

# OUR LADY OF MERCY CHURCH

837 Bartlett Road • Harborcreek, PA 16421 • [www.ourladyofmercychurch.org](http://www.ourladyofmercychurch.org)



## December 13, 2020 - Third Sunday of Advent

### 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](mailto: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](http://ourladyofmercychurch.org/calendar)

Mon. 12/14	9:00 a.m. Quilters 9:30 a.m. Steel Magnolias SCC 5:30 p.m. Sisters of Scripture SCC
Tue. 12/15	2:00 p.m. Prayer Shawl 7:00 p.m. Faith & Racial Justice
Wed. 12/16	8:30 a.m. Food Pantry Distribution 1:00 p.m. Diamonds in the Rough SCC 7:00 p.m. Advent Evening Prayer - Virtual
Thur. 12/17	7:00 p.m. Book Group 9:00 a.m. Painting Class 6:00 p.m. Prayer Shawl 7:00 p.m. HOPE: Restoring the Heart
Fri. 12/18	
Sat. 12/19	4:30 p.m. Sacrament of Penance
Sun. 12/20	<b>Fourth Sunday of Advent</b> 9:45 a.m. Religious Ed. Gr. K-8 12:00 p.m. Gr. 7 & 8 Youth Event 1:00 p.m. HOPE: Restoring the Heart

## SCRIPTURE READINGS

Mon. 12/14	Nm 24:2-7, 15-17	/ Mt 21:23-27
Tue. 12/15	Zep 3:1-2, 9-13	/ Mt 21:28-32
Wed. 12/16	Is 45:6b-8, 18, 21c-25	/ Lk 7:18b-23
Thur. 12/17	Gn 49:2, 8-10	/ Mt 1:1-17
Fri. 12/18	Jer 23:5-8	/ Mt 1:18-25
Sat. 12/19	Jgs 13:2-7, 24-25a	/ Lk 1:5-25
Sun. 12/20	2 Sm 7:1-5, 8b-12, 14a, 16	
	Rom 16:25-27	/ Lk 1:26-38

## 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. 12/14	8:30 a.m. Dan Sweeney (Jim & Carol Perrotto)
Tue. 12/15	8:30 a.m. Denny Smith (Janet Smith)
Wed. 12/16	8:30 a.m. Helen Szklenski (The Heise Family)
Thur. 12/17	8:30 a.m. George Geisler
Fri. 12/18	8:30 a.m. Norman Schlosser (Joe & Gerri Gallagher)
Sat. 12/19	8:30 a.m. <del>No Mass</del> 6:00 p.m. John Eckendorf (Pat Kosobucki)
Sun. 12/20	8:30 a.m. For the People of OLM 11:00 a.m. Scott Emling (Carole Peters)

## FINANCIAL SUPPORT

Offertory for the weekend of December 6, 2020

Envelopes sent:	392
Envelopes returned:	68 \$5,828.00
Faith Direct Deposits:	133 \$3,432.70
Loose Change:	\$ 50.00
<b>TOTAL OFFERTORY:</b>	<b>\$9,310.70</b>

We Remember... *Loving Memory*

Michael Doyle - brother of Theresa Blazek,  
and Ben DeDionisio  
who passed away recently.

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



## THIS SUNDAY'S REFLECTION

**JOHN 1:6-8, 19-28**

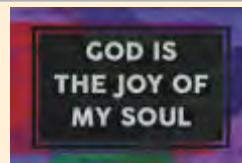
"He was not the light, but came to testify to the light."

The violet we use to decorate our churches during this season is the first color we see as the night sky changes from dark to light. This shade between dark and light reminds us that we wait in anticipation of the light - the birth of Jesus. John was not the light, but he came to say the light was coming. John knew his own role well - he was not the Christ, not Elijah, not the Prophet, but the one who cried out and called people to a baptism of repentance.

We received the light of Christ at our baptism, but perhaps we need John's baptism of repentance during this season. Maybe there is something in our life that is keeping us from fully preparing to receive Jesus this Christmas. Without a doubt, the world will speed up around us this season, but we are called to slow down, to look carefully at ourselves and to prepare a place in our heart for the Christ Child. The sky is changing from black to violet; the light is coming. Are we ready?

For Reflection: How could repentance help me to prepare for the light of Christ to shine through my life?

*Roy Goetz*



### Hope – Restoring the Heart

The next session is Thursday, December 17 at 7:00 p.m. Zoom and in person. If you would like to attend this meeting by Zoom please contact Donna Clark in the parish office or check the parish website. Many of us have had an emotionally difficult time as we struggle with the uncertainty of our current situations. We may be feeling stress, anxiety, or fear. Maybe our prayer is dry or non-existent. If you are looking for a spiritual boost please join us for an opportunity to share stories of hope and healing. We are encouraging people to stay safe. We are taking precautions and following the county health department guidelines. If you would like to talk with someone but don't feel comfortable coming out or are uncomfortable with zoom meetings, please call Donna in the parish office.



### Evening Grief Support Group

Monday, December 21 at 7:00 p.m. is the next evening grief support group meeting. (Zoom available) The holidays can pose a challenge to those in the grief process. In this session we will share different ways to get through the holidays. If you would like to attend the meeting by Zoom or have questions, please contact Donna Clark in the parish office. We can also do one on one ministry on the phone as well.



### Help Needed

We are looking for someone willing to take over our Birthday Card Ministry. This is a ministry that can be done from your home. We would give you the birthday cards, stamps, addresses and the birthdays of the children in the parish. You would send out the cards to each child for their birthday. If interested, contact Irene Lucas at 899-6132 or [ilucas@ourladyofmercychurch.org](mailto:ilucas@ourladyofmercychurch.org).

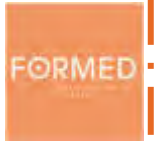


### From the Knights of Columbus...

A reminder from the Our Lady of Mercy Knights of Columbus to "Keep Christ in Christmas".



### FORMED.ORG



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.

*The daily reflections by Dr. Tim Gray on Formed.com are a wonderful addition to my daily prayer time. I also like to share them with friends.*  
Marlene Meyer

### OLM Book Group

In January, we will discuss The Hummingbird's Daughter by Luis Alberto Urrea.



### Social Justice



Really! Who actually likes wearing face masks? They fog up your glasses and make your face itch. It's hard to talk intelligibly through them and nearly impossible to pick up nonverbal facial expressions that add vital texture to conversation. And they make it impossible to forget the depressing reality that COVID-19 is still around.

Plus the mask has become such a divisive political symbol, the masked and the masked-nots assuming the worst about each other. It's a sad commentary on our national state of mind that it's come to this: politicizing masks.

We are faced with an avalanche of evolving information and no shortage of inconsistency and hypocrisy from our government leaders. We default to siding with whatever partisan camp to which we belong. For most of us, independent, nuanced appraisal of a litany of complex issues is unrealistic for our already taxed brains.

For the members of Our Lady of Mercy Church, though, it's important to rise above the political partisanship and think through what our *faith* would call us to with regard to wearing or not wearing masks. What if our view on masks were shaped more by our Christian identity rather than our American political identity?

Christ calls us to care for the least of these among us — the sick, the elderly and the stranger included (Matt 25: 31-46.) We are challenged to sacrifice our own personal comfort, put on a mask and respect the lives of others. It is what all of us should do for the sake of our families, friends, neighbors, fellow parishioners, employees, customers and the community at large.

(The ideas above have been taken from the writings of Brett McCracken, <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/4-reasons-wear-mask/> )





## WAYS TO PREPARE DURING THE SEASON OF ADVENT

It is Advent, a time to wait. By the light of the second candle, we wait. In stillness while the world rushes, we wait. In joyful hope during a time of anxiety, we wait. For the Christ Child who came, for the Christ of Glory who will come, for the Christ of Love who is always coming, we wait. It is Advent, time to wait.

- † Each **Wednesday at 7:00 p.m.** on Facebook and YouTube, Brandon Vogt will lead our community in Evening Prayer during these weeks of Advent.
- † The Diocese of Erie has created a special page with Advent family ideas and resources at the diocesan website. <https://www.eriecd.org/christmas.html>
- † The parish is also making copies of “The Word Among Us” available for this holy season. Free copies of the Advent issue are available on the bulletin tables.
- † Formed.org offers a new Advent project called The Road to Bethlehem. This exciting new project from FORMED will allow you to grow in your faith from anywhere you can access FORMED—from your home, in the car, on a run, or taking a walk. Sign up at [www.formed.org/advent](http://www.formed.org/advent). It includes: daily Advent reflections by Dr. Tim Gray; weekly videos, audio talks, and book excerpts on FORMED related to the theme of the week; email reminders every morning; Brother Francis Advent reflections for kids; and a weekly action item to help you put the Advent message into practice.

## TENNESSEE BACKPORCH-FOLLOW THE STAR

We hope you are all well and keeping safe. This year would have been our 12th year for Follow the Star. It is sad for us that we could not perform it live this year. Instead we would like to inform you that it will be airing on WQLN radio on two Saturday nights in December, 19th from 6 to 8 p.m. EST. The show can be live streamed from anywhere in the world. We hope you can enjoy what has become a tradition for some every year to attend. There is no fee to listen in.

Thank you so much and have a wonderful holiday.

Chris and Julie Moore

# Our Lady of Mercy is a PurpleOne site: purpleOne™

## What does this mean?

Our parish is a safe place for domestic violence victims to receive help.

Walk ins are welcome at the parish office and after-hours contacts are available upon request.

We have a team able to **RECOGNIZE**, **RESPOND** and **REFER** victims to Safe Journey/Safe Net. We are here to listen if someone needs to talk. Conversations are always confidential. This is a no judgement, safe place to get help and/or information.

The PurpleOne initiative includes: public awareness, training of community members, and being a safe place for domestic violence victims to find help.

## Are you being abused?

This might be a complicated and difficult question to answer. Abuse is about power and control. An abusive partner uses various methods to establish and maintain control in the relationship. The methods of control are as broad as the abuser's imagination. Please see the checklist in the PurpleOne booklet to help identify techniques of control and abuse. This checklist and more information are available on the table under the bulletin board in the gathering space in a booklet entitled: "When Someone You Know is Being Hurt".

## Our Neighbors' Place

Our Neighbors' Place is a beautiful ministry that addresses the people of the community who are homeless. The coordinators have been working very hard to come up with a plan that allows us to continue this ministry this unique year! We are very happy to say that there will be a season 9! The program will tentatively run from November 18, 2020 to March 17th or 24th, 2021. Space will be made available during our hosting times at the Mental Health building which is on the corner of 11th and Peach. We tentatively will be hosting 2 weeks in January and 2 weeks in March, with exact dates to be determined. There will be many changes made to this program due to COVID. In order to establish a tentative schedule, we need to know if you are able/willing to volunteer this year. If you are interested or have any questions, please contact Mary Hoffman at 814-873-2981 or May Ellen Lieb at 814-873-1284.



## **Spaghetti Dinner Fundraiser for the Religious Education Ministry**

**Sunday, January 31, 2021**

**Take-Out Only!**

**\$10 for Adults**

**\$5 for Children 10 and Under**

- Spaghetti & Meatballs
- Salad
- Italian Bread

**You will reserve your pick-up time  
when you purchase your ticket.**

**Tickets go on sale on January 2<sup>nd</sup>**



## **OUR LADY OF MERCY SCRIP NEWS**

**Now Available!**

OLM is now selling \$25 gift cards to Stan's Garden Center! Stop by the office Monday-Friday from 9 a.m. - 3 p.m. or after each Mass to purchase yours!





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