



FOR MERCY'S SAKE

quarterly newsletter of Our Lady of Mercy Church

837 Bartlett Road
Harborcreek, PA 16421

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www.ourladyofmercychurch.org



August 2017



Mark your calendars for our
**FEAST DAY
WEEKEND**
as we celebrate
paying off our mortgage!

Through your generosity and sacrifice, our mortgage has been paid in full!
It is a significant and exciting time in the life of our community
because it represents a time of completeness and a fulfilling of God's promise
that God's "grace is sufficient to meet all of our needs." (2 Corinthians:9)

Saturday, September 23

Parish Dance

7:00—11:00 p.m. in the Gym

Featuring "The Groove" -

Erie's most popular band

(see future bulletins for more information)

Sunday, September 24

Feast Day Mass and Mortgage Burning

10:30 a.m.

followed by a dinner in Sperry Hall

(This is the only Mass at OLM this weekend.)

Inside
this
Issue :

Parish Feast Day 2017.....	Page 1	Summer Festival 2017 Results.....	Page 8
Take Me to Worship.....	Page 2	Knightly News.....	Page 9
Hidden Ministries.....	Page 2	Social Justice News.....	Page 10-11
Building and Grounds.....	Page 3	Baptismal Preparation.....	Page 11
Religious Education Registration.....	Page 4-6	Memorial Mass.....	Page 11
New Member Welcome.....	Page 6	Sunset Mass.....	Page 12
Taizé Prayer.....	Page 7	2017-2018 Calendar.....	Page 12



Take Me to Worship is an Erie County campaign to encourage regular, weekly participation in organized religious institutions. The data behind this initiative states that regular religious participation helps in many categories for children such as less violence, less drug and alcohol use, and less chance of suicide. The Unified Erie's Religiosity Committee has purchased (through the generosity of local businesses) for August 15 -October 30, 2017 TV, social media, radio, and billboard advertisements throughout the county.

It is the hope of the Diocese of Erie that the Take Me to Worship campaign will spark the interest of Catholics who have the desire to reconnect with their faith and/or individuals that are looking to join the rich tradition of our faith by becoming converts to Catholicism.

The job of the parish will be to welcome those who visit and inspire them to participate regularly at Mass and other parish activities. For more information, please visit www.takemetoworship.org

Behind the Scenes Ministries at OLM

People are constantly working behind the scenes to make sure that small tasks are done that we may not notice, until the task is left undone for some reason. Then we ask: "Who takes care of that?"

Altar Linen Ministry: Did you ever wonder who washes and irons all the purificators (the small napkin used to clean the chalice after drinking from the cup) and the corporals (the white cloth on the altar on which is placed the bread and wine)? Or how is it that Fr Ritchie's alb and vestments look clean? Three women on a rotating schedule take the linens home every other week to wash and iron: Andrea Maille, Marilyn Rinke and Brenda Royer. When more are needed, Carole Peters graciously cuts and sews more purificators or corporals.

Eucharist Ministry to the Homebound: Did you ever wonder what would happen if you were homebound or too sick to come to church for a significant amount of time? You might feel cut off from the community and from the sacraments. If this happens, we have a ministry that will bring communion to you in your home and also bring the love and support of the community. Depending on the desire of the person who is unable to celebrate Eucharist with the community, a minister will come once a week or once a month. The minister will spend time in conversation, will bring a bulletin and then celebrate a communion service with the homebound person. The parishioners in this ministry are: Paul Barko, Dave Jacquell, Gary Lacy, Andrea Maille, Jackie Pointer, Judy Skuce and Sue Haynes.

Interested in learning more about these ministries? Contact one of the people listed or Donna Clark in the Parish Office.



BUILDING AND GROUNDS

The Committee completed the following projects so far this year:

Food Pantry walk-in freezer construction and enclosure

If you look out the south windows of Sperry Hall, you will see an impressive structure that houses the new freezer. The committee, led by John Madigan, started in February to lay a foundation, have the freezer constructed and spend many hours building the enclosure themselves. The construction is nearly complete with only some trim yet to be finished. Phil Legler's paint crew painted the T111 sides and repainted the food pantry and garage so that the walls all matched.

Rose Garden upgrade

The committee redid the walkway leading to the upper portion of the Rose Garden with stone edging, loaded several yards of crushed limestone in the walkway and added new mulch in the garden. Mulch was also added around the Church and rectory.

Replacement of incandescent light bulbs with LED's

Nearly 200 of the old style incandescent bulbs were replaced in the Church and the Rectory. We took advantage of a Penelec rebate offer with the result being a zero cost to the church!

Parking lot repairs

Our parking lot is now well over 10 years old and showing signs of deterioration. To help extend the time before major repairs will be needed, approximately 8,000 feet of cracks were filled with a State approved grade rubberized filler. This will prevent water from flowing into the cracks, freezing and causing extensive damage. Thanks to the Knights of Columbus for contributing \$6,000 towards the cost of this project.

Gym table replacement

If any of you have ever set up and taken down the old heavy laminated tables for our many events, you will appreciate this project. We replaced 40 of the old tables with much lighter wooden tables similar to the 20 that we already had. The used tables were purchased at a considerable savings over new tables, and we plan to refinish the tops next winter.

Religious Education Registration

Another summer is nearing an end. Fall is just around the corner and so is another school year. Our Lady of Mercy is readying classrooms and unpacking books in preparation for the start of the religious education calendar.

In this article, you can find a summary of the policies and schedules that give a framework to our religious education ministry. Please take a moment to skim through this information to locate the areas that concern your children. If you have any questions not answered in these paragraphs, call Irene Lucas at 899-6132.

Registration for the 2017-2018 Religious Education Program is taking place after all liturgies the weekend of August 12-13.

If you have found that you have missed the general registration weekend, please stop by the office of Lifelong Faith Formation during normal working hours. All families with children intending to participate in the 2017-2018 Rel. Ed. program are asked to register at this time. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated.

Again this year, there will be a \$10 discount on the registration fee for those families who provide the parish with current clearances for at least one parent. If you have already submitted clearances, and they are less than 3 years old, the discount will apply. As most of you know, all those who volunteer with children must have government issued clearances, both criminal background checks and child abuse clearances. This law applies to parents helping with a classroom party, chaperoning a field trip, religious education substitutes and the like. These clearances are free for volunteers. However, they must be on file with the sponsoring organization before any volunteer can assist with any aspect of the program.

Our Lady of Mercy believes that parent participation in the religious education ministry is essential to its success. Whether parents can volunteer on a weekly basis or assist with a one-time project, we value your gifts and time. The only way we can involve parents is if we have their clearances on file. Many of you have obtained these clearances for school, scouting, sports, or other programs. If you do not already have these documents, you can apply online. All links can be found at the diocesan website <http://eriecd.org>.

In an attempt to encourage parents to provide Our Lady of Mercy with these clearances, we are offering a \$10 registration discount to any family who provides us with both clearances (clearances must be less than 3 years old).

Program Fees may be paid at the time of registration. Checks should be made payable to Our Lady of Mercy Religious Education. Program fees are:

\$40.00—One Child	\$55.00—per child of non-parishioners
\$50.00—Two Children	\$10.00—Youth ministry fee grades 7-12
\$60.00—Three or more children	\$25.00—Youth ministry fee for 3 or more children grades 7-12

For a family who has current criminal background checks and child abuse clearances on at least one parent on file at OLM, the fee schedule is:

\$30.00—One Child	\$45.00—per child of non-parishioners
\$40.00—Two Children	\$10.00—Youth ministry fee grades 7-12
\$50.00—Three or more children	\$25.00—Youth ministry fee for 3 or more children grades 7-12

If we have current clearances on file, a notation will appear on your registration form. If you present clearances at the time of registration, the registration fee will be adjusted accordingly.

Program Description

Kindergarten Religious Education class is held on Sunday mornings from 9:30-10:45. Participants must be age 5 by September 1 and should be in the same school grade.

Grade One religious education is required prior to participation in the Sacramental Preparation program. First grade religious education students meet on Sunday mornings from 9:30-10:45.

First Reconciliation preparation is conducted on the second grade level. The First Reconciliation program, held 9:30-10:45 Sunday morning, is open to all students in Grade 2 or older who have previously been involved in at least one year of religious instruction and who have been baptized. No child can be registered for the grade 2 RE class who has not attended one year of formal religious education classes at a Catholic parish. In order to qualify as successfully completing 1 year of instruction, the child must have been present for a minimum of 3/4th of the scheduled classes or provide a letter of completion from the pastor or director of the parish program they attended stating such. Participation in a 3-hour preparatory retreat is required prior to the celebration of the sacrament. The celebration of First Reconciliation occurs in March. Parental support and involvement is essential during periods of sacramental preparation.

First Eucharist preparation is the curriculum for the third grade program. Individuals must have celebrated the sacraments of Baptism and Reconciliation prior to the celebration of their First Eucharist. First Eucharist is celebrated in May. Students are required to participate in an April retreat day as part of the preparation program. Parental involvement and support is essential during periods of sacramental preparation.

The Intermediate Program encompasses grades 3-6. Students participating in religious education on this level gather for classes on Tuesday afternoons from 4:00 to 5:30. Our Lady of Mercy arranges for bus transportation from the Harborcreek public elementary schools to the church. Parents are responsible for picking up their children at class end.

Behavior for the Rel. Ed. bus follows the same policies as that enforced by the Harborcreek School District. Failure by any student to behave in an appropriate fashion while riding the bus to religious education classes will result in the suspension of the privilege to receive this transportation for the remainder of the academic year.

Junior High Program is conducted on Sunday afternoon. On the first three Sundays of each month, students meet immediately after the 11:00 Mass for classroom style sessions from 12:00-1:15. On the final Sunday of each month, the young people gather for an extended youth ministry session which combines opportunities for community service, retreats, community building and more.

Confirmation Preparation is a three year process. Individuals may enter the program in the ninth grade or later. Those attending a Catholic high school are not required to participate in the first two years of this process. This program includes Home Sessions, service projects, retreat days, etc. Those celebrating the sacrament of Confirmation must be in the eleventh grade or older, have been baptized, and have completed all requirements.

Days of Retreat are provided for students in the formal religious education program. All programs providing retreat experiences are free to participants. Attendance at these events is required for those preparing for a sacramental celebration (Grade 2 First Reconciliation, Grade 3 First Eucharist and Grade 9-11 Confirmation). All other experiences are encouraged, but not mandatory. These days combine fun with spiritual growth.

Family Faith Days are opportunities for families to share in the faith formation process with their children. Currently, these are scheduled twice during the school year during the Sunday morning program. On these specially designated mornings, all children in pre-K through Grade Two are joined by parents, siblings and any extended family members wishing to attend to share in a special morning of prayer and fun.

Parent Meetings enable family members to best support the faith development of their child. Every year we hold a series of parent meetings designed to inform parents of curriculum topics, special projects and other details of interest. All parent meetings are designed to be informative and brief. All parents and guardians are highly encouraged to attend these meetings. Please consult the religious education calendar and the bulletin for specific times and dates.

Absentee & Homework Policy: Preparing for a sacramental celebration is a very important process. Extra care and attention is directed to these parts of the program by the R. E. Office, the catechists and the families. To ensure that youth are as well prepared as possible, attendance policies are in place for these years:

- Children preparing for First Reconciliation and First Eucharist (Grades 1, 2 & 3) must be present for a minimum **of ¾ of scheduled classes each year**. Any child absent for more than a quarter of the scheduled classes in any given year will not be approved to celebrate this sacrament. (Any first grade student who has missed more than a quarter of the scheduled classes will not have met the requirement of completing a year of religious education necessary to enter the First Reconciliation program.)
- Confirmation candidates (grade 9, 10 & 11) are permitted a maximum of 3 absences per year. Additional absences must be made up with the Director of Lifelong Faith Formation before the candidate can continue in the process.

Additionally, these years of preparation include work to be done at home. All homework must be completed and returned before the individual will be approved for the sacramental celebration.

To all returning catechetical ministers, students and families, I look forward to seeing you soon. To all new participants in the religious education program, I welcome you. To all members of this parish community, I encourage your comments, ideas and suggestions.

Religious Education Classes begin Tuesday, September 5.

Religious Education calendars are available
at the time of registration.

May you continue to deepen your love for God and one
another.

May the remaining weeks of the summer
season bring many blessings.



Welcome New Members!

Please welcome our new members by sending a card or stopping by if you live nearby.

Jane & Mike Chase
608 Bartlett Rd.
Harborcreek PA 16421-1132

Tony & Carol Gilmore
4900 Reese Rd.
Erie PA 16510-4304

Sandra Jordan
4320 E. South Shore Drive. S
Erie PA 16511-1339

Jack & Diane Kraus
6398 Lake Forest Dr.
Erie PA 16511-1580

Matthew & Alicia Laskey
(Milena)
7640 E. Lake Rd
Erie PA 16511-1627

Robert & Evelyn (Honey) Polatas
611 Parkside Dr.
Erie PA 16511-2436

Dennis & Janet Smith
3907 E. Lake Rd.
Erie PA 16511-1350

PRAYER IN THE STYLE OF TAIZÉ



AT OUR LADY OF MERCY

Every other month beginning in October

MONDAY EVENINGS

**OCTOBER 9 , DECEMBER 11, FEBRUARY 19, APRIL 9
6:00 P.M.**

Prayer services in the style of Taizé have spread in popularity throughout the world in churches of all denominations. Its primary intention is to bring people together in simple, quiet and contemplative prayer for peace and healing.

When you come to prayer, you will arrive in a dimly lit church. Once inside, your gaze will be drawn towards the illuminated altar area with its icons and many candles. The sweet aroma of incense reminds us that our prayers are lifted heavenward.

Please come and bring a friend to these beautiful services. Take the time to rest in God. There is no need to leave behind your worries or your troubles, nor should you forget the burdens of the world. Rather, bring it all to the cross of Jesus in prayer.

Summer Festival 2017 Results

REVENUE

Take-out Dinners	6,997.00
Dinner	6,865.00
Chicken Sales	540.00
Grand Award	1,506.00
50/ 50	1,060.00
TV	860.00
iPad	749.00
Roomba	603.00
Lottery Tree	1,210.00
Restaurant Tree	1,099.75
Quilt Raffle	1,315.75
Afghan	<u>297.00</u>
Total Raffle	6,133.75
Chinese Auction	1,935.00
Children's Chinese Auction	530.00
Large Item Chinese Auction	<u>1,170.00</u>
Total Chinese Auction	3,635.00
Kiddyland	420.25
Teen Land	186.25
Instant Bingo	552.50
Bingo	487.70
Bake Sale	417.00
Funnel Cakes	688.50
Refreshments	391.95
Big 6	98.75
Misc. donations	573.00
Total Income	\$30,552.90

EXPENSES

Chicken	4,100.45
Dinner	1,711.74
Charcoal	538.00
Pit Area	258.56
Grand Award	1,000.00
50/ 50	530.00
Advertising	35.00
Festival Supplies	128.76
Tickets	919.02
iPad	349.79
Roomba	110.00
Lottery Tree	80.00
Chinese Auction	100.68
Kiddyland	198.89
Bingo License	15.00
Funnel Cakes	51.75
Refreshments	158.66
Parking	225.00
Total Expenses	\$10,511.30
PROFIT	\$20,041.60

Festival 2015 Results

Income	\$30,011.00
Expenses	<u>\$9,635.52</u>
Profits	\$20,375.48

Festival 2016 Results

Income	\$31,350.45
Expenses	<u>\$10,940.20</u>
Profit	\$20,410.25

DEBT SERVICE for July 2017

Loan Balance -	\$22,158.49
Rate -	3.29%
Payment -	\$3,772.29

Last year at this time,
our loan balance
was \$66,427.76



GOLF RAFFLE

We had another very successful Golf Raffle this past May, our 24th year. Thanks to the many parishioners who bought and sold tickets and attended, the many ladies of the parish who helped during the raffle and the parish men who volunteered along with the Knights. See below for some of the things that the Knights help the Parish with through the profits from this event.

MEMBERSHIP

Congratulations to new Knights who made their First Degree since the last newsletter: Sean Cillissen, Mike Hawryliw and Brandon Vogt. A number of Knights also completed their Second and Third Degrees in preparation for a Fourth Degree which will be held in Erie in October. Any men of the parish wishing to join our Council, which numbers over 60 active members, can contact any of the Knights or inquire in the Parish Office.

CONTRIBUTIONS

The Knights contributed \$6,000 toward parking lot repairs this past June. You may have noticed the freshly filled cracks – there were 8,000 feet of cracks filled.

SCHOLARSHIPS

The Knights of Council 11144 of Our Lady of Mercy was pleased to award four Ed Cudicio Scholarships for the 2018 school year. The young adults who will begin their college education in the fall are Sydney Lander (Penn State University, University Park), Danielle Luniewski (Gannon University), Alexis Manna (Edinboro University) and Michael Rocco (Slippery Rock University).

Some background - many years ago, not long after the council was formed, Ed Cudicio voiced a concern for our youth and a desire to establish programs that would encourage them to grow in their faith and life in general. Out of this desire evolved the scholarship fund which has been funded by a portion of the profit from the Golf Raffle. In his honor, it continues to bear his name. He would be so proud of the accomplishments of those who have benefitted over the years and the impressive careers of many.

ACTIVITIES

The Knights are primarily a service organization and thus provided service in the following areas: Chicken Run and church festival, served at the OLM family breakfast, assisted at the July 4 Liberty Run (at OLM sponsored by OLMC Knights), assisted at Emmaus Soup Kitchen (served dinner) and held Bingo / Pizza Night @ V.A. Hospital.

UPCOMING EVENTS

- ◆ Ladies Wine Tour (Aug 13). This is in appreciation for the Ladies who helped with the Golf Raffle.
- ◆ Cleveland Indians Bus Trip (Sept 10). This is in conjunction with the Men's Night Out organization.
- ◆ OLM Parish Dance (Sept 23). The Knights are sponsoring a dance as part of the Parish Feast Day celebration. This event will be held in our gym and feature "The Groove", Erie's most popular band.





News from the Social Justice Committee

Every year, Bread for the World invites churches across the country to take up an offering, not of money, but of letters to Congress. On October 1st, the community of Our Lady of Mercy will participate in this national effort to advocate for the ending of hunger in the US and around the globe. Our goal is to eradicate malnutrition by the year 2030.

The United States and the world have made substantial progress toward ending hunger and poverty over the past several decades. Worldwide, extreme poverty, living on less than \$1.90 a day, has been cut in half over the past 30 years. But more work needs to be done. Nearly 800 million people in the world are still hungry. In the United States, 1 in 6 children lives in a family that struggles with hunger.

President Trump and many in Congress are pushing to dismantle or cut funding for programs that offer direct help to buy food for infants and families in this country. Also threatened are international programs that provide nutrition assistance for young children and that help struggling farmers grow more food for their families and communities. Government programs cannot by themselves end hunger. Families, churches and charities, and businesses also have to play their parts. But we can only end hunger if our national government does its part. Bread for the World's 2017 Offering of Letters calls on Congress to pass budget and appropriations bills that put us on track to end hunger by 2030. Regardless of which party controls Congress or the White House, our elected leaders must adopt and administer our nation's budget. Through the federal budget our government invests in many programs that help people stay out of poverty and feed their families. Nations around the world, including

the United States, have agreed to work for an end to hunger and related goals by 2030. Vital policies and safety-net programs, including WIC, global nutrition, SNAP, and refundable tax credits, must be properly funded and protected. Dismantling or cutting funding for such programs would make the goal of ending hunger by 2030 unlikely. The decisions Congress makes in the months ahead will have far-reaching effects on the lives of people in the United States and around the world. By writing letters to Congress you can do your part to help end hunger.

Programs that Help Hungry People

Our federal government funds many anti-poverty and anti-hunger programs that help people stay out of poverty and thrive. Among the most important:

- The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), formerly known as food stamps, provides financial assistance to purchase nutritious food. Nearly half of the beneficiaries of SNAP are children with parents who work but don't earn enough to feed their families.

- Low-income women and young children receive nutritious food and nutrition education through the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) program. Half of all children born in the United States benefit from WIC.

- Poverty-focused development assistance (PFDA) for the world's poorest countries provides improved nutrition, access to safe water and sanitation, better farming techniques, and access to education and medicine. Today, fewer children around the world are dying and more are thriving because of this development assistance.

- The Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) and the refundable portion of the child tax credit (CTC) move more people out of poverty in the United States than any other program, aside from Social Security.

International poverty-focused development assistance is less than one half of one percent of our federal budget. Domestic nutrition programs comprise less than 3 percent. Cutting these programs would not significantly reduce our debt, but it would make it much harder to end hunger by 2030. In the United States, the health-related costs of hunger are a staggering \$160 billion. Investing in anti-hunger programs will save money in the future and help reduce budget deficits.

We celebrate our parish feast day on Sept. 24. We not only rejoice with grateful hearts for all the blessings we enjoy, but we are mindful of all who struggle in poverty to provide enough food for their families. Individually, the problem of global poverty feels overwhelming. But, when Christians across the country join together on behalf of the neediest, we can break the chains that imprison so many in hunger.

On October 1, the weekend after Feast Day, we ask all who join us around the Table of the Lord on Sept. 24, to bring a personal letter to Senators Patrick Toomey and Robert Casey advocating for the full funding of programs that assist those in need to access sufficient nutritious food. If you forget to bring your letter with you, paper will be available for you to write a letter that day.

On the next page is a sample letter. It is highly recommended that each person include personal details so that it does not have the feel of a form letter.

Share why the issue of feeding the hungry is important to you. This could be the story of a friend or loved one who benefitted from one of these programs, an experience volunteering at the Harborcreek Food Panty or other program that assist those in need or the conviction of your faith that we must care for our sisters and brothers in need. Letters may be hand-written or typed. If you do not feel comfortable personalizing this letter, simply writing out the sample letter below in your own hand-writing will ensure that it is not passed over as a form letter. Please include your last name and full address when you sign your letter. This verifies that you are a constituent whose vote matters to this elected official.

SAMPLE LETTER:

U.S. Senate Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator

As Congress works on the 2018 budget and spending bills, I ask you to make funding decisions that will put us on track to end hunger by 2030.

I urge you to invest in programs like WIC, SNAP, tax credits for low-income workers, and international development assistance. These programs help millions of people escape from hunger.

We have made great progress reducing hunger and poverty in our country and around the world, but our work remains unfinished. My faith calls me to urge you to make investments that will reduce and end hunger.

**Sincerely,
[your name]
[your address]
[city, state, ZIP]**



Are you expecting a new child? Has a baby recently blessed your family? Is the celebration of the Sacrament of Baptism with your child something that you are planning for some time in the next year? If so, mark your calendar for **noon on Sunday, October 1** for our semi-annual Baptismal Preparation Session.

All parents/ guardians and godparents are asked by the Diocese of Erie, to prepare their hearts and spirits to celebrate this wonderful Sacrament by attending a special session just for them. Because these sessions are only held twice a year here at Our Lady of Mercy, you will want to take advantage of the opportunity now.

To register for the Baptismal Preparation Session, parents/ guardians are asked to call the Parish Office at 899-5342. Questions can be asked at that time. Or, check out our web page to see the answers to the most frequently asked questions about child Baptism.

If the session scheduled at Our Lady of Mercy does not fit your calendar, you may attend a Baptismal Preparation Session for Parents at any Catholic parish in the area. If you call the area parishes, you should find a session that meets your time constraints; evening and weekend classes are available.

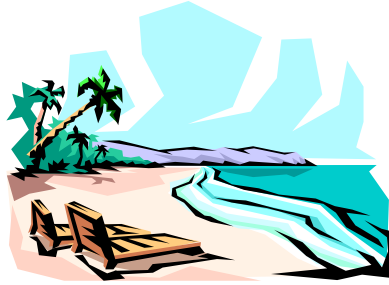
Mass of Remembrance: December 2 at 10 a.m.



Each December we gather together to celebrate a special Mass of Remembrance, hosted by members of the Bereavement Ministry. Join together in prayer on Saturday, December 2, 2017, at 10 AM. All members of Our Lady of Mercy are invited to attend this annual Memorial Mass to support the families of our parish who have lost loved ones during the past year. During this service, votive candles will be lit for the deceased family members and immediately following the Mass, a social gathering will be held in Sperry Hall with refreshments being served by the members of the Funeral Meal Committee. Please join us for this special celebration.

Sunset Mass

Sunday, August 20 @ 7:00 PM
(This Mass does fulfill the Sunday obligation)



Glinodo Conference Center
Off of East Lake Road just east of Mount St. Benedict
Please do not drive on the grass

Bring a chair and bug spray
Cookies and punch fellowship to follow
(Could you bring a plate of cookies to share?)

2017-2018 Calendar of Events

From the AGIFT (Adults Growing in Faith Together) Committee

The coming months are filled with opportunities for you, your family and the parish to gather and grow in God's love and light. Below are some highlights. The calendar below gives you a taste of all that is coming. Mark your calendars and be certain to join us.

August

20 Beach Mass

September

24 Feast of Our Lady of Mercy

October

1 Baptismal Preparation Session

8 Harvest Fest

9 Q & A with the Pastor

November

12 Sunday CAFÉ

December

10 Family Advent Party

January

14 Sunday CAFÉ

24 Q&A with the Pastor

February

3 Wine Social

11 Parish Mardi Gras

16-17 Parish Alive

21 Lenten Pastus

28 Lenten Pastus

March

7 Lenten Pastus

11-13 Parish Mission

21 Pilgrimage Through Holy Week Symbols

April

19 Q & A with the Pastor

29 Sundae Sunday