

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 24, 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. 12/25** **Christmas Day** - Parish Office Closed
10:00 a.m. Christmas Day Mass
- Tue. 12/26** Parish Office Closed
- Wed. 12/27** Parish Office Closed
- Thur. 12/28** Parish Office Closed
- Fri. 12/29** Parish Office Closed
1:30 p.m. Legion of Mary
7:00 p.m. Young Adult Adoration
- Sat. 12/30** **4:30 p.m.** Sacrament of Penance
- Sun. 12/31** **Feast of the Holy Family**
8:30 a.m. Mass
11:00 a.m. Mass
- Mon. 01/01** **New Year's Day** - Parish Office Closed
10:00 a.m. Mass—Solemnity of Mary Mother of God



IN LOVING MEMORY

We remember Anthony Carbonelli, brother-in-law of Frank Abate. Please keep him and his families in your prayers.

MASS INTENTIONS

- Mon. 12/25** **10:00 a.m.** For the People of Our Lady of Mercy
- Tue. 12/26** **8:30 a.m.**
- Wed. 12/27** **8:30 a.m.**
- Thur. 12/28** **8:30 a.m.** Dennis Hollarn (Lois & Bill Struchen)
- Fri. 12/29** **8:30 a.m.**
- Sat. 12/30** **8:30 a.m.**
6:00 p.m. Helen Hemmis (Norman & Barbara Schlosser)
- Sun. 12/31** **8:30 a.m.** Joseph Wenzel (Family)
11:00 a.m. For the People of OLM

SCRIPTURE READINGS

- Mon. 12/25** Is 9:1-16 / Ti 2:11-14 / Luke 2:1-14
- Tue. 12/26** Acts 6:8-10, 7:54-59 / Matthew 10:17-22
- Wed. 12/27** 1 Jn 1:1-4 / John 20:1a, 2-8
- Thur. 12/28** 1 Jn 1:5—2:2 / Matthew 2:13-18
- Fri. 12/29** 1 Jn 2:3-11 / Luke 2:22-35
- Sat. 12/30** 1 Jn 2:12-17 / Luke 2:36-40
- Sun. 12/31** Sir 3:2-6, 12-14/Col 3:12-21/Luke 2:22-40

OLM PARISH OFFICE REMINDERS

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.

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.

Bulletin Announcements

All content for the bulletin is due 10 days before the bulletin date. All bulletin flyers are now one-half page. Bulletin flyers also need to be **scheduled in advance** for inclusion in any given bulletin. **They must also be submitted as a Word or Publisher document.** Questions? Contact Marsha in the parish office.

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 Visitor for the week is Andrea Maille.

THIS SUNDAY'S REFLECTION

Luke 1:26-38



God makes a covenant of fidelity with us, as strong as a rock that cannot be moved. God is a loving "father" whose kindness and mercy stand firm forever. God builds an everlasting home in which to dwell, not a magnificent temple or palace, but a virgin womb, a new tabernacle for a new covenant. Mary's child is called "Jesus, savior, and Son of the Most High." His throne and kingdom will be without end.

Paul says that this mystery, hidden throughout the ages and manifested by the prophets, is fully revealed in Jesus Christ. The universal kingdom that Jesus establishes is for all people in search of love, truth, and justice.

To those who are fearful, God's messenger says, "Do not be afraid. Nothing is impossible with God!" With the Virgin Mary who placed her life at the service of God we humbly answer, "I am the servant of the Lord. Let it be done as you say." "Ave Maria! Rejoice! O highly favored daughter!"

For Reflection: Have I experienced the Lord's presence today? Do I give evidence that God resides in my life?

© 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)

9:20 p.m. – Music Selections

10:00 p.m. – Christmas Night Mass
(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 17, 2017**

Envelopes sent:	399	
Envelopes returned:	115	\$4,497.00
Faith Direct Deposits:	106	\$2,851.75
Loose Change:		\$117.00
TOTAL OFFERTORY:		\$7,465.75

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.

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!

The Question-Of-The-Week Contest Winner

The winner for the week of December 5 was, **Parker Nguyen, Grade 5**, who knew that we celebrate the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of Mary on Dec. 8.

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).

Winter Scripture Study

A Scripture Study on the minor prophets will be held **Wednesday, January 17–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!

Ministry Sign Ups

The stewardship committee is working toward renewing our sense of parish ministries. Through the course of this coming year we will take time each month to celebrate a category of ministries and to bless the ministers. We will have an opportunity to find out more about each of the ministries through talks and ministry brochures. There will also be an opportunity to join a ministry if you are drawn to it.

The Letters of Stewardship

J: Jesus is the model of the good steward. Receiving his gifts from God, acknowledging them and then using them to lift other people up.

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.

Smile for Our Lady of Mercy

To link to our Amazon Smile charity listing visit: <http://smile.amazon.com/ch/25-1563277>. If you shop Amazon please consider using Amazon Smile and naming "Our Lady of Mercy - Harborcreek" as your charity.

Social Justice Committee News

The first element that we must consider is that palliative cures have advanced a lot and therefore there are more effective ways to relieve pain and suffering than in the past. Shortening life is a way of not respecting a fundamental internal judgement, "You shall not kill." According to studies, one out of four relatives of a patient who has died from euthanasia develops stress and imbalances, as she/he feels guilty for having allowed him/her to die.



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.

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.

Parish Alive

Our annual Parish Alive retreat will be held February 16–17. It is a wonderful way to kick off your Lent, to renew your faith, to deepen your connection to the parish. Apply on-line 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.**

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

Join us on Wednesday, January 17 at 7:00 p.m. at the home of Irene, 1019 Bartlett Rd., to discuss "The Boys in the Boat" by Daniel Brown. The weather outside might be frightful, but our book group is so delightful. Whether you are interested in joining a book group or just want to talk about one particular title, the door is open to you. Want to read ahead? In February we will discuss "The Ballroom" by Anna Hope.

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.

Do you Shop at Gordon Food Service?

Please mention Our Lady of Mercy when you check out. We accumulate points and then our Funeral Meal Ministry can use these points to purchase food.



Christmas Greetings

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Thank you for being a part of this Christmas celebration!
We hope you have experienced the love of Christ in our midst.
We especially welcome any visitors and guests.

Are you looking for a safe, welcoming and nurturing place to call your spiritual home? You are always welcome here! On behalf of the entire parish community, we invite you to join us and hope you will choose to worship here!

**May the light of Christ enlighten you, enliven you,
and bless you this Christmas and always.**

Merry Christmas!



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.

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