

OUR LADY OF MERCY CHURCH

837 Bartlett Road • Harborcreek, PA 16421 • www.ourladyofmercychurch.org



December 8th, 2019 - Second Sunday of Advent

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*

Katie Stephenson, *Administrative Assistant*

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



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. 12/09	The Immaculate Conception	8:30 a.m. Holy Day Mass
		6:30 p.m. Fruit of the Vine SCC
		7:00 p.m. Healing Ministry Service
Tue. 12/10		9:30 a.m. Steel Magnolias SCC
		1:30 p.m. Legion of Mary
		2:00 p.m. Prayer Shawl
		4:00 p.m. Religious Ed. Gr. 3-6
		5:30 p.m. Children’s Choir
		7:00 p.m. Lifelong Faith Formation
		7:00 p.m. New SCC
		7:30 p.m. AA
Wed. 12/11		1:00 p.m. Diamonds SCC
		6:45 p.m. OLM Book Group
		7:00 p.m. Knights of Columbus
Thur. 12/12		9:00 a.m. Painting Class
		9:30 a.m. Potter’s Clay SCC
		1:00 p.m. Contemplative Prayer
		6:00 p.m. Prayer Shawl
		6:45 p.m. Choir Rehearsal
Fri. 12/13		
Sat. 12/14		9:00 a.m. Dan Schutte Workshop Retreat
		10:00 a.m. AA
		4:30 p.m. Sacrament of Penance
Sun. 12/15	Third Sunday of Advent	
		9:30 a.m. Healing Ministry
		9:30 a.m. Religious Ed. Gr. K-2
		12:00 p.m. Family Advent Party
		3:00 p.m. Advent Concert with Dan Schutte

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**.



MASS INTENTIONS

Mon. 12/09	8:30 a.m.	
Tue. 12/10	8:30 a.m.	Judy Zipp (Ron Morris Family)
Wed. 12/11	8:30 a.m.	John Green (Family)
Thur. 12/12	8:30 a.m.	Frances Somolani (Rita Kaliszewski)
Fri. 12/13	8:30 a.m.	Mary Simkins (The Painting Class)
Sat. 12/14	8:30 a.m.	
	6:00 p.m.	Gert Peters (Tony & Laura Perze)
Sun. 12/15	8:30 a.m.	Helen Szklenski (Heise Family)
	11:00 a.m.	For the People of OLM

The Immaculate Conception of Mary, as the patronal day of our country, remains a holy day of obligation except when it falls on a Sunday of Advent. Only then, when the celebration must be moved to **Monday, December 9th, it is not obligatory.** Our Mass here for the Feast of the Immaculate Conception will be **Monday at 8:30am.**

SCRIPTURE READINGS

Mon. 12/09	Gn 3:9-15, 20	/ Eph 1:3-6, 11-12 / Lk 1:26-38
Tue. 12/10	Is 40:1-11	/ Mt 18:12-14
Wed. 12/11	Is 40:25-31	/ Mt 11:28-30
Thur. 12/12	Zec 2:14-17	/ Lk 1:26-38 or Lk 1:39-47
Fri. 12/13	Is 48:17-19	/ Mt 11:16-19
Sat. 12/14	Sir 48:1-4, 9-11	/ Mt 17:9a, 10-13
Sun. 12/15	Is 35:1-6a, 10 / Jas 5:7-10	/ Mt 11:2-11

Question-of-the-Week

The winner of the Question-of-the-Week Contest for the week of Nov. 18 was **Cooper Benson, Gr. 4**, who knew that “EUCHARIST” means “give thanks”.

THIS SUNDAY’S REFLECTION

MT 3:1-12

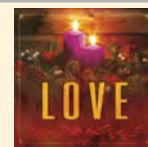
“Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!”

John the Baptist not only heralds the coming of the kingdom, but proclaims the same message that Jesus would soon preach, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!” He tells us that we should prepare, with some degree of urgency, for the fullness of God’s power and presence in our world by turning away from evil and turning toward God. This turnaround requires a radical and deeply internal change of direction in our lives. This internal conversion then expresses itself in external acts and works of penance.

With our hearts thus moved by God’s grace, we bear good fruit-offering gestures of reconciliation, showing concern for the poor, and seeking to end injustice. During Advent, for example, we might seek to heal the alienation caused by a family conflict or offer forgiveness to someone who has hurt us. We could provide a meal or Christmas gift for someone less fortunate. We also might choose to fast or deny ourselves some comfort in order to more fully embrace the gift.

Repentance is a continuing task, an ongoing process of conversion. But with hope in God’s mercy and trust in his grace, we can be ready for God’s power and presence in our world and in our lives.

For Reflection: How does repentance look in my life? Have I become aware of a change in



Family Advent Party

Join us **TODAY, Sunday, Dec. 8 at noon** for our annual Advent Party. We will share a pot luck lunch. There will be crafts and games for the kids. A special guest from the North Pole may just show up.



A TIME TO HEAL



You are invited to join the OLM healing ministry on **Monday, December 9th at 7pm** for an evening of prayer, song, laying of hands and quiet reflection. There are so many levels of healing that are needed in

this world, whether it be physical, emotional or spiritual. Come for yourself or for someone you love... and bring a family member or friend who may need healing and calm in their lives. We hope to see you there.

OLM Book Group

The best part of long, cold winter nights is that they give an excuse for more hours of reading. You are invited to share the fruits of your winter reads with the OLM Book Group. Because of the hectic pace of the holiday season, we will take a break from reading in December to view a movie "The Green Book" on **Dec. 11**. Join us at the home of Claudette Terrill, 6821 East Lake Rd. at 6:45 for a movie start time of 7:00 sharp. Want to read ahead? Our January title will be Of Human Bondage by W. Somerset Maugham.



Woman's Event



If you live alone join us for this evening out. On **Dec 13** we will start with a social gathering at **4:30pm**, dinner at **5:00pm** (both at Our Lady of Mercy). Then we will head over to the Harborcreek Christmas Light Up Night around **6:00pm**. **RSVP to Donna Clark** in the

Parish Office or dclark@ourladyofmercychurch.org.

Holiday Grief

The holidays usually bring joy but if this is the first Christmas without your loved one it can also bring sadness or pain. The grief support group will have a special session on managing the holidays when you really don't feel like celebrating. Join us **Monday, Dec 16 at 7pm** in the parish parlor. We will have some suggestions that may help. Questions **call Donna Clark** in the parish office.



Room Available

Looking for a non-smoking, non-drinking female to share a home near Rt 90 and Depot Rd. Bedroom with bathroom, large shared TV room with fireplace. \$400 per month includes utilities.

Interested? **Call Donna Clark** in the parish office.



WAYS TO GIVE THIS SEASON

CHRISTMAS CARING TREE PROGRAM
Thank you to all who took a name from the Caring Tree. This weekend is the deadline for returning the wrapped gifts. Please be sure to place your wrapped gifts in the gathering space today.

Operation Assisting Santa:
Our mission, in conjunction with the Erie Vets Hospital, is to insure that Local Veterans and their families, who might not be able to do so otherwise, have Christmas gifts for their children. We are looking for people to 'adopt' children off of our 'Santa's Good Kid List'. We supply the age, gender, and what the child would like (we actually ask the parents). The person goes out and buys the gift(s)...we collect them....wrap them....and distribute them at a luncheon where we honor the Veterans and their families. The children's info will be available starting **November 24th**....all gifts should be in by **TODAY December 8th**. Thank you in advance for your support. **Moochie Zielewski 814-823-6506**

Warming Shelter
Our Neighbors' Place is a faith based seasonal shelter for the homeless. Sessions at St. John the Baptist this season are **January 15-28, 2020** and **February 26-March 10, 2020**. If you would like to provide food, money or volunteer your time to the shelter, please contact **Mary Ellen Lieb 873-1284 melieb@gmail.com**. or **Mary Hoffman 873-2981 mymary14@gmail.com**. Checks may be made

Interim Coordinator for Youth Ministry Needed

Our Lady of Mercy is seeking a temporary coordinator of Junior and Senior High Youth ministry events and retreats. Responsibilities include: a January freshman retreat, a February Junior High retreat and a May Confirmation retreat as well as monthly Junior High youth ministry events and a high school mission trip. The coordinator will work with Irene Lucas in the Faith Formation Office to work out the logistics of each event and to communicate with youth and families. The interim coordinator would receive a stipend for this ministry. **Contact Irene Lucas at 899-6132** for more information.



Healing the Hurt



Within our faith journeys, we may struggle from time to time with our image of God, with our faith, or with the institutional church. Perhaps there was an experience or an exchange of words that stimulated the struggle, which

became a hurt and fostered anger, despair or discouragement. If you or someone you know is struggling with their faith or spirituality and would like to talk in confidence, call 814-303-9282. This is a google voice number set up to receive calls outside of our regular church channels. Donna Clark is the person receiving these private calls.

Support Aging Religious

Our second collection is for the Retirement Fund for Religious. Many senior Catholic sisters, brothers, and religious order priests served for little or no pay. Today, religious communities often do not have enough savings to meet retirement needs. Your gift helps provide medications, nursing care, and more for tens of thousands of elderly religious. It also helps ensure younger members can continue the good works of their elders. Please be generous.



Drivers Needed

Weekday trips to and from Erie, various times and days. Compensation provided. Contact Donna Clark in the parish office.

Children Welcome

At Our Lady of Mercy, our ideal is that families come to Mass together, with their children of all ages. If they are just learning how loud their voices are, don't be embarrassed, we consider it praise of God. If you have a runner – there are speakers in the gathering space so you can listen as you chase. If you need a contained room, try the nursery (the second room down the hall from the Bartlett St door) which also has closed circuit TV of the worship space. If you are sitting next to a family with children, smile a lot.



Child Protection and Creating Safe Environments

Keeping God's Children Protected and Safe

To know that we are children of God is to live in complete love, with deep abiding security and the ability to dream, to sing, to create, to laugh, and to play without worry. As we grow older, we face a new reality – we cannot approach all God's creation with the same trust and confidence. We learn, through sometimes hurtful and damaging experiences, that some people reject the ability that God gave them to love and respect others – they ignore God's call. The diocesan program to safeguard children helps remind us of these very facts. With the help of this program, the faithful are guided and educated about the responsibility of how to keep God's children protected and safe. To see what the Diocese of Erie is doing to help maintain safe environments, visit <https://www.eriecd.org/childprotection/>

"In God's Perfect Time" Advent Reflections and Concert with Dan Schutte

Dan has been composing music for worship for more than 30 years, including extensive collaborations with the St. Louis Jesuits. His more recent pieces exhibit an enduring ability to reach into people's hearts and draw them into prayer. He is one of the best-known, most prolific and influential composers of music for the liturgy today.



Composer of:

"Here I Am, Lord", "City of God", "Sing A New Song",
"These Alone are Enough",
and many more...

**SUNDAY,
DECEMBER 15, 2019
AT 3:00 P.M.**

**OUR LADY OF MERCY CHURCH
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FINANCIAL SUPPORT

Offertory for the weekend of December 1, 2019

Envelopes sent:	392	
Envelopes returned:	111	\$4,449.00
Faith Direct Deposits:	116	\$2,948.08
Loose Change:		\$ 270.00
TOTAL OFFERTORY:		\$7,667.08



SOCIAL JUSTICE

With all the stress, expense, and expectation surrounding the holidays, it can be a challenge just to get through "the most wonderful time of the year" with our Christian values and our wallets intact. Here's some alternate gift suggestions that might help keep Christ in Christmas, save money, protect the planet, and spread good cheer all at the same time. Chronicle your family history by assembling photographs, letters, and important documents. Frame a meaningful photograph or put together a photo album or book of family recipes. Give children a gift of music or sports lessons instead of another toy. Give the gift of time. Begin with a gift certificate that offers babysitting, a home-cooked meal, or a monthly lunch date with a relative or friend. Donate to a charity in the name of a loved one. Examples include Heifer International, Second Harvest Food Bank, and Emmaus Soup Kitchen. Give fair trade items such as tea, coffee, or chocolate. Give homemade baked goods, potpourri, or a dried herb wreath. Create a special memory by going to a ball game, to a museum, or on a camping trip. Give away one of your favorite things.



Spaghetti Dinner Fundraiser

For the Religious Education Ministry

SUNDAY, JANUARY 26, 2020

First Sitting:

12 - 2 p.m.

Second Sitting:

2 - 4 p.m.

\$10 for Adults

\$5 for Children 10 and under

- Spaghetti & Meatballs
(Gluten Free Options Available)
- Refreshments
- Salad
- Italian Bread
- Cupcake Bar
- Chinese Auction

Tickets are on sale in the Gathering Space and in the Parish Office during office hours.

Take-out tickets are available for purchase.