

OUR LADY OF MERCY CHURCH

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



September 6, 2020 - 23rd Sunday in Ordinary Time

MASS SCHEDULE

Weekday and Weekend Mass has resumed with the following schedule and covid-19 protocols in place:

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*

Sarah Phipps, *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



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. 09/07	Labor Day	Parish Office Closed
Tue. 09/08	9:30 a.m.	Steel Magnolias SCC
Wed. 09/09	6:30 p.m.	AGIFT Meeting
	7:00 p.m.	Knights of Columbus
Thur. 09/10	11:00 a.m.	Scripture Study - Zoom
	6:00 p.m.	Prayer Shawl
	6:00 p.m.	Gr. 9 & 10 Parent /Candidate Meeting
Fri. 09/11		
Sat. 09/12	4:30 p.m.	Sacrament of Penance
Sun. 09/13	8:00 a.m.	Pre-Cana
	9:30 a.m.	Religious Ed Gr. K-8
	12:15 p.m.	Gr. 11 Parent /Candidate Meeting

FINANCIAL SUPPORT

Offertory for the weekend of August 30, 2020

Envelopes sent:	392	
Envelopes returned:	50	\$3,999.00
Faith Direct Deposits:	134	\$3,412.20
Loose Change:		\$ 62.00
TOTAL OFFERTORY:		\$7,473.20

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 490-9681



MASS INTENTIONS

Mon. 09/07	8:30 a.m.	-No Mass-
Tue. 09/08	8:30 a.m.	Chet Szymecki (Ed Lacastro)
Wed. 09/09	8:30 a.m.	Lewis Peters (Carole Peters)
Thur. 09/10	8:30 a.m.	Mr. & Mrs. Henry Wienczowski (John & Irene Abbate)
Fri. 09/11	8:30 a.m.	Ruth Extein (The Extein Family)
Sat. 09/12	8:30 a.m.	-No Mass-
	6:00 p.m.	Norm Schlosser (Terry Miller)
Sun. 09/13	8:30 a.m.	Scott Emling (Susan Payne)
	11:00 a.m.	For the People of OLM



SCRIPTURE READINGS

Mon. 09/07	1 Cor 5:1-8	/ Lk 6:6-11
Tue. 09/08	Mi 5:1-4a or Rom 8:28-30/	Mt 1:18-23
Wed. 09/09	1 Cor 7:25-31	/ Lk 6:20-26
Thur. 09/10	1 Cor 8:1b-7; 11-13	/ Lk 6:27-38
Fri. 09/11	1 Cor 9:16-19, 22b-27	/ Lk 6:39-42
Sat. 09/12	1 Cor 10:14-22	/ Lk 6:43-49
Sun. 09/13	Sir 27:30-28:7/Rom 14:7-9	/Mt 18:21-35

THIS SUNDAY'S REFLECTION

MATTHEW 18:15-20

"Go and tell him his fault."

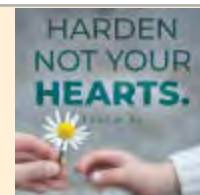
This is not a passage for those of us who hate confrontation. At least it tells us to keep it as private as possible, to begin with anyway. A religious sect founded on this passage would probably be known as the "busybodies." But this passage offers more than just a stark command to be confrontational.

There is something here also that should lead us to carefully consider our responsibilities toward our spiritual siblings, even our errant ones. It seems God so desires our harmony that just two of us simply agreeing in prayer is enough to compel the hand of God. If just two of us gathering together can summon the Son of God into our company, where does two of us avoiding each other send Jesus?

Maybe those who are our sisters and brothers through baptism are actually meant to be incredibly dear to us. Maybe the way we live together (or don't live together) actually makes a difference in our personal relationship with God. What if our relationship with God is actually a family affair? Now whose turn is it to host Thanksgiving this year?

Reflection: What situations am I avoiding that need my attention? Are their repairs to be made in a relationship? Misunderstandings that need correction?

Clifford Yeary



A safe Place for Victims

Our Lady of Mercy has an opportunity to create a safe Place for Victims of domestic violence. We are getting a team together to be trained to recognize, respond to and refer victims of domestic violence to get help. The PurpleOne, Initiative is sponsoring webinar on **Sept 9 or Oct 15 from 8 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.** If you are interested, contact Donna Clark for the sign up link. The PurpleOne Initiative seeks to empower the community to confront domestic violence and support victims through education and outreach. Following the training Our Lady of Mercy can elect to receive PurpleOne Certification and can elect to be registered as a "Safe Place for Domestic Violence Victims." We would display the PurpleOne dot on our window.



Ladies' Lunch



If you live alone and are seeking company to share a meal and good conversation join us for the Ladies' Lunch on **Monday, Sept 14 at 1:00 p.m.** at Harborveiw Grill, 3730 Harbor Ridge Trail. Questions contact Donna Clark.

OLM Book Group

Join us on **Wednesday, Sept. 16 @ 7:00 p.m.** at the home of Pat Marshall, 4159 Ridge Pkwy, to discuss *Olive Again* by Elizabeth Strout. Our October title will be *Big Little Lies* by Liane Moriarty.



AV Ministry About To Go Live

We are working on our permanent live-stream system so we can continue to live stream Mass and other parish events. We

are looking for people who would love to learn how to work the camera and sound system for our livestream. Interested? Please contact Donna Clark in the parish office. Or dclark@ourladyofmercychurch.org



Grief Support

Every third Monday of the month we host a Grief Support Group. The next one is **Sept 21 at 7:00 p.m.** The grief journey is something we don't choose; it just happens to us. This support group helps people find the best way to walk their grief journey. Hearing other people's stories helps with the healing process. For questions contact Donna Clark.

Baptismal Preparation Parent Session

Families desiring to celebrate the Sacrament of Baptism with a child are asked to attend a preparation session before scheduling the baptism. The next Baptismal Preparation Parent Session will be held **Sunday, Oct. 18 at 12:15** in the Worship Space. To register, contact the parish office at 899-5342.



FORMED.ORG

FORMED

If you are new to the parish subscription, you can enjoy formed.org for free by signing up as part of the parish subscription. All you need is your email, then select the option for an "institution or parish" subscription and search for Our Lady of Mercy Harborcreek.

Look for the "Silver Lining"



In an effort to help people connect we are collecting your "silver lining" stories. Have you had any blessings in the past few months? Have you done something during the pandemic that you never used to do, and you found it uplifting? Can you share one positive thing that has happened since March? Tell your stories to us, Katie or Donna in the parish office, by phone, in person, or by e mail. We will share these stories with the community, at mass, in the bulletin or in our email blasts and on facebook. dclark@ourladyofmercychurch.org or call 899-5342.

Religious Education Parent Meetings



Adjustments have been made to the faith formation ministry at OLM because of COVID. September will open with a series of parent meetings to explain what is happening. All meetings will be held in the Worship Space to ensure social distancing.
Sept. 10 @ 6:00 p.m. – Grade 9 & 10
Sept. 13 @ 12:15 – Grade 11

Catechist Needed

Due to COVID, we will have to offer faith formation remotely this year. We need help to make that happen. We need volunteers willing to work with youth on the 1st, 4th and 6th grade level. We also need adults willing to provide current clearances and complete the on-line child protection in-service who would be willing to log into an on-line class to fulfill the diocesan requirement mandating 2 adults present when we work with youth on a conferencing platform. If you are willing to help this year, please contact Irene at 899-6132 or ilucas@ourladyofmercychurch.org.

Religious Education Registration

Families with children intending to participate in religious education at Our Lady of Mercy this year are reminded to return their updated and signed forms to the church as soon as possible. Families who are new to the ministry this year can find forms at the parish website or can call the church to have forms mailed to them. Religious education virtual classes begin on **September 13.**

Scripture Study

A new on-line Scripture Study is beginning. Join us Thursday mornings at 11:00 via Zoom to study the Gospel of Matthew. Each week will listen to the next two sessions from Lectio Matthew on formed.org. Then, we will discuss the content when we gather. Sept. 3 Session # 1 & 2, Sept. 10 Session #3 & 4. If you want to join, send an email to ilucas@ourladyofmercychurch.org by 5:00 Wednesday and Irene will send you the link.



Parish Mission

Mark your calendar for Oct. 4-6 for our annual Parish Mission. Originally scheduled for March, this was postponed due to COVID. Attend in person or via live stream. Fr. Frank Desiano is a nationally recognized author and speaker. This mission "Being a Disciple Today: How Can I Live My Faith in a New Way?" will challenge us to a deeper, more authentic witness to the Gospels in our daily lives.



Child Protection and Creating Safe Environments

Diocesan Child Protection Policies

The Diocese of Erie, along with all other dioceses in the United States, has policies and procedures in place to address the national problem of child abuse and to aid in maintaining safe environments. The three main components of the Policy for the Protection of Children are: screening of all employees and volunteers who work with minors, training of all youth, parents, employees and volunteers, and reporting all suspected child abuse. The diocese is committed to promptly reporting any suspected child abuse directly to ChildLine or law enforcement. The diocese requires on-going screening and training of all personnel, paid or unpaid, who have regular contact with our children and youth under the age of 18. The diocese also requires yearly safe environment training of our children, youth and parents regarding touching-safety and safe environments. Visit <https://www.eriecd.org/childprotection/> to read the policy and learn what the diocese requires for all personnel who work with children and youth in parishes/schools/agencies.

Catholic Education Collection -September 19-20, 2020

The 2020 Catholic Education Collection will take place on September 19-20. This important collection supports lifelong faith formation for all generations throughout our diocese. Please give generously and know that half of what you give will remain here at Our Lady of Mercy parish to support our own religious education and faith formation.

Social Justice

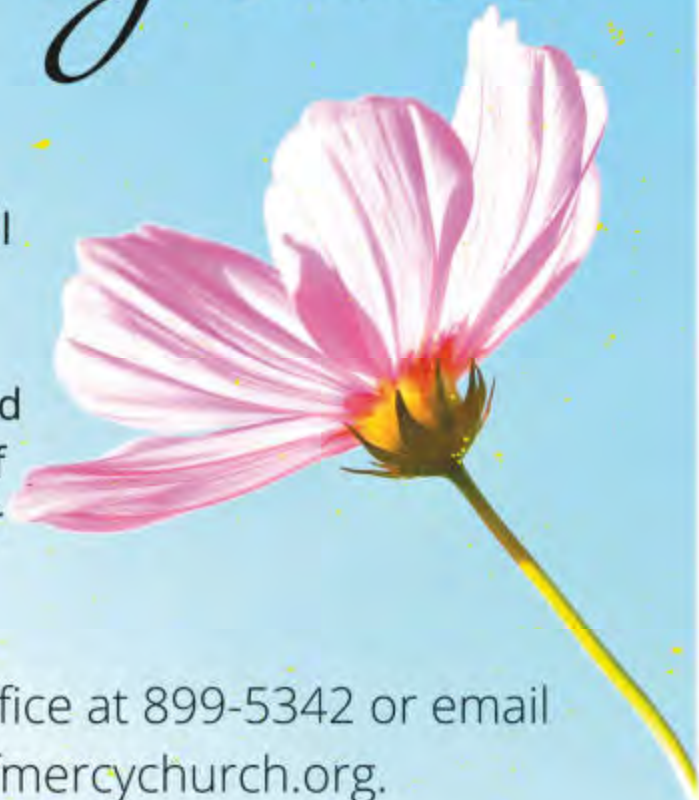
Christians have a moral responsibility to participate in the political process to form a society in keeping with the values of the Gospel. As the United States prepares to hold a presidential election, we are challenged by our faith and by the Bishops of the United States to reflect on the issues of our time in light of the teachings of Christ. Voting is not merely a right, it is a responsibility. As baptized disciples of Christ, we are obligated to contribute to the building of the Kingdom of God by working for the common good in shaping a just society. The Bishops of the United States tell us that: "In the Catholic Tradition, responsible citizenship is a virtue, and participation in political life is a moral obligation. "People in every nation enhance the social dimension of their lives by acting as committed and responsible citizens" (*Evangelii Gaudium*, no. 220). The obligation to participate in political life is rooted in our baptismal commitment to follow Jesus Christ and to bear Christian witness in all we do. As the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* reminds us, "It is necessary that all participate, each according to his position and role, in promoting the common good. This obligation is inherent in the dignity of the human person. . . . As far as possible citizens should take an active part in public life" (nos. 1913-1915). Unfortunately, politics in our country often can be a contest of powerful interests, partisan attacks, sound bites, and media hype. The Church calls for a different kind of political engagement: one shaped by the moral convictions of well-formed consciences and focused on the dignity of every human being, the pursuit of the common good, and the protection of the weak and the vulnerable. As Pope Francis reminds us, "Politics, though often denigrated, remains a lofty vocation and one of the highest forms of charity, inasmuch as it seeks the common good. . . . I beg the Lord to grant us more politicians who are genuinely disturbed by the

state of society, the people, the lives of the poor!" (*Evangelii Gaudium*, no. 205). The Catholic call to faithful citizenship affirms the importance of political participation and insists that public service is a worthy vocation. As citizens, we should be guided more by our moral convictions than by our attachment to a political party or interest group. When necessary, our participation should help transform the party to which we belong; we should not let the party transform us in such a way that we neglect or deny fundamental moral truths or approve intrinsically evil acts. We are called to bring together our principles and our political choices, our values and our votes, to help build a civilization of truth and love. As the Holy Father also taught in *Deus Caritas Est*, "The direct duty to work for a just ordering of society is proper to the lay faithful" (no. 29). This duty is more critical than ever in today's political environment, where Catholics may feel politically disenfranchised, sensing that no party and too few candidates fully share the Church's comprehensive commitment to the life and dignity of every human being from conception to natural death. Yet this is not a time for retreat or discouragement; rather, it is a time for renewed engagement. Forming their consciences in accord with Catholic teaching, Catholic lay women and men can become actively involved: running for office; working within political parties; communicating their concerns and positions to elected officials; and joining diocesan social mission or advocacy networks, state Catholic conference initiatives, community organizations, and other efforts to apply authentic moral teaching in the public square. Even those who cannot vote have the right to have their voices heard on issues that affect their lives and the common good. "Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship - Part I - The U.S. Bishops' Reflection on Catholic Teaching and Political Life" United States Conference of Catholic Bishops

Giving Grace

Based on the concept of "Secret Santa", parish families will be matched secretly.

On Feast Day weekend (or sometime near to it) you are asked to leave a small gift and a note of support at the front door of your assigned family.



To sign-up call the Parish Office at 899-5342 or email secretary@ourladyofmercychurch.org.

The deadline to sign-up is September 13th.

Look For The
*Silver
Lining*

SILVER LINING STORY #1

A parishioner lost the job he had for almost thirty years due to the pandemic. He had seen the writing on the wall for quite a few years, surviving two rounds of layoffs in the past six years. As he opened up his heart and honestly looked at the situation, he had not been happy at this job for quite some time. He stayed there because it allotted him a good salary and benefit package. He prayed that he would be able to retire from there someday but was willing to be led where God wanted him to go. Every day he would come home from that job feeling unsatisfied and unappreciated but still couldn't imagine working anywhere else, especially after spending most of his adult life there.

GOD answered his prayer. His worst fear came true. He was let go from this company. Looking back, it's obvious that God was doing for him what he couldn't do for himself. You see, he never would have left of his own accord and would have stayed there suffering until he retired. His wife knew he wasn't happy and was relieved when he came home and said that he had lost his job. She knew his abilities and skills and was confident something better would come along. She kept telling him it would be ok and GOD had better plans for him. He soon came to believe, knowing that she was right.

His confidence grew by leaps and bounds as companies reached out to him. He wasn't sure where he was going to end up but he knew GOD did. If he trusted and followed the path that was laid out for him it would work out better than he could imagine. He made random contact with a parishioner who happened to be looking for someone with his skills. He interviewed for the position and submitted a resume. He was hired a few weeks later. The lesson he learned was to Trust in GOD, knowing GOD was always working for him even when he didn't know it himself.

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