

OUR LADY OF MERCY CHURCH

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



MASS SCHEDULE

Saturday Vigil: 6:00 p.m.

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

Weekday: 8:30 a.m.

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.

PARISH STAFF

Msgr. Gerald T. Ritchie, *Pastor*

Deacon Paul Barko, *Deacon Assistant*

Donna Clark, *Pastoral Minister*

Irene Lucas, *Director of Lifelong Faith Formation*

Patti Reavel, *Music Director*

Katie Stephenson, *Administrative Assistant
& 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



DECEMBER 19, 2021 - THE FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

THE WEEK AHEAD

For a complete calendar of events, please visit
ourladyofmercychurch.org/calendar

Mon. 12/20	9:00 a.m. Quilters 9:30 a.m. Steel Magnolias SCC 5:30 p.m. Sisters of Scripture SCC 6:30 p.m. Fireside Chatters SCC 7:00 p.m. Grief Support Group
Tue. 12/21	Photo Directory Make-Up Sessions 2:00 p.m. Prayer Shawl 4:00 p.m. Religious Ed Gr. 3-6 5:30 p.m. Children's Choir
Wed. 12/22	Photo Directory Make-Up Sessions 1:00 p.m. Diamonds in the Rough
Thur. 12/23	Photo Directory Make-Up Sessions 9:00 a.m. Painting Class 12:00 p.m. Mid Day Prayer 1:00 p.m. Legion of Mary 6:30 p.m. Choir Rehearsal
Fri. 12/24	CHRISTMAS EVE Parish Office Closed 6:00 p.m. Christmas Eve Mass 10:00 p.m. Christmas Eve Mass
Sat. 12/25	CHRISTMAS DAY 10:00 a.m. Christmas Day Mass
Sun. 12/26	

SCRIPTURE READINGS

Mon. 12/20	Is 7:10-14	/ Lk 1:26-38
Tue. 12/21	Sg 2:8-14 or Zep 3:14-18	/ Lk 1:39-45
Wed. 12/22	1 Sm 1:24-28	/ Lk 1:46-56
Thur. 12/23	Mal 3:1-4, 23-24	/ Lk 1:57-66
Fri. 12/24	2 Sm 7:1-5, 8-12, 14, 16	/ Lk 1:67-69
Sat. 12/25	Is 62:11-12 / Ti 3:4-7	/ Lk 2:15-20
Sun. 12/26	1 Sm 1:20-22, 24-28 / 1 Jn 3:1-2, 21-24 /	/ Lk 2:41-52

MASS INTENTIONS

Mon. 12/20	8:30 a.m.	Don McCurdy (Sr. Mary Herrmann)
Tue. 12/21	8:30 a.m.	Mame Latchford
Wed. 12/22	8:30 a.m.	Leo Kosobucki (Pat Kosobucki & Family)
Thur. 12/23	8:30 a.m.	
Fri. 12/24	8:30 a.m.	Joseph Wenzel (Family)
	6:00 p.m.	For the People of OLM
	10:00 p.m.	For the People of OLM
Sat. 12/25	10:00 a.m.	For the People of OLM
Sun. 12/26	8:30 a.m.	For the People of OLM
	11:00 a.m.	Lewis Peters (Carole Peters)

We Remember...

Donna Nishnick,
 mother of Cheri Ruminski-Longua;
 who passed away recently.

In Loving Memory

Please hold her and her family in prayer during this difficult time.

FINANCIAL SUPPORT

Offertory for the weekend of December 12, 2021

Envelopes sent:	357	
Envelopes returned:	45	\$ 1,499.70
Faith Direct Deposits:	136	\$ 3,449.83
Loose Change:		\$ 25.00
TOTAL OFFERTORY:		\$ 4,974.53

PRAYER LINE

9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.
 Call Donna Smicker at 814-899-9108
 4:00 p.m.-9:00 p.m.
 Call Gerri Extein at 814-490-9681



THIS SUNDAY'S REFLECTION

LUKE 1:39-45

"The infant in my womb leaped for joy."

As we "wait in joyful hope for the coming of our Savior" on Christmas, we hear the story of two women, both pregnant with new life, both filled with wonder, hope and fears. In this domestic, peaceful scene, far removed from the political and social tumult of the times, these two women come together to share their joy. The joy of an old woman who was rejected by society as barren and the joy of a young woman who has received, and believed, the promise of a heavenly messenger.

When Mary and Elizabeth meet, Elizabeth experiences a quickening in her womb, a movement of the child she carries within. She interprets this as a sign of joy. Any mother who has felt the first kick of a life within can relate to this joy. Yet Elizabeth's is a joy beyond the physical and emotional response of an ordinary mother-to-be.

Mary and Elizabeth, women nurtured by the Psalms of their ancestors, rejoice in this moment and praise the wonders of the Living God within them.

We, whether male or female, can experience the deep-seated joy of the presence of Jesus.

For Reflection: On this last Sunday of Advent, am I alert to the joy of Christ within me?

Jerre Roberts



Special Music and Dance Offerings for our Christmas Eve Masses

This year we are privileged to have an opportunity to experience special music presented by the children’s choir, a special violin solo and flute music by several of our talented youth, and a liturgical dance offered by one of our parishioners. Please join us 15 minutes prior to the 6 p.m. Mass on Christmas Eve! In addition, the Adult Choir will sing a 20 minute program prior to the 10 p.m. Christmas Eve Mass, culminating in O Holy Night. We will also delight in the talents of the Liturgical dancing by one of our parishioners. Please join us at 9:40 p.m. Christmas Eve for this very special Choir offering.



Religious Education Fundraiser

Can you or your group donate a basket for the Feb. 6 religious education spaghetti dinner? Our Spaghetti Dinner will return in 2022 with dining in and dining out options. The gift basket auction raised about \$1,500 last time. If you can donate a gift basket, please bring it to the Faith Formation Office by Jan. 30.

Healing Ministry

We regret to say because of Covid we will not be having the Advent Healing Service. The Healing Ministry is available after the 8:30 Mass on the first and third Sunday of the month. Special requests may be made by calling the office.



Family Friendly Live Nativity

Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Parish will present a family-friendly Living Nativity on Sunday, December 19th. Bethlehem will come to life for you and your family! The free outdoor performance will be held continuously every five minutes, beginning at 6 p.m., with the last performance at 7:15 p.m. Real animals, including a donkey, and goats are all a part of the performance. Free hot chocolate will be provided! Don't miss this interactive opportunity to teach your family about the true meaning of Christmas! Please call Sue Berdis in the Faith Life office with questions. 814 825-7313.

Book Group

Join us at 7:00 p.m. on Jan. 19 to discuss The Plot by Jean Hanff Korelitz. Unvaccinated members, PLEASE wear masks.



FORMED.ORG



If you are new to the parish, 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.

QUESTION OF THE WEEK

Question-of-the-Week Winner for the week of Dec. 6 was Delaney Andrews, grade 6, who knew that we celebrate that Mary was born without original sin on the Immaculate Conception.

If you did not get your photographs in the mail.

There was a mishap with the photos for our picture directory for three of the September shoot dates. If you have not yet received your photo(s) in the mail then most likely you had your picture taken on Sept 15, 16 or 17.

The company would like to make it right, so has scheduled reshoot dates of Tuesday Dec 21, Wednesday Dec 22 and Thursday Dec 23. We ask your patience and understanding in rescheduling the photos of families.

Two ways to sign up:

●Go to the scheduling website at: www.ucdir.com. Click on schedule your photography session on the right side. Enter Church Code: pa888 and password: photos Choose a date December 21, 22, or 23. Then select your time.

●Call the parish office 814-899-5342 If you are not in town for these dates please contact 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 topic for the next grief support group will be on managing the holidays when you really don't feel like celebrating. Join us Monday, Dec 20 at 7 p.m. in the parish parlor. We will have some suggestions that may help. Questions call Donna Clark in the parish office.



Celebrating the 75th Anniversary of Our Lady of Mercy Parish



The parish community would share many joyous occasions with Msgr. Sperry. Several of importance would include Mary Ellen Plumb making her final vows as a sister of St. Benedict in 1973 and the ordinations to the priesthood of native son, Fr. John Jacquel in 1983.



Social Justice

"Let justice descend, O heavens,
like the dew from above,
like gentle rain, let the skies drop it down.
Let the earth open and salvation bud forth;
let justice also spring up!
I, the Lord, have created this."
Isaiah 45:8

Medical Equipment Needed

Chosen International Medical Assistance will take used medical equipment. The equipment is cleaned, refurbished, then given to those in need, both at home and abroad: Wheelchairs, walkers, transfer benches, shower chairs, canes, hospital beds, etc. They also collect diabetic supplies in their original packaging. Rolling walkers are in great demand. Questions about what is accepted contact jeff@chosenima.org or 833-3023. Bring to Chosen International located at 3638 West 26 St. 8am to 3pm M-F.



Thank You Notes!

Thank you for your generous gift of assorted winter clothing, hand-knitted items, winter coats and boots, baby items, and cleaning products for the Erie Field Office of the U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants. Your donation is helping USCRI Erie to provide new families with the resources, expert resettlement services, and new support they need to start new lives in a safe and stable environment. This is now more important than ever, as refugee resettlement levels are returning to traditional levels, with an increase from the arrival of America's Afghan allies. If you would like to stay connected to our work, here are a few simple ways to stay engaged: <https://www.facebook.com/uscrierie/> and www.refugees.org

Thank you to all who have prayed for our daughter-in-law, Heather, with stage 4 breast cancer. After months of treatment, doctors who operated say they got all of the cancer. God (and your prayers) have given us our miracle!! God bless you all. —Donna & Steve Smicker



For the
Religious
Education
Ministry

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 2022

12:00 - 3:00 p.m.

- Spaghetti & Meatballs
- Refreshments
- Salad
- Italian Bread
- Cookies
- Chinese Auction

Sit down and take-out options are available

\$10 for Adults
\$5 for Children 10 and under

WE ARE REQUESTING DONATIONS OF GIFT BASKETS

PLEASE DROP OFF BASKETS TO THE FAITH FORMATION OFFICE NO LATER THAN JANUARY 30.

The Season of Christmas 2021-2022

MASSES FOR CHRISTMAS

Christmas Eve: Friday, December 24

(Both Christmas Eve Masses will be livestreamed to the OLM Facebook and YouTube pages.)

6:00 p.m. with music by the Children's Choir

10:00 p.m. with music by the Festival Choir and instruments

Christmas Day: Saturday, December 25

10:00 a.m.

There will be NO Vigil Mass on Saturday at 6:00 p.m.

We will have 8:30 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. Mass on Sunday



MASS FOR NEW YEAR'S:

Feast of the Solemnity of Mary:

New Year's Day: Saturday, January 1 – 10:00 a.m.

There will be no Mass on New Years Eve at 6:00 p.m.

We will have the Vigil Mass for Sunday on Saturday at 6:00 p.m. and the regular 8:30 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. on Sunday



Synod: Key Term #3

The infallible belief of the faithful: What is the *sensus fidei fidelium*?

One of the reasons that Pope Francis has been emphasizing synodality is that he wishes to better recognize and utilize all the gifts of **all** the people in the Church. Most of us know that the **Magisterium** of the Church (the teaching office of the Church exercised by the Pope and the bishops), under certain conditions, can teach infallibly. But the **faithful members** of Christ's Church also have a corresponding gift. We can believe infallibly. Ideally these two **gifts** should inform and reinforce each other.

This gift of the Holy Spirit is called the *sensus fidei fidelium*: The understanding of the Faith by the Faithful. Everyone who is baptized is anointed with the Holy Spirit, and this anointing is strengthened by the Sacrament of Confirmation. By the **grace** of the Spirit, the People of God as a whole does not err in faith, even when it cannot adequately explain the faith. The more faithful a Christian is – participating in the Sacraments, building their relationship with God, feeling with the heart of the Church – the **better** of an instinct they will have for the True Faith. When we are open to Him, God gives us an intuition about divine realities. And when the entire People of God manifests a belief of faith or morals, that belief cannot be wrong, because the Holy Spirit would not allow the entire Church to go into error.

The *sensus fidei* cannot be determined by majority vote. History shows that individuals and groups in the Church, whether members of the faithful or bishops, can very easily fall into error and sin. The more separated a person is from God and His Church, the **less likely** they will be to instinctively recognize the truths of the Faith — and we have all sinned and fallen short (Romans 3:23). However, **if** the faithful stubbornly **cling** to some belief or **obstinately** refuse to accept another, for a long time and in many places, even in the face of opposition and persecution, that should be a sign to the Magisterium of the *sensus fidei* at work.

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OUR LADY OF MERCY CATHOLIC CHURCH
Membership Form

Name _____

Address _____

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Change of Address Moving out of the Parish

New Parishioner

To start the new member process please call the parish office at 899-5342; or request a phone call by filling out this form and returning it to the office by mail or collection basket.