

OUR LADY OF MERCY CHURCH

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



January 12, 2020 - The Baptism of the Lord

MASS SCHEDULE

Saturday Vigil: 6:00 p.m.

Sunday: 8:30 a.m. & 11:00 a.m.

Weekday: 8:30 a.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*

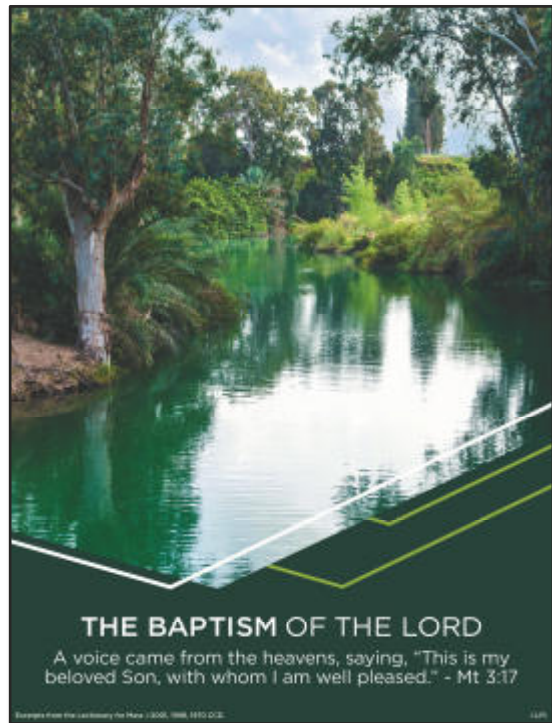
CONTACT INFORMATION

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. 01/13	7:00 p.m.	Q&A with the Pastor
Tue. 01/14	9:30 a.m.	Steel Magnolias
	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
	6:00 p.m.	Mexico Delegation
	7:00 p.m.	Lifelong Faith Formation
	7:00 p.m.	Roman Candles SCC
	7:30 p.m.	AA
Wed. 01/15	8:30 a.m.	Food Pantry Distribution
	1:00 p.m.	Diamonds in the Rough
	7:00 p.m.	OLM Book Group
Thur. 01/16	9:00 a.m.	Painting Class
	9:30 a.m.	Families & Faith Formation Meeting
	9:30 a.m.	Potter's Clay
	1:00 pm.	Contemplative Prayer
	6:00 p.m.	Prayer Shawl
	6:45 p.m.	Choir Rehearsal
Fri. 01/17		
Sat. 01/18	10:00 a.m.	AA
	4:30 p.m.	Sacrament of Penance
Sun. 01/19	9:30 a.m.	Religious Ed. Gr. K-2
	9:30 a.m.	Healing Ministry
	9:45 a.m.	First Reconciliation Parent Meeting
	12:00 p.m.	Religious Ed. Gr. 7 & 8
	12:15 p.m.	Gr. 11 Interviews

SCRIPTURE READINGS

Mon. 01/13	1 Sm 1:1-8	/ Mk 1:14-20
Tue. 01/14	1 Sm 1:9-20	/ Mk 1:21-28
Wed. 01/15	1 Sm 3:1-10, 19-20	/ Mk 1:29-39
Thur. 01/16	1 Sm 4:1-11	/ Mk 1:40-45
Fri. 01/17	1 Sm 8:4-7, 10-22a	/ Mk 2:1-12
Sat. 01/18	1 Sm 9:1-4, 17-19; 10:1	/ Mk 2:13-17
Sun. 01/19	Is 49:3, 5-6 / 1 Cor 1:1-3	/ Jn 1:29-34

MASS INTENTIONS

Mon. 01/13	8:30 a.m.	
Tue. 01/14	8:30 a.m.	Carson Reichert (Gerri Gallagher)
Wed. 01/15	8:30 a.m.	Sam Garwig (Liana Pasquale)
Thur. 01/16	8:30 a.m.	
Fri. 01/17	8:30 a.m.	
Sat. 01/18	8:30 a.m.	John Green (Family)
	6:00 p.m.	For the People of OLM
Sun. 01/19	8:30 a.m.	Marie Ritchie
	11:00 a.m.	Kelley Wilke (The Stephenson Family)

FROM THE RELIGIOUS ED. OFFICE

Gr. 9 Retreat

The candidates in their first year of preparation for the Sacrament of Confirmation will have a mandatory retreat TODAY Sunday, Jan. 12 from noon to 4:00 in Sperry Hall.

First Reconciliation Parent Meeting

There will be a very important meeting for parents of children preparing for First Reconciliation. The meeting will be held on Sunday, Jan. 19 at 9:45 in the Conference Room.

Gr. 11 Interviews

Confirmation candidates in their final year of preparation for the Sacrament are reminded that they have mandatory interviews on Sunday, Jan. 19 at 12:15. Meet in Classroom #1.

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 Florence Voelker.



THIS SUNDAY'S REFLECTION

MT 3:13-17



...and behold, the heavens were opened...

Many of us have the date of our baptism marked on our calendars. We recognize this event as a holy day when symbolically we went down into the waters with the weight of our mortality and rose out of those waters "trailing clouds of glory."

Today we see Jesus descending into the waters bearing the bittersweet burden of each of us. As he rises out of the waters the heavens open; a heavenly voice resounds through all creation, "Here is my Beloved." I boldly suggest that The Beloved God speaks of includes all whom Jesus loves. Thus if you and I are part of the frail and glorious weight Jesus takes down into the waters, we are also part of the loveliness that rises out of the waters with him.

To help us remember that we, too, are the Beloved of God let us try to keep the words, "and the heavens were opened," alive in our minds and hearts. If we can be more aware of the moments when the heavens open and God breaks through on a daily basis, our lives will be filled with baptismal moments.

For Reflection: Can I imagine myself, and my flaws, being carried into the waters of Jesus' baptism? And can I believe that I am part of his rising out of the waters to hear God's voice? What is God speaking to me?

Question & Answer With the Pastor



Mark your calendar. 2020 will kick off with an evening of conversation with Fr. Ritchie, **Monday, Jan. 13 at 7:00 PM.** All are welcome, including friends and family members with questions about the Catholic faith. Feel free to bring snacks or left over cookies to share.

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. Our January title will be Of Human Bondage by W. Somerset Maugham. We will meet on **January 15th at 7:00 p.m.** at the home of Irene Lucas at 1019 Bartlett Road. Want to read ahead? In February we will discuss What Alice Forgot by Lianne Moriarty.



For Mercy Sake Deadline
The deadline to submit items for the February issue of *For Mercy Sake* newsletter is **Jan. 19.** Items can be emailed to ilucas@ourladyofmercychurch.org.

Grief Support

Have you lost someone in your life and are experiencing doubt, confusion, anger or deep sadness? The Grief Ministry sponsors a monthly support group on the third Monday of the month. Our next meeting is **January 20 at 7pm.** We choose a topic associated with the grief process, discuss our experience, learn how others are coping and close with prayer. Questions call Donna Clark in the parish office.



Awaken Your Faith



Wednesday January 22 at 7pm - for people who are struggling with their faith and feeling pushed away from church. Has your faith journey been confusing, frustrating, filled with guilt? Has it pushed you out of a faith community? Are you seeking to awaken your faith but are not ready to re-enter the community. Join this discussion group to explore the difficulties of the faith journey and discover the next step on the journey that works for you. Questions call Donna Clark, Pastoral Minister 899-5342 or 814-303-9282

FINANCIAL SUPPORT

Offertory for the weekend of January 5, 2020

Envelopes sent:	392	
Envelopes returned:	110	\$4,903.20
Faith Direct Deposits:	117	\$3,059.08
Loose Change:		\$ 227.00
TOTAL OFFERTORY:		\$8,189.28

Spaghetti Dinner Fundraiser

The religious education ministry is holding its first spaghetti dinner on **Jan. 26.** In addition to spaghetti and meatballs, salad and bread, beverage and dessert, there will be a gift auction. Gluten free pasta will also be available. Tickets are \$10 for adult and \$5 children under 10 years. Seating is limited, so buy your tickets early. Tickets can be purchased after weekend Masses or at the Parish Office during the week. Take out will be offered. We are asking our religious education community to volunteer for this event. Donations of theme baskets for our gift auction and empty large baskets for our gifts are appreciated.



Know someone . . .



Who is struggling with church or faith? Who feels hurt or is angry with God, himself or herself or a minister of the church? Invite them to Healing the Faith Journey, **Monday, February 10 at 7pm.**

This session will allow us to process our hurts in a prayerful environment and take a step towards healing and forgiveness. Questions call Donna Clark, Pastoral Minister 899-5342 or 814-303-9282.

Parish Mardi Gras

Last year's Sister Parish Mardi Gras celebration was a huge success raising over \$2,000 for our sister parish in Mexico. This year's Mardi Gras on **Feb. 22** is going to be even better! There will be a taco bar dinner, beer, wine and pop, tip boards and 50/50, a homemade beer, wine and salsa taste-off, a murder mystery. And a reverse raffle for the grand prize of \$500. The \$10 ticket covers your food, drinks, entertainment and entry into the reverse raffle. Tickets are available after Masses or in the Faith Formation Office during the week. Sign up to enter the wine, beer or salsa taste-off on the easel in the Gathering Space.



Parish Alive



Give yourself a gift this Christmas. Register to make Parish Alive on **Feb. 28-29.** The gift of a deeper relationship with Christ is the best gift you could ever receive. Registration forms and more information can be found at the parish website and on the bulletin tables.

Paper Crafters Needed

Fr. Ritchie has some pictures he would like put in a scrapbook. Please contact Teresa Shamburg at 879-8622 or shamtace@roadrunner if you are interested in helping.



Our Neighbors' Place

Thank you for making Our Neighbors' Place a reality. The January session (15th-29th) is underway. We are still in need of the following donations: coffee, hot cocoa, creamer, pop, drink mixes, cereal, snacks such as potato chips, pretzels, and fresh fruit. We also accept men's and women's winter clothing items, especially warm gloves. Checks may be made payable to "St. John the Baptist Outreach." Thank you and bless you! Mary Ellen Lieb - 873-1284 melieb4@gmail.com Mary Hoffman – 873-2981 mymary14@gmail.com



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.



Question-of-the-Week

The winner of the Question-of-the-Week Contest for the week of Jan. 1 was Hannah Bradley, Gr. 2, who knew that the wise men brought gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh to honor Jesus.

January 6, 2020

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Thank you for taking a moment to read this brief note about the importance of strong communications from the Diocese of Erie. It's a key priority among my many responsibilities and is a form of evangelization. As the crush of information that comes our way continues to increase, it becomes harder and harder to remain informed. What's important? What's straightforward? How can we discern the truth? The more access we have, the harder it is for us to pull out what is of value. Among the many solutions the Diocese of Erie tries to provide is our award-winning Diocese of Erie-News. I encourage you to visit www.nwpaCatholic.com subscribe to this free, weekly email that provides links to stories and news from the diocese, as well as a top national and international story of interest to Catholics. We work to make it engaging, often including a picture or video of the week and highlighting the work we do in social media and in our flagship publication, Faithmagazine. I am grateful to the students at Gannon University who recently completed a marketing study for us, helping us to refine our messaging so that we can reach a broader audience more effectively. Their insights are already having an impact on our work. Your contributions to the Help Spread the Faith campaign, scheduled to take place in parishes the weekend of Jan. 26, 2020, will continue to help us make the most effective use of all forms of communications, from videos and publications, to work online and in social media. Please know of my gratitude for your support.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

+Lawrence T. Persico

The Most Reverend Lawrence T. Persico,
JCL Bishop of Erie



SOCIAL JUSTICE

January opened with the annual celebration of the International World Day of Peace. During these days of the Season of Christmas, we rejoice that God took on our nature and entered our world as a vulnerable baby. Our hearts are gladdened by the laughter of children, their delight in the Christmas lights and Santa's surprises. But, the celebration of the International Day of Peace reminds us that for many of the world's children, pain, fear, hunger and trauma marks this season as it marks most of their days. As we begin 2020 with a commitment to work for peace in the world, let the cries of the children inspire us to action.

On the 50th anniversary of the founding of UNICEF, the United Nations published a report which chronicled the toll of war on children in the 20th century. The decade that brought that century to a close saw the following impact of war on the most vulnerable members of the human race, our children.

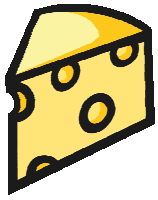
- 2 million killed;
- 4-5 million disabled;
- 12 million left homeless;
- more than 1 million orphaned or separated from their parents;
- some 10 million psychologically traumatized." ⁴

The most recent report of the World Food Program reveals a close link between armed conflict and hunger. More than 56 million people faced starvation in 2018, the vast majority of these were living in nations at war.

As hunger and conflict fuel one another, the recent proliferation of conflicts has reversed several decades of progress fighting global hunger. Today, people living in conflict-stricken areas make up 60 percent of the world's 815 million chronically hungry. They are more than twice as likely to be undernourished than those living in countries at peace.



What You Always Wanted to Know About...



Monday, January 13 @ 7:00 PM

Join Us For A

Q & A With Fr. Ritchie



Informal gathering in the Conference Room

Wine, Cheese and Your Questions

(Feel free to bring a snack to share, if you wish)

This is your opportunity to chat with your pastor about those questions concerning the Bible, the Church, Catholic beliefs, etc. that you have never known how to answer. Every question is worthwhile as we will learn from one another.

Whether you have a specific question in mind or just want an opportunity to learn and discuss, bring a friend and join us.

Awaken Your Faith

Wednesday January 22 at 7pm

Has your faith journey been confusing, frustrating, filled with guilt?

Has it pushed you out of the faith community?

Are you seeking to awaken your faith but are not ready to re-enter the community?

Join this discussion group to explore the ups and downs of the faith journey and discover the next step on this journey that works for you.

Questions Call Donna Clark, Pastoral Minister 899-5342.

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