



FOR MERCY'S SAKE

February 2025

the quarterly newsletter of Our Lady of Mercy Church

837 Bartlett Road Harborcreek, PA 16421

814-899-5342 • www.ourladyofmercychurch.org

www.facebook.com/ourladyofmercyharborcreek

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THE SEASON OF LENT

ASH WEDNESDAY

Wednesday, March 5

8:30 a.m. & 6:00 p.m.

Mass with Distribution of Ashes

STATIONS OF THE CROSS

Fridays of Lent

7:00 p.m.

EUCCHARISTIC ADORATION

Wednesday Evening

March 12

6:00 p.m.

LENTEN PASTUS

Wednesday Evenings

March 19, 26 & April 2

6:00 p.m. - Prayer

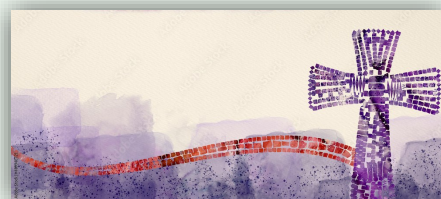
6:10 p.m. - Simple Soup Supper

6:30 p.m. - Presentation

ANOINTING OF THE SICK

March 15 & 16

All Weekend Masses



HOLY THURSDAY LITURGY

Thursday, April 17

7:00 p.m.

GOOD FRIDAY SERVICE

Friday, April 18

3:00 p.m.

Outdoor Stations

will be prayed at

1:00 p.m.

BLESSING OF FOOD

Saturday, April 19

11:00 a.m.

EASTER VIGIL

Saturday, April 19

8:30 p.m.

EASTER LITURGIES

Sunday, April 20

9:30 a.m.

THE SEASON OF EASTER

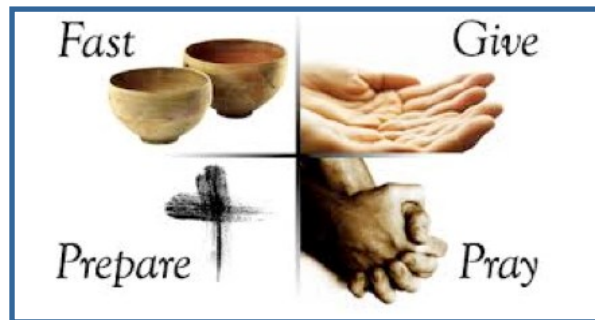


Inside this Issue:

Lenten Practices	Page 2
Scripture Study	Page 3
Operation Rice Bowl	Page 3
Baptismal Prep	Page 4
RCIA.....	Page 4
Spaghetti Dinner	Page 5
Eucharistic Adoration.....	Page 5
Anointing of the Sick	Page 5
Lenten Pastus Series	Page 6-7

Small Christian Communities	Pages 7
Knightly News	Page 8
Lenten Reflections	Page 9
Adult Faith Formation	Page 9
Scrip Order Form	Page 10
Sunday CAFE	Page 11
Anniversary Celebration	Page 12
Sanctus Retreat.....	Page 13

LENTEN PRACTICES 2025



The season of Lent begins this year on **Ash Wednesday, March 5, 2025**, and concludes when the Paschal Triduum of the Passion, Death, and Resurrection of the Lord begins at the start of the Evening Mass of the Lord's Supper on Holy Thursday, **April 17, 2025**. The following practices and regulations are promulgated and binding for all Latin Rite Catholics in the Diocese of Erie for Lent and the Paschal Triduum, 2025. Eastern Rite Catholics who may be attending Latin Rite parishes have their own proper regulations and should consult their own eparchy or parish.

1. Traditional Lenten practices of PRAYER, FASTING, and ALMSGIVING, and other forms of self-denial, are recommended most warmly by the Church. Daily Mass is particularly encouraged.
2. ASH WEDNESDAY, ALL FRIDAYS IN LENT, and GOOD FRIDAY are days of abstinence from eating meat for those 14 years of age and older.
3. ASH WEDNESDAY AND GOOD FRIDAY are also days of fasting for those ages 18 to 58 inclusive. (On these days, those bound by the law of fasting may take one full meal. Two smaller meals, sufficient to maintain strength according to one's needs, are also permitted. Eating between meals is not permitted, but liquids including milk and fruit juices are allowed. When health or work is seriously affected, the law does not oblige.)
4. On HOLY THURSDAY, no celebration of the Mass is to begin anywhere in the diocese earlier than 4:30 pm without the explicit approval of Bishop Persico.
5. Although it does not include the Liturgy of the Eucharist, by its very nature the GOOD FRIDAY service is celebrated by a priest only.
6. All celebrations of the EASTER VIGIL are to begin after nightfall (which is defined as approximately one hour after local sunset.) Nightfall is about 9:00 pm this year. To balance pastoral need and liturgical prescriptions, Bishop Persico has decreed that the Easter Vigil in the Diocese of Erie is to begin at 8:30 pm or any later time. Any start time earlier than 8:30 pm must receive explicit approval from the Bishop.

The Book of Signs ~ The Gospel of John

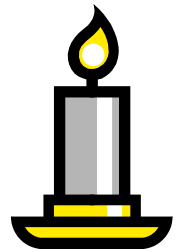
A Lenten Scripture Study



Thursday, Mar. 6 thru Apr. 10
9:30-10:30 a.m.

OR

Saturday, Mar. 8 thru Apr. 12
5:30-6:30 p.m.



The Gospel of John is written with a lyrical and mystical beauty. Unlike the other Gospels, John does not rush the reader from one miraculous moment in the life of Jesus to the next. Instead, John offers 7 carefully selected "signs" that point to profound truths. Each week of this Lenten study, we will explore one of those signs and what it reveals for the disciple who is journeying with Christ toward the cross.

For more information, contact Irene Lucas at ilucas@ourladyofmercychurch.org or 814-899-6132.

OPERATION RICE BOWL



Once again, this Lent, parishioners of Our Lady of Mercy are invited to participate in Operation Rice Bowl.

Operation Rice Bowl is a project sponsored by Catholic Relief Services. CRS is a Catholic developmental

organization assisting the poorest and most desperate of our brothers and sisters around the world. Through Operation Rice Bowl, we are given an opportunity to share our abundant blessings with those in need.

Rice Bowl cardboard banks and family calendars will be distributed to all of the children enrolled in our Rel. Ed. Program. Additional Rice Bowls and calendars will be available for families not connected with Rel. Ed.

The calendars offer excellent suggestions for keeping the needs of others before us during Lent. Information on the causes of hunger and poverty in various regions of the globe are given in a way that is easy for all to understand.

As we give up luxuries such as chocolate or eat a simple meal once a week, we are invited to place the money we save into the Rice Bowl bank. In this way, our acts of self-sacrifice are not tests of our self-will, but opportunities to help others. The money in each bank is turned in to the Rel. Ed. Office during the Easter season. From there, it is mailed to Catholic Relief Services to help the hungry and homeless, those without access to education or medical care, around the world.

Baptismal Preparation Session

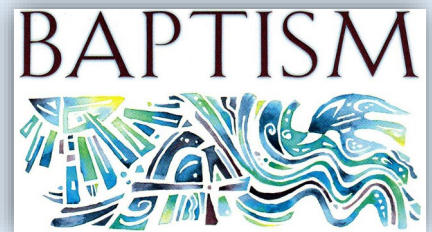
To hold your child for the first time is one of the most holy moments in a parent's life. No one can deny the awe and gratitude that fills the heart when a parent gazes on this miracle. We know that we have been entrusted with a sacred duty, to protect and guide this gift of God into adulthood.

To hold your child who is newly born in the waters of baptism is a profoundly holy moment. God has given you this treasure and you surrender him or her back to

the loving arms of God. Is there a more incredible responsibility than to shepherd this child into the life of a disciple, to enable them to rise with Christ, to become a member of the Body of Christ? Recognizing the gift and responsibility of bringing a child to the font, the Church asks that all parents attend a Parent Baptismal Preparational Session prior to scheduling their child's baptism.

The next session held at OLM will take place on Sunday, March 30 @ 10:30 am.

Parents are asked to call the parish office at 814-899-5342 by **Wednesday, March 26** to register. The class will not take place if there are no registrations.



OCIA INVITATION

God loved us so much that God sent His only Son so that we might have eternal life and everlasting joy. This eternal life and everlasting joy begins today, in the extraordinary reality of grace, in the gift of faith lived in the Christian community. Come and be a part of this legacy, The Body of Christ making God's love and mercy visible in a world of pain and alienation.

Would you like to learn more about the Catholic faith? Are you attracted to the life of Jesus Christ and the thought of being one of his disciples? Would you like to be baptized into the Christian family?

The Order of Christian Initiation for Adults (OCIA) would like to invite you to consider the richly challenging and profoundly rewarding life of Catholic Christianity. The OCIA is a year-long (or longer) process of prayer and study, of community ritual and personal reflection, of parish life and scriptural study designed to enable individuals to hear, understand and respond to the internal promptings drawing them to Christ and the Catholic Church.

If you would like more information about the Order of Christian Initiation of Adults, for yourself or for someone you know, you may call Irene Lucas at 814-899-6132 or email ilucas@ourladyofmercychurch.org to schedule an individual meeting.

Come and journey with us. Our destination is out of this world! Asking your questions, starting the conversation, stepping onto the path does not obligate you. So, come and learn more.



Spaghetti Dinner

Fundraiser

at Our Lady of Mercy Church

SUNDAY FEBRUARY 2, 2025

11:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Our Lady of Mercy Church
837 Bartlett Rd. Harborcreek, PA 16421

EUCCHARISTIC ADORATION DURING LENT

Wednesday March 12

beginning at 6:00 p.m.



ANOINTING OF THE SICK

Our Parish Community will celebrate the **Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick** at all **Masses on March 15 & 16**. Jesus spent the greatest amount of his time healing both spiritually and physically. It is said that we spend our time on those things which are most important to us. If this is true, then healing must have been a very important value to Jesus. Our Mission Statement reminds us that we are a community that lives the values of Jesus Christ. Our celebration is not just for the sick. The faith community gathers with them to show their concern for the sick of our community, and to pray with and for the sick of the community.

Who may celebrate this Sacrament?

Those who are suffering any serious physical or mental illness; those who are suffering any chronic illness; those who are about to undergo surgery; the elderly who cannot get around as well as before.



Lent is a season of spiritual renewal and growth. Through prayer and penance, service and study, community and conversion, we rededicate ourselves to our baptism and become more faithful and faith-filled disciples of Christ.

The Wednesday evening Lenten speaker series at OLM gives us an opportunity to grow together as the Body of Christ. As we gather for a simple soup supper, we nourish the bonds of community. As we listen to a local speaker, we nurture our Catholic faith.

Mar. 5 6:00 PM Ash Wednesday Mass

Let us begin this holy season of preparation and conversion joined together around the Eucharistic table and the Word of God.

Mar. 19 6:00 Prayer
 6:10 Soup Supper
 6:30 Fr. Michael Kesicki

Until You Come Again: Reflections on the Last Things

A summary of the Church's teaching on the Second Coming of Christ and the Teaching on Heaven, Hell and Purgatory. What does the Church believe and how do we carry this out in life and worship?

Fr. Michael Kesicki is University Chaplain at Gannon University and has taught there since 1997. He worked in seminary formation at St. Mark Seminary until 2022 and currently is in residence at St. Peter Cathedral. In addition to his pastoral ministry to the Gannon community and at the Cathedral parish, he teaches courses in philosophy, theology, and foreign language.

March 26 6:00 Prayer
 6:10 Soup Supper
 6:30 Fr. David Renne

That The Mother of Our Lord Should Appear to Me

Around the globe and across the centuries, people have reported appearances by the Virgin Mary. Marian apparitions have led to conversions to Catholicism, a spread of devotions to Mary, and worldwide trips by millions of pilgrims to holy sites. The Vatican has specific regulations for investigating the Marian Apparitions, and only 16 have been deemed "worthy of belief".

Fr. Renne will explore celebrated Marian appearances, focusing on Lourdes, Fatima, and Guadalupe. He will explain the process the church undergoes when evaluating Marian apparitions.

Fr. David Renne is a native of Punxsutawney, PA. He was ordained a priest for the Diocese of Erie in 2013 by Bishop Persico. After serving four years as a parochial vicar at Our Lady of Peace Parish in Erie, he was assigned to The Catholic University of America in Washington, DC for doctoral studies. He defended his doctoral dissertation in 2022 on the use of technology in the liturgy. He currently serves as the vice-rector of St. Mark Seminary. He is an instructor of theology at Gannon University, and serves as the director of continuing clergy formation for the Diocese of Erie.

Apr. 2 6:00 Prayer
 6:10 Soup Supper
 6:30 Members of the OLM Parish Family
 Ignited By the Spirit: Witnesses by Those Whose Lives
 Have Been Touched By the Holy Spirit

In Baptism, each of us was given the gift of the Holy Spirit. Sealed with that Spirit in Confirmation, the gifts that the Spirit gives were strengthened in us. But how often are we aware of the Holy Spirit working through and in us?

Three members of our parish, Adriana Grosch, Todd Beckes, Amanda Durst, will share how the Holy Spirit is experienced in their lives. As we hear their witnesses, we will be challenged to a greater awareness of the Spirit at work in us.

Date and Time TBD Parish Penance Service

Lent is a beautiful season to celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation. The prayers and practices of this season help us call to mind our sins and God's forgiveness. As we grow in awareness of our faults, we can bring them to God in a spirit of repentance, open to growth in grace, awaiting the full expression of mercy and love. Communal celebrations of the sacrament of reconciliation remind us that continued conversion is a journey we make together as the Body of Christ.

Small Christian Communities

Lent is a season of renewal, of making new what we hold closest to our hearts. Small faith sharing groups are the perfect way to renew our spiritual lives, to challenge ourselves to live a new our walk with Christ each day.

All are invited to try a Small Christian Community during the season of Lent. There are groups for every schedule: daytime and evening, all female and mixed groups, those that meet weekly and those that meet less frequently.

What is a Small Christian Community? A Small Christian Community is a group of parishioners who meet consistently to reflect together on the Sunday readings. Each gathering begins and ends with prayer. Believing that God's Word is alive and deeply personal, participants allow the Scripture to speak to their hearts. The shared insights of each member help the others to grow in their understanding of what God is saying. As the

members share their reflections on the biblical passage, they also share their lives, their hopes and dreams, their joys and sorrows and become the hands and voice of Christ to each other.

Anyone interested in trying a small faith sharing group during the Lenten season can contact Irene in the Faith Formation Office at 814-899-6132 or ilucas@ourladyofmercychurch.org. Trying a small faith group during Lent does not obligate you to continue beyond those 6 weeks if the experience does not speak to you or time does not allow.

Are you reluctant to join a group that has been together for years? Consider forming a group with your own friends or parishioners you know. We will provide you with the training you need.

For more information, contact Irene at ilucas@ourladyofmercychurch.org or 814-899-6132



Spaghetti Dinner

Several Knights will be involved with The Annual Spaghetti Dinner Fundraiser on February 2nd. Frank Abate is the main man in preparation of meatballs, sauce and spaghetti itself and has asked for help on each of the three days prior to the event - Thursday, Friday and Saturday. If you can help, contact him or just show up in Sperry Hall those mornings. And don't forget cleanup. A new menu item has been added - chicken parmesan. Most importantly, we ask everyone to promote and come yourselves on the 2nd for a good meal and great social time.

Golf Raffle

The annual Golf & Sports Raffle will be held Friday, May 9, 6pm in Sperry Hall. We are in the early stages of planning and count on Knights and non-Knights alike to join, as in the past, to present an event that not only our church, but much of the Harborcreek Community enjoys and supports so well.

Chapter Meeting

There will be a K of C Chapter Meeting at OLM on the evening of February 3rd. A Chapter, consists of several councils, of which we are one. Eucharistic Panels will be on display that evening. There will be more information on the panels.

Fourth Degree

A Fourth Degree will be held at St. Luke Parish in Erie the first weekend in August. All Third-Degree Knights are eligible and encouraged to attend.

Scholarship Reminder

Begin thinking about scholarships, which we offer to graduating seniors whose parents are members of the parish.

Knight Membership Grows

Our 100th member has joined our council. As we continued to grow in members, Tom Palisin, former Deputy Grand Knight, issued a challenge several months ago - to achieve a membership of 100 by the end of 2024. We did it. Our goal is not only to achieve numbers, but to involve ourselves in being charitable with our neighbors and our church. Our council is a very active one. If you're not already a Knight, consider becoming one. We'd love having you.

Financial Giving for 2024

\$7,000 - Replaced Leaky Skylight in Atrium (Classroom Area)

\$2,900 - Scholarships

\$1,500 - Youth Mission Trip

\$1,300 - Ella Cochran Food Pantry

\$631 - Receivers for Hearing Impaired

\$500 - Seminarian Support

\$500 - Eleanor Roosevelt Presentation

\$357 - Bibles for Confirmation Students

\$300 - Needy Family

\$286 - Vacation Bible School

\$200 - Women's Care Center

\$15,474 Total

Thanks to all who support the fundraisers (Golf Raffle) which in turn enable the contributions above.

Parish Dance with The Groove Band

The Knights sponsored the sixth annual parish dance held in early November featuring the GROOVE band, which has been Erie's most popular band for a number of years. Nearly 300 people attended and enjoyed another memorable evening of lively and entertaining music. Like our May Golf Raffle this dance has become a popular event not only for the Parish but the entire Harborcreek community. And yes, they are booked again for November 2025.

PARISH REFLECTIONS FOR LENT



The Word of God holds depths of insight that never seem to be exhausted. When we come to Scripture in prayer, the Holy Spirit can give us the eyes to see and the ears to hear a word to challenge and comfort. Sometimes it takes the voice of another to reveal new and powerful truths in passages that have become familiar.

This Lent, we are inviting everyone to allow the Spirit to speak to the parish through them. Would you be willing to write a short reflection (approximately 250 words) on one of the Lenten weekday Mass readings? This reflection will be emailed to those who have opted to receive them through FlockNote.

In February, a sign-up list will be posted in the Gathering Space along with copies of the readings. Find a reading that speaks to your heart, add your name to the list for that day, then take time to pray with those words of Scripture. One week before the date of your readings, email your reflection to the Faith Formation Office ilucas@ourladyofmercychurch.org. On the day you chose, that reflection will be emailed to those interested parishioners.

Our snowbirds and college youth are encouraged to be part of this Lenten project. Readings can be found at the website of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops or the parish can email you a copy of the readings. Just email ilucas@ourladyofmercychurch.org with the date you would like to write the reflection for.

A FlockNote group has been created for those who want to receive these reflections. To be added to the list, simply go to your FlockNote account and add "Lenten Reflection Group".

Through our baptism, we have each been anointed as prophet and entrusted with the gifts of the Spirit. This Lent, let us be the voice that opens the Scripture for each other. This Lent, let us listen to the wisdom in our sisters and brothers.

CURRENTLY SEEKING NEW MEMBERS FOR THE ADULT FAITH FORMATION COMMITTEE!



This committee serves the community of Our Lady of Mercy by developing programming aimed for adults in our parish. Our mission is to produce events that help us grow closer to Christ and learn more about our Catholic faith. Events that the AFFC has organized include the Sunday Cafés, Lenten Lecture Series, bus trips to sacred sites, Q&A with the Pastor, Symbols of Holy Week, and much more!

The committee meets every **First Wednesday of each month at 6:00pm**. Commitment is very flexible. If you can't attend meetings, but have some suggestions for parish events, please let us know by contacting Irene Lucas (ilucas@ourladyofmercychurch.org) or Adriana Grosch (adriana.alma18@gmail.com)!

Looking for Easter Basket Fillers or like to shop from home?

Gift Cards could be the answer!

One stop shopping AND the Church earns money.

Gift Card Order Form

Our Lady of Mercy earns cash with every gift card purchased.

(2.5% - 14% depending on the gift card)

The cards listed below are those available in the Parish Office or visit the RaiseRight mobile app or RaiseRight.com to see all 750+ brands and available denominations.

3 ways to order:

Stop by the parish office after the weekend Masses or during the week between 9 and 2.

Fill out the form below and drop it off or mail it to OLM 837 Bartlett Rd Harborcreek PA 16421

Contact Pat Marshall: Text (814)440-4890 or email pmm1955.erie@gmail.com

Please make checks payable to: Our Lady of Mercy Church

For questions or more information please call Pat Marshall at 814-440-4890

	Denomination	Quantity	Total Cost
Amazon	\$25		
Amazon	\$100		
Apple/Itunes	\$25		
Applebees	\$25		
Arby's	\$10		
Barnes & Noble	\$10		
Bath & Body Works	\$10		
Bath & Body Works	\$25		
Bob Evans	\$10		
Bob Evans	\$25		
Buffalo Wild Wings	\$10		
Buffalo Wild Wings	\$25		
Burger King	\$10		
Chipotle	\$10		
Cinnabon-Moes etc	\$25		
Country Fair	\$25		
Country Fair	\$50		
Country Fair	\$100		
Dairy Queen	\$10		
Darden Restaurants	\$25		
Domino's	\$10		
Dunkin'	\$10		
Dunkin'	\$25		
Giant Eagle	\$25		
Giant Eagle	\$50		
Giant Eagle	\$100		

	Denomination	Quantity	Total Cost
Home Depot	\$25		
Kohl's	\$25		
Michaels	\$25		
Old Navy	\$25		
Outback Steakhouse	\$25		
Outback Steakhouse	\$50		
Panera	\$10		
Panera	\$25		
Pizza Hut	\$10		
Stan's Garden Center	\$25		
Starbucks	\$10		
Starbucks	\$25		
Subway	\$10		
Target	\$10		
Target	\$25		
Target	\$50		
Tim Hortons	\$10		
Total Wine	\$25		
Ulta	\$25		
Walmart	\$25		
Walmart	\$50		
Walmart	\$100		
Wendy's	\$10		

Others found at RaiseRight.com

	Denomination	Quantity	Total Cost

Customer Info:

Name: _____
 Phone # _____
 Email: _____

In stock: Total \$ _____ # Cards _____
 Ordered: Total \$ _____ # Cards _____
 Total: \$ _____ Total Cards _____
 Check # _____ Or Cash

Sunday Morning *C*A*F*E*

Sunday, Feb. 16 @ 10:30

JOIN US FOR FRESH BREWED COFFEE, HOMEMADE TREATS AND AN INFORMATIVE PRESENTATION.



TITLE:

GUARDING THE DIGITAL FRONTIERS: PROTECTING YOUR CYBER WORLD IN THE MODERN AGE

Summary:

Join us for an engaging session where we explore the critical importance of cybersecurity in today's interconnected world. Learn about the latest threats, including malware, phishing, and ransomware, and discover practical strategies to protect your data, devices, and personal information. From mastering strong passwords and leveraging multi-factor authentication to understanding the power and risks of AI in cybersecurity, this talk provides actionable insights to stay safe online. Whether you're an individual or an organization, this session will equip you with the tools and knowledge to navigate the digital age securely. Don't miss this opportunity to fortify your digital defenses!

PRESENTER:

DR. CHRISTOPHER MANSOUR

Christopher Mansour is the founding member and Chair of the Computing and Information Science Department at Mercyhurst University, where he has been developing and teaching the Cybersecurity program for six years. He holds a Ph.D. in Engineering with a concentration in Cyber Security and a Master of Science in Computer Engineering from Villanova University.

Christopher's areas of expertise include computer networks security, software security, embedded systems security, internet of things, ubiquitous computing, software-defined networks, cyber-physical systems security, and trusted computing. He has published multiple articles in international peer-reviewed conferences and journals, as well as been an invited speaker for various cybersecurity talks and workshops.

In addition to his academic work, Christopher served as a technical committee member and reviewer for several international conferences and as an assistant editor for the Cybersecurity Skills Journal. He is also a member of the Association for Computing Machinery (ACM) and the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE).





25TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

Come celebrate 25 years of the
dedication of our Church Building!

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 9

6:00p.m. Mass

Bishop Persico, presider

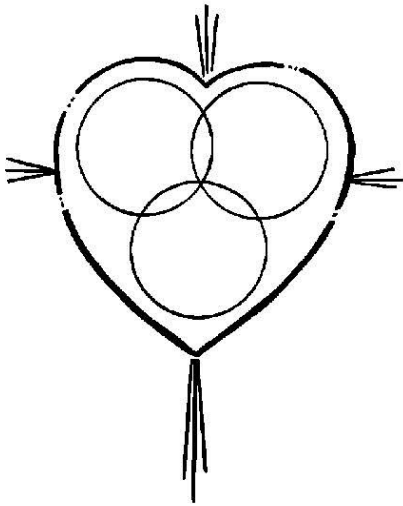
followed by an hors d'oeuvre reception

if you plan to attend the reception,
please RSVP to Cheri Longua

cclongua@gmail.com or (814) 464-4832 by March 24

SANCTUS

March 1, 2025



Retreat! Step back from the hectic pace of life to spend a day with God. Give yourself the gift of time to hear afresh the story of God's great love, to renew your faith and deepen your walk with Christ.

Join us for prayer, reflection, sharing and renewal.

🔔 Meals are provided 🔔 There is no cost 🔔

To register, complete the bottom portion of this flier and return it to the RE Office or in the collection basket by Feb. 9.

Questions? Call Irene @ 814-899-6132
or email ilucas@ourladyofmercychurch.org

Space is limited

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Email _____

Do you have any special needs? _____

Check All That Apply

Female Male

Married registering w/ Spouse Married registering alone

Single Divorced Separated Widowed

Catholic Non-Catholic