspiration to the parishioners around them. Far too often our familiarity with the Mass, the gift of the Eucharist, the beauty of the Catholic faith can lead us to take them for granted. The longing, the hunger of those preparing for the Sacraments of Initiation challenge us to remember, to reflect on the value of what we have been given. In the weeks leading up to Easter, Steve was asked what he was looking forward to. His answer was "I mostly am anxious to receive the Eucharist now that I know its true meaning. I look forward to coming into full communion with God and my OLM family!" The Eucharist and our membership in the Catholic Church should be something we celebrate with just as much joy each and every Sunday.

The role of the sponsor is a vital part of the RCIA process. The sponsor walks alongside the candidate, sharing the journey, witnessing to faith on a personal level, encouraging and reflecting back to the candidate the growth that is unfolding. As sponsor, Maureen has had a special vantage point from which to watch the transformation in Steve.

“First I need to say I never thought the day would come that Steve would consider being a Catholic. In fact, when he agreed to marry in the Church I recall him saying this doesn’t mean I’ll become a Catholic. It has been a transformation for him. He has always had a kind heart but this process has made him even more in tune to the needs of others. It has been heartwarming to witness his curiosity and questioning.”

Steve was asked what he might say to those who have thought about the Catholic faith but not taken the step to begin any formal process. “Why not seek it and at least try. If you don’t take that step you will be short changing yourself. Once you take the step, you will never be alone in your journey.”

If you are interested in exploring the Catholic faith

or the possibility of being baptized into the life of Christ, there is no better time than the present. Because the RCIA is a year long process, those desiring to be baptized or welcomed into full communion in the Catholic Church at the next Easter need to begin the process now. For more information, contact Irene Lucas at 899-6132 or email ilucas@ourladyofmercychurch.org. If making an official contact seems too intimidating, start with a conversation with any member of this faith community. As Steve and Maureen say “We have never felt alone in this journey. We have felt supported by the OLM community including those we have known and the many new friends we have made along the way. Everyone is welcoming and we truly feel part of the OLM family. It makes us want to give back which has been given so freely to us.

Asking the **BIG** Questions

OLM hosts Mercyhurst University students to moderate thoughtful discussion

When was the last time you asked yourself the big questions about the Church?

This spring, a group of 10 Our Lady of Mercy parishioners had the opportunity to dig deeper in a group discussion led by freshmen from Mercyhurst University. As part of an elective theology class, the group of students developed a list of 29 challenging questions, such as:

- ♦ From your perspective, is the role of the laity considered to be important in the mission of the Church today? Why or why not?
- ♦ What do you think needs to be done to counteract the decline of priests and religious in the U.S. Church? Or is this decline happening for a reason?
- ♦ How has the clergy sex abuse crisis affected your understanding of and commitment to the Church?
- ♦ What are your concerns about the local church today and for the future?
- ♦ If you had the power to do anything to change and enhance the Church’s identity in the future, what would your vision of Church look like?

Different groups from the Mercyhurst theology class traveled to various churches in the Erie area to moderate similar discussions. The students will present their findings in class this semester.

A wide range of perspectives and experiences was represented in the room, from lifelong OLM members to RCIA graduates to new parishioners. It was a robust, respectful, and thought-provoking discussion!



OUR LADY OF MERCY PRESENTS... VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL



JULY 22 - JULY 26
9:00 A.M. - 12:00 P.M.
AGE 4 THRU ENTERING 6TH GRADE

FOR MORE INFORMATION CALL:
IRENE LUCAS 899-6132 OR THE PARISH OFFICE 899-5342
REGISTRATION DEADLINE IS JULY 8, 2019

Family Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ Zip: _____ Parish: _____

Phone #: _____ Emergency #: _____

Email Address: _____

Child's Name	Age	Grade 19-20	Medical/Dietary Needs

Adult & Teen Volunteers
(Teens must be entering 9th Grade or above)

Name: _____

Phone: _____

Email Address: _____

Please indicate in which area you would like to help out:

Teacher: ____ Story Time: ____ Craft: ____ Games: ____ Music: ____

Aide: ____ Kitchen: ____ Set-Up: ____ Other: ____

****ADULT VOLUNTEERS MUST PROVIDE CLEARANCES****

Summer Playtime!

Are you a parent, grandparent or summer caregiver of children between the ages of 0 and 5?

Join us this summer for some playtime at Shades Beach Park!

We will meet at the park at 9:30 for a time of fellowship and allow the little ones to play.

Join us Thursdays June 13th, July 18th, and August 15th.

If it should be a rainy day, we will still have some fun in the Our Lady of Mercy Gym!

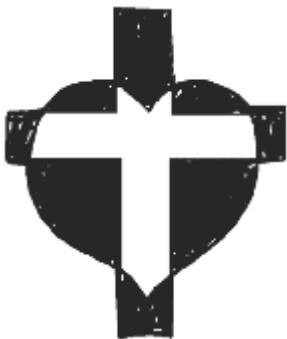
Older siblings are welcome to come too!



Thank you, Thank You!

Thank you to all the volunteers who gave their time and talent so generously during this past year serving in the catechetical ministry. Your prayerful witness, creativity, patience, dedication and cooperation have been noticed with appreciation by your parish family. Your students are grateful. The families of your students are very grateful. This entire parish community is grateful beyond words for your hours of selfless service.

Catching Fire: Becoming Flame



Ever wonder how some people seem to become on fire about their relationship with God? This six-week series will give you the tools and kindling to prepare for the spark of God in your life—and then show you how to fan that spark into flame until you are set ablaze. With the time-tested wisdom of the Christian spiritual experience and the guidance of the saints, this will be eminently practical. Each session will include a half hour video presentation by Fr. Albert Haase, OFM and group discussion.

When: Tuesday mornings from 9:00 to 10:00

June 11, 18, 26, July 9, 16, 23

OLM Conference Room

There is no cost and no need to commit to every week

Coffee and sweets provided. All welcome!

If there is an interest, this program can be run on Monday evenings also. Please contact Irene Lucas at 899-6132 or ilucas@ourladyofmercychurch.org if interested in a Monday night session.



KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS®

KNIGHTLY NEWS SPRING 2019

KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS OLM SCHOLARSHIPS

**Reminder – The scholarship application
deadline is May 17.**

Scholarships are offered to graduating high school seniors of our parish. A portion of the Golf and Sports Raffle proceeds are earmarked for them. Thank you for supporting the raffle through which you support the youth of our parish in this and other ways as well. The scholarship form is found in this newsletter, or contact the parish office or see the parish website for details.

26th ANNUAL GOLF & SPORTS RAFFLE

This annual event is just days away. It is one of the largest of our parish and relies on the generosity not only of the Knights, but also of the Ladies of the Knights,

parishioners and friends. We are thankful to all and look forward to seeing you on May 10th. If you cannot attend, by purchasing tickets you will be eligible for 19 wonderful prizes.

BINGO / PIZZA NIGHTS AT V.A. MEDICAL CENTER

Our quarterly night with the Veterans at the V.A. Medical Center was held in April.

The Knights of Columbus Council 11144 at Our Lady of Mercy Church has been in existence for 26 years. We now number over 65 active members and are recognized as a significant ministry in our parish. If you would like to know more about the Knights of Columbus or about becoming a Knight, contact one of us. If you would like to become a *Lady of the Knights*, just let one of us know.



Welcome to Our New Members!

If you live near these new parishioners please send a card or stop in to say hello.

John Curtin
6815 Firman Road
Erie PA 16510-4513

Dot & Jack Green
5456 East Lake Road Apt #220
Erie PA 16511-1462

Erica Erwin
Nora
1925 Lakeside Dr.
Erie PA 16511-1067

Nicole Holden-Summers
Macy and Benjamin
8355 Windsor Beach Ct.
Erie PA 16511-1657

Knights of Columbus
Council #III44
Edward F. Cudicio Scholarship

Scholarship Application 2019
Our Lady of Mercy Parish

Personal Information

Name:

Address:

Birth Date:

Telephone:

High School:

Graduation Date:

College or Institution to be attended:

Entrance Date:

Parent or Guardian Information

Father's Name: _____ Phone Number: home _____ cell _____

Mother's Name: _____ Phone Number: home _____ cell _____

Scholastic Record

Your school must send an official school transcript to the Knights of Columbus at Our Lady of Mercy Church. The high school record is required through the latest grading period.

Extra-Curricular Activities

List your most significant extra-curricular or non-academic activities, including areas such as work experience, involvement in organizations, service to community, school, and/or church and dates of these activities.

(Please see the next page for final directions.)

Essay Requirements

In addition to this form, please submit an essay of 300 words minimum, explaining how these activities demonstrate initiative, leadership and creativity. Your essay will be evaluated based on the Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA) elements of good writing. For legibility it is preferred that the document be digital or printed, rather than hand-written.

Reminder

Applications must be complete and an essay included in order for you to be considered for the scholarship. Please be sure to sign below.

I hereby affirm that the information herein is correct and promise to notify the Knights of Columbus Council 11144 on any changes.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Please see that your application, essay and scholastic record are returned to the main office of Our Lady of Mercy Church at 837 Bartlett Rd., Harborcreek, PA 16421 in person or by mail by **Friday, May 17, 2019.**

~~~~~  
Thank you for your interest and we wish you well! We look forward to receiving your application and reading your essay.

## YOUTH NEWS

So many things are going on for our youth! On June 12th youth have the opportunity to go on our annual trip to Cedar Point. Permission slips and payment are due on May 13th and can be found on the parish web site or parish office.

On June 16th youth and chaperons will be heading to Cumberland Maryland for this years Mission Trip. We are excited to once again share our time talents and treasures for those in need in a very poor part of the United States.

Our next big adventure is the National Catholic Youth Conference which is November 21-23 . It is held every other year in Indianapolis, Indiana and is open to students from 9-12 grade. This is an amazing experience with 20,000 youth from all over the US attending. If you are interested or need more information contact Geri Hadlock.

