

We Miss You

The full, active and joyous participation of every Catholic is a precious gift to our faith community. As long as any Catholic is inactive or alienated from the Church, the Church remains incomplete.

We Miss You!

We want all our brothers and sisters to return to the church so we can support each other on our common journey of faith.

We, the faith community of Our Lady of Mercy, invite all who are away to rediscover the gift of faith and the abundant life in God through Jesus Christ. Fulfill the longing in your heart for

“Our hearts are restless, O Lord, until they rest in you.” *St. Augustine*

An Invitation

The Church's call is to help people encounter Jesus Christ through the Sacraments. Perhaps this brochure has been given to you by someone who cares about you and wants you to develop a deeper relationship with God and get reacquainted with the Church. Listen to your heart, pray about it or talk to someone. Allow God to reach out to you through others.

What can we do to help?

If you are returning to the church, we want to welcome you personally and find out if there is anything we can do to help you in the process of reconnecting to the church. Contact Information is on the back of this brochure.

An apology:

Although we celebrate the victory of God's grace over our weakness, we still regret that some have been alienated from the church, perhaps by the actions of individuals.

We are sorry.

It is our hope that those who have been hurt and feel alienated will come to realize that although unChristian behavior may be done by those who are a part of the church, such behavior does not represent the Church and it offends us. Despite the presence of the human condition in the Catholic Church, the presence of God's grace is still greater in the many people who strive to follow Christ authentically. There are many wonderful people who are still Catholic, and there is always room for more.

Growing Spiritually

Is God calling you to a deeper relationship?

- The routines and rhythms of everyday life do not fulfill your hunger
- There is a restlessness to live a life that matters
- Life is full yet not fulfilling
- There is a longing in you that you have not been able to satisfy elsewhere

If any of the previous statements ring true, then perhaps this is the first step toward growing spiritually.

What should you do?

- ❖ Come to Mass on Sunday, listen to God speak to you through the prayers and scriptures.
- ❖ Pick up a bulletin, see what is happening in the parish and choose a place to start that is right for you.
- ❖ Come to a parish event with a friend.

Divorce and Marriage

Can I come back if I am divorced? . . . **Yes.** You can definitely come home to the Catholic Church and participate fully in the life of the parish community, including receiving communion. Divorce alone does not exclude anyone from the sacraments.

For those who are married or remarried outside the Church, each situation is unique. You can begin the process of healing your relationship with God and the Church.

To find out more, contact your local parish and speak to the person who handles marriage annulments. You can also learn more at:

<http://www.eriescd.org/tribunal.asp>

The Church is very eager to help and welcome you home with the love of Christ.

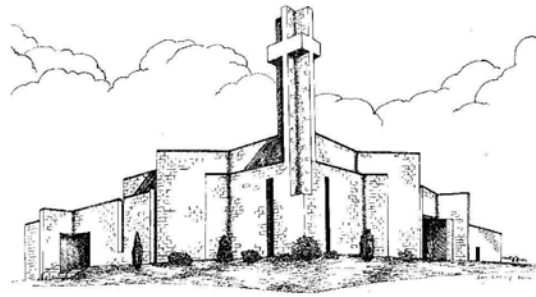
Finding Answers

Do you have Questions Like These?

- Is my own spirituality enough, or do I need something more?
- What if I am divorced? Or married /remarried outside of the Catholic Church? Can I come back?
- What am I missing by not actively practicing my Catholic faith?
- How can I make the greatest possible difference with the rest of my life?
- I have been away from the Church for a long time. Is it too late to return?
- A lot has changed in the Church. Can I really get caught up?
- What if I disagree with some of the Church's teachings?
- I feel guilty about my past. How can returning to the Church help me?
- I left the Church because I was hurt. Why should I return now? And, what can I expect if I return?

If you're are asking these or similar questions, you might be hearing God's loving call to return to the active practice of your Catholic Faith. We can help you find answers.

If you want to speak with someone about returning to the practice of the Catholic faith, please contact us, using the information on the back. Our parish representative will be in touch with you. We look forward to seeing you. Pray to God for guidance. Your response to this invitation could be the first step to a new beginning in your life.



Our Lady of Mercy Church

814-899-5342
837 Bartlett Rd
Harborcreek PA 16421

Parish Staff:

Msgr. Gerald Ritchie, Pastor

John Brophy, Deacon

Donna Clark, Pastoral Minister

Irene Lucas, Director of Faith

Formation

Geri Hadlock, Youth Minister

Sr Mary Rose Romeo, Liturgy & Music
Coor.

Sr Theresa Zoky, OSB, Parish Secretary

Masses: Saturday 6 PM
Sunday 8:30 AM
Sunday 11:00 AM

www.ourladyofmercychurch.org

Parish Contact: Donna Clark

Welcome Home



Our Lady of Mercy Church
www.ourladyofmercychurch.org

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814-899-5342

Roman Catholic Diocese of Erie
www.eriercd.org

www.CatholicsComeHome.org