

OUR LADY OF MERCY CHURCH

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



February 23, 2020 - 7th Sunday in Ordinary Time

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. 02/24	2:00 p.m.	Hospital Visitors Meeting
	6:30 p.m.	Fruit of the Vine
Tue. 02/25	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.	Youth Open Gym
	7:30 p.m.	AA
Wed. 02/26	Ash Wednesday	
	8:30 a.m.	Ash Wednesday Mass
	1:00 p.m.	Diamonds in the Rough
	7:00 p.m.	Ash Wednesday Mass
Thur. 02/27	9:00 a.m.	Painting Class
	9:30 a.m.	Potter's Clay
	1:00 p.m.	Contemplative Prayer
	6:00 p.m.	Prayer Shawl
	6:45 p.m.	Choir Rehearsal
Fri. 02/28	7:00 p.m.	Stations of the Cross
Sat. 02/29	9:00 a.m.	Angels in Training
	10:00 a.m.	AA
	4:30 p.m.	Sacrament of Penance
Sun. 03/01	Casserole Club Drop - Off	
	Monthly Food Pantry Collection	
	9:30 a.m.	First Reconciliation Retreat
	9:30 a.m.	Religious Ed. Gr. K-2
	9:30 a.m.	Healing Ministry
	12:00 p.m.	Religious Ed. Gr. 7 & 8

SCRIPTURE READINGS

Mon. 02/24	Jas 3:13-18	/ Mk 9:14-29
Tue. 02/25	Jas 4:1-10	/ Mk 9:30-37
Wed. 02/26	Jl 2:12-18	/ 2 Cor 5:20-6:2 / Mt 6:1-6, 16-18
Thur. 02/27	Dt 30:15-20	/ Lk 9:22-25
Fri. 02/28	Is 58:1-9a	/ Mt 9:14-15
Sat. 02/29	Is 58:9b-14	/ Lk 5:27-32
Sun. 03/01	Gn 2:7-9, 3:1-7	/ Rom 5:12-19 / Mt 4:1-11

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 **Donna Smicker**.



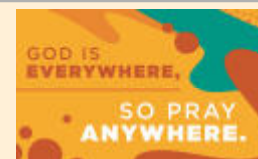
THIS SUNDAY'S REFLECTION

MATTHEW 5:38-48

The last two antitheses offered in the Sermon on the Mount deal with love of enemies. We should not look at "an eye for an eye" as an inordinately strict punishment. It is actually meant to limit acts of revenge by making sure the punishment is not excessive but fits the crime. However, Jesus asks his followers to take a different approach by resisting retaliation altogether. The response to a stronger person who slaps us on the cheek, takes us to court, or demands a service of us is not to resist. Similarly, for a weaker person, such as a beggar or borrower, we are to give him or her what he or she asks for. Those who are called to the Kingdom of Heaven are to go beyond the way the world usually works and serve God's kingdom here on earth.

The other difficult demand of those who are called to the kingdom is to embrace the enemy. There is no command in the Old Testament to hate individuals in a personal or vindictive way. But there is a religious stance that calls one to hate evil and to distance oneself from those who participate in evil. In contrast, Matthew emphasizes that love of God and love of neighbor are the fundamental commands on which all else depend. Because God's love is unconditional, we are to strive to love as God does, though, of course, it is challenging. Is it even possible?

The key is in the final verse. We are to be perfect as our heavenly father is perfect. Matthew uses the Greek word *telos*, which is probably better translated here as "complete." We are not to be perfect as in doing everything correctly, that is, as in being absolutely morally correct. We are to be perfect as in striving to reach the completeness we are called to in the Kingdom of Heaven. Attempting to love our enemies is part of striving for that completeness.



FINANCIAL SUPPORT

Offertory for the weekend of February 16, 2020

Envelopes sent:	392	
Envelopes returned:	96	\$4,041.00
Faith Direct Deposits:	117	\$3,059.08
Loose Change:		\$ 257.00
TOTAL OFFERTORY:		\$7,357.08

MASS INTENTIONS

Mon. 02/24	8:30 a.m.	Bill Behringer (Family)
Tue. 02/25	8:30 a.m.	Carolyn Charney (Kosobucki Family)
Wed. 02/26	8:30 a.m.	Dennis Rapp
	7:00 p.m.	
Thur. 02/27	8:30 a.m.	Francis Ritchie
Fri. 02/28	8:30 a.m.	Agnes Barko (Barko Family)
Sat. 02/29	8:30 a.m.	George Ritchie
	6:00 p.m.	For the People of OLM
Sun. 03/01	8:30 a.m.	
	11:00 a.m.	Thomas Liebel (Liebel Family)

Hospital Visitors Meeting

A reminder that Hospital visitors have a planning meeting for **Monday, February 24 at 2:00pm**. The Make-up meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, March 3 at 2:00pm. Please let Donna Clark know if you are unable to attend.



Harborcreek Community Engagement Team



The Harborcreek Community Engagement Team meets regularly to support events that help to build a strong community. The team members are from local businesses and churches, township and school offices. They periodically have a drive to support the Ella Cochran Food Pantry. There is a "Spring Cleaning" Drive going on now. for toilet paper, paper towels and multi-purpose cleaner. Please bring your donations to the church and place them in the baskets by the doors.

Baptismal Prep Parent Session

The next Baptismal Prep Session for Parents and Godparents will be held on **Sunday, March 15 at noon** in the Conference Room. The Diocese of Erie mandates that parents who desire to celebrate the Baptism of their child attend a parent prep session within 2 years of the child's baptism. If you are anticipating the baptism of your child in the coming 6 months, register for this session by calling the parish office at 899-5342. Registration prior to the class is required in order to ensure that sufficient materials are available.



OLM Book Group



On the weather outside may be frightful, but it is perfect for a good book. Join the OLM Book Group for a cozy evening of book talk with book lovers. On **March 18**, you are invited to the home of Irene

Lucas, 1019 Bartlett Rd. at 7:00 to discuss The Life You Bury by Allen Eskens.

Ink Jet Fundraiser

Please donate used black or color ink jet cartridges to the Religious Education ministry. Previously refilled and remanufactured cartridges can not be redeemed, nor can laser toner cartridges.



Soup Makers Needed

Lenten Soup Supers are being held before our Lenten Pastus speakers on **March 4, 11 & 25**. We need soup makers to serve at least 40 people. Please sign-up in the Gathering Space. Contact Sue McCreary at 814-602-0146 with any questions.



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.

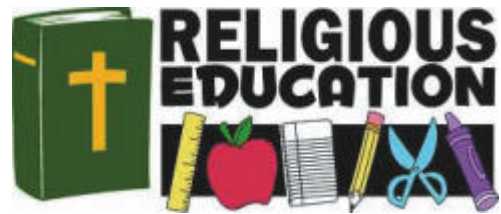
Parish Quilt

New parish families are encouraged to decorate a quilt square for our parish quilt that hangs on the back wall of the worship space. You may find a square in the basket on the table next to classroom #1. After you decorate your family square please return it to the parish office.



Question-of-the-Week

The winner of the Question-of-the-Week Contest for the week of Feb. 11 was **Alexandra Bryan, Gr. 2**, who could name several of the Apostles.



First Reconciliation Retreat

Families with children preparing for their first celebration of the Sacrament of Reconciliation are reminded that we have an important day of retreat on **Sunday, March 1 from 9:30-1:00**. The celebration of First Reconciliation will be held on **Saturday, March 7 at 1:00**.

First Eucharist Parent Meeting

Parents with children preparing to celebrate First Eucharist in the spring are reminded that there will be a very important meeting on **Sunday, March 8 at 9:45-10:45** in Sperry Hall.

Operation Rice Bowl

This week, religious education children will be receiving their Lenten Operation Rice Bowls. This is a project of Catholic Relief Services. The family calendar offers a daily suggestion for prayer, study or action as we journey through Lent. Money collected through this rice bowl is used to assist those in need, both in our diocese and around the world.

We Remember...

Dave Johnson, brother-in-law of Jim Skarzenski and uncle of Josh Skarzenski; who passed away recently.

Please hold them and their families in prayer during this difficult time.

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CURSILLO CORNER



2020 Cursillo Dates

March 19-22nd Men's Cursillo #251 at OLM

April 16-19th Women's Cursillo #258 at OLM

Start making plans for life's best weekend! Lois Heise would love to talk to you about Cursillo and how it can change your life! Call Lois at 882-9555.

SOCIAL JUSTICE



Human Trafficking

There are an estimated 40 million victims of human trafficking (modern day slavery) today. Every country in the world is affected, including the United States. Migrants and refugees are particularly vulnerable to human trafficking. You can do something about this scourge on humanity. Become a responsible consumer to lessen the chance that your purchases are products of forced or child labor. You can learn about your ties to human trafficking at this website: <http://slaveryfootprint.org>

CSA 2020

CSA Commitment Sunday

Today is commitment Sunday for the 2020 CSA. The theme of this year's CSA is "Forward Together...doing the work of Christ". Together, we make it possible for parishes, Catholic schools, Catholic Charities, clergy and the Catholic faithful to live and share Christ's teaching. You may wonder why you should support the CSA. The truth is, as members of the Diocese of Erie, we play an important role in the diocesan activities of Catholic education, evangelization, promoting justice and serving people in need throughout our diocese. Our diocese has work to do on behalf of the Lord and we are all asked to share our gifts to help advance the mission of the church. Our bishop assures us the CSA donations are strictly designated to fund the projects, ministries and departments of the Diocese of Erie. No funds donated to the CSA have been or will be used to defray expenses related to the sexual abuse crisis. Your gift is so important. Thank you for giving.



LENTEN Schedule

Ash Wednesday

Wednesday February 26th is Ash Wednesday. Ashes will be distributed during the 8:30 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. Mass.

Stations of the Cross

The parishioners of Our Lady of Mercy are invited to join the following groups as we pray the Stations of the Cross on Fridays at 7 p.m. throughout the season of Lent:

February 28	Adoration Group
March 6	Religious Ed. Students
13	Legion of Mary
20	SCC Fireside Chatters
27	Knights of Columbus
April 3	Pastoral Council

Lenten Pastus Series

The parish soup supper and speaker series is a beloved tradition during Lent at OLM. Our first Pastus will be held on Wednesday, March 4. Join us for Mass at 5:30 and/or homemade soup supper at 6:10 and/or the presentation at 7:00. Our first Pastus presentation will be given by Fr. Ritchie who will share pictures and stories from his recent tour of the Holy Land.

Parish Mission

Mark your calendar for our annual Parish Mission, March 15-17. Fr. Frank DeSiano will invite us to reflect on "*Being a Disciple Today: How Can I Live My Life in a New Way*". Each evening's program will begin at 7:00 PM. Fr. DeSiano is a nationally known author, speaker and leading voice on evangelization.

Sacrament of Reconciliation

The prayers and practices of this season help us call to mind our sins and God's forgiveness. As we grow in awareness of our faults, we can bring them to God in a spirit of repentance, open to growth in grace, awaiting the full expression of mercy and love. Communal celebrations of the sacrament of reconciliation remind us that continued conversion is a journey we make together as the Body of Christ. We will gather as a local faith community on the following days:

Sunday, March 29 3:00 p.m.
at St. Gregory in North East

Tuesday, March 31 7:00 p.m.
at Saint James in Wesleyville

Wednesday, April 1 7:00 p.m.
at Our Lady of Mercy in Harborcreek

Thursday, April 2 7:00 p.m.
at St. Mark in Lawrence Park

HIGHLIGHTS OF OUR LITURGIES AND EVENTS

ASH WEDNESDAY

Wednesday, February 26
8:30 a.m. & 7:00 p.m.

Mass with Distribution of Ashes

LENTEN PASTUS

Wednesdays of Lent
March 4, 11, 25

5:30 p.m.—Mass

6:10 p.m.—Soup Supper

7:00 p.m.—Presentation

STATIONS OF THE CROSS

Fridays of Lent - 7:00 p.m.

ANOINTING OF THE SICK

Saturday/Sunday, March 21,22
at all Masses

PARISH MISSION

Sunday, Monday, Tuesday
March 15, 16, 17
7:00 p.m.

COMMUNAL RECONCILIATION SERVICE

Wednesday, April 1
7:00 p.m.

The season of Lent begins on **Ash Wednesday, February 26, 2020** and concludes when the Paschal Triduum of the Passion, Death, and Resurrection of the Lord begins at the start of the evening Mass of the Lord's Supper on Holy Thursday evening, April 9, 2020.

The following regulations are promulgated and binding for all Catholics in the Diocese of Erie for Lent and the Paschal Triduum.

1. Traditional Lenten practices of PRAYER, FASTING, and ALMSGIVING and other forms of self-denial are recommended most warmly by the Church. Daily Mass is particularly encouraged.
2. ASH WEDNESDAY, ALL FRIDAYS IN LENT, and GOOD FRIDAY are days of abstinence from meat for those 14 years of age and older.
3. ASH WEDNESDAY AND GOOD FRIDAY are also days of fasting for those ages 18 to 58 inclusive. *On these days, those bound by the law of fasting may take one full meal. Two smaller meals, sufficient to maintain strength according to one's needs, are also permitted. Eating between meals is not permitted, but liquids including milk and fruit juices are allowed. When health or work is seriously affected, the law does not oblige.*

We keep Lent together as one parish family.
We put aside our business-as-usual to support each other
in prayer, fasting and almsgiving.
We turn to God to enlighten us and purify us
throughout the lengthening brightness of this holy season.



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