



For Mercy's Sake

A quarterly newsletter of the parish of Our Lady of Mercy Roman Catholic Church

837 Bartlett Road,
Harborcreek, PA 16421

814/899-5342

www.ourladyofmercychurch.org



OUR LADY OF MERCY IS CELEBRATING 75 YEARS AS A PARISH COMMUNITY



As you know, on May 4, 1946, Fr. William Hastings was appointed the first pastor of Our Lady of Mercy, marking the beginning of Our Lady of Mercy as a parish. As a community we will begin celebrating our 75th Anniversary on the weekend of May 15th and 16th.

However, such a monumental celebration, will be celebrated throughout the year. As a community, when we reflect on our parish history, we celebrate with gratitude all the people and all the blessings that brought us to where we are today. Now we look ahead to where we are going as a vibrant Faith Community .

We will have a great celebration on the Feast of Our Lady of Mercy on September 26th at our Great Mass.

We will celebrate with an Anniversary Dance with “the Groove”, on September 17th.
We will also celebrate with our 75th Anniversary Parish Photo Booklet.

We would encourage all parishioners to join us for our celebrations and most especially encourage all parishioners to make sure you have your family photos taken for our booklet.

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY!

May 2021

Inside this Issue:

OLM 75th Anniversary	Page 1	Deacon Ordination	Page 6
The Feast of Pentecost.....	Page 2	Parish Directory.....	Page 7
CSA 2021 Report.....	Page 3	Vacation Bible School.....	Page 8
Small Christian Communities.....	Page 3	Summer Bible Study.....	Page 9
Parish Festival.....	Page 3	Knightly News.....	Page 10
Graduate Celebrations.....	Page 4	Knights Donation	Page 11
Parish Council.....	Page 4	Building and Grounds..	Page 11
Summer Fun.....	Page 5	Helping the Homeless.....	Page 12

The Feast of Pentecost

~May 23, 2021~

*Pentecost, the coming of the Holy Spirit,
calls up the image of wind that rushes ,
flames that leap,
and disciples inspired to go out from
the upper room fearlessly.*

Scripture tells us that this is the moment that gave birth to the Church.

Pentecost brings the Easter season to a grand and fiery close.

The Holy Spirit lavishes us with gifts which empower us as followers of Jesus
to take up his mission and make it ours.

**Wisdom, Understanding, Counsel, Fortitude, Knowledge, Piety and Fear of the
Lord**

are gifts which help us to continue Jesus' work in our world.

Pentecost is our Birthday.

As part of the Universal Church, the Community of Our Lady of Mercy
will celebrate being Church.

To acknowledge our oneness in the Spirit

all parishioners are asked to wear red on the Feast of Pentecost.

As included in our Mission Statement,
may we be “empowered by the Holy Spirit
to live the values of Jesus in a prayerful, welcoming, and nurturing environment.”





CSA - 2021 Report

Thank you for your generous support of the 2021 Catholic Services Appeal. As of May 1, 2021, we have received 157 pledges in the amount of **\$77,555**.

This will allow us to meet our parish assessment of **\$68,405** and allow our parish to meet our needed extraordinary costs such as repairing pot holes in the parking lot (\$6,000-\$7,000) and repairing the steel structure of our large, corner cross (\$3,800). We also plan to start saving for future capital improvements.

If you have not yet made a pledge, it is not too late to do so. Forms may be found in the parish office. There is no gift too small.

RE-ENERGIZE AND FIND PEACE AFTER THE PANDEMIC

What happened to the Small Christian Communities during the year of pandemic? Honestly, it was tough, with some groups meeting outdoors with distancing, others meeting via Zoom, still others keeping in touch with email and text messaging. But God has blessed Our Lady of Mercy with these small communities for over 31 years, and they are coming back strong. What makes these communities tick? They are;

“Ordinary people helping each other connect everyday life and faith, regularly.”

As the vaccinations go up, the positive cases go down and life returns to ‘normal’, don’t just swing back into your former hectic, busy lifestyle. Try joining a Small Christian Community. Build peacefulness, and an opportunity to re-energize, into your life before busy-ness crowds it out. You will be glad you did! Call Katie 899-5342 days, Dave 602-4622 evenings.



PARISH FESTIVAL

Our Parish Festival will be on July 11, 2021.
We will have a takeout dinner.

Because of covid-19 we are not exactly sure what form it will take, but please mark the date.

As we work out the details we will keep you updated.





Congratulations Graduates!

You are amazing! Not only have you graduated, but you persevered through this time of COVID. Your parish family is so proud of you. Let us recognize you as we gather on Sunday morning.

When: June 12-13 at each weekend Mass

What: A time for you to be recognized by the parish family & receive a small gift

Who: Any parish member graduating from high school or a post-secondary program

There will be a parish celebration of either muffins or ice cream after each Mass that weekend for the entire parish as more of us are able to return to in person worship.

RSVP to ilucas@ourladyofmercychurch.org by June 1 if you are a graduate who will be with us on June 12 or 13.



1 Corinthians 16:14

Pastoral Council Update

The Pastoral Council believes the OLM community strives to be "prayerful, nurturing and welcoming" to all of our members both old and new.

As the Council looks at how well we meet and execute our mission we have been drawn to this phrase 'in a prayerful, welcoming, and nurturing environment '.

We look to celebrate as a community where we have met this intention as well as challenge ourselves to improve where we have possibly fallen short. In the upcoming days we will be seeking your input.

As we are exploring the areas of diversity and inclusion, we are not finding any specific issues or problems, but rather want to find ways to showcase the many good things we do in our community. We want to promote, raise awareness, and look for ways to educate our members on sensitive subjects.

Our hope is that any ONE and every ONE that comes in contact with our community will see that 'Our Lady of Mercy strives to be an inclusive community where everyone is treated equally with dignity & respect at all times'.

If you are interested in learning more, please contact Vickie Gilchrist at (814)397-3407. You can also learn more at www.dignityandrespect.org.

SUMMER FAMILY FUN IS RETURNING TO OLM!



STAY TUNED TO THE BULLETIN FOR MORE INFORMATION...

Welcome New Members!

Please welcome our new members
by sending a card.

Thomas & Stella Carney
1145 Fair Ave
Erie, PA 16511-2452

Vincent & Audrey Coletta
1901 Moorheadville Road
North East, PA 16428-2409

Angie Karotka
2836 E. 29th Street
Erie, PA 16510-2828

Mark Kosmowski
2625 Cumberland Road
Erie, PA 16510-2013

Timothy May
1087 Boyer Road
Erie, PA 16511-2515

Mark Razanauskis
3960 Shamrock Court
Erie, PA 16510-3264

Josh & Kara Richardson
4212 English Ave
Erie, PA 16510-3627

Janelle Rzodkiewicz
11100 East Law Road
North East, PA 16428-3803

John & Stacey Wedzikowski
9536 West Law Road
North East, PA 16428-3740



JOIN US!

Our Lady of Mercy
is broadcasting the
Permanent Diaconate Ordination
of our very own

DAVE JACQUEL & PAUL BARKO

in the OLM Worship Space on
Friday, May 28, 2021 at 7:00 p.m.

THE MEASURE OF A
MAN'S GREATNESS
IS NOT THE NUMBER
OF SERVANTS HE HAS,
BUT THE NUMBER OF PEOPLE
HE SERVES

If you are unable to attend
our in-person event, you can stream the
Ordination at home by going to
[https://www.youtube.com/channel/
UCdS696JU5ISTNIhIhPoErxQ](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCdS696JU5ISTNIhIhPoErxQ)



Dear Church Family, It's time for a New Directory!

Celebrating faith. Connecting families. Sharing hope.



New Safety Procedures

Universal is committed to the health and safety of your church families & our employees.

We want you to know that we are taking the necessary precautions to reduce the spread of the coronavirus.

- Following 6 ft. Social Distancing rules throughout the photography process
- Germ guard plexiglass between customers & photographers at the viewing station
- All equipment will be disinfected between sittings
- Utilizing larger lobby rooms for safe social distancing
- Staff will be utilizing hand sanitizer between sittings

Join us for this "Family Connections Event" and be part of what God is doing right here at your church!



Family Connections Event

Our church directory will not be complete without you. Please join us and help celebrate faith and family with our new church family directory.

- Schedule your professional photography session when you stop by the sign-up table at the church or simply go online and follow the instructions below.
If we don't see your name on our list of appointments, you will receive a phone call inviting you to participate.
- Everyone who is photographed by Universal will receive a complimentary 8 x 10 portrait and a directory!
- Universal provides a complete professional portrait studio right here at your church!
You'll enjoy a variety of poses, backgrounds, portrait sizes, finish and framing options AND have the opportunity to purchase portraits to give to family and friends.

Directory Committee



New Safety Glass at Viewing Station



OUR LADY OF MERCY CHURCH AUGUST 3RD - AUGUST 7TH, 2021

Stay tuned to the bulletin for scheduling instructions.

OLM Directory Coordinator: Karen Sweeney

OUR LADY OF MERCY PRESENTS... VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL 2021



Treasure Island!

JULY 26-30, 2021

9:00 A.M. - 12:00 P.M.

All adventurer's - age 4 thru entering 6th grade are invited!

For more information call:

Irene Lucas 814-899-6132 or the Parish Office 814-899-5342

Registration Deadline is July 12, 2021

Family Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ Zip: _____ Parish: _____

Phone #: _____ Emergency #: _____

Email Address: _____

Child's Name	Age	Grade 2021/2022	Medical/Dietary Needs
--------------	-----	-----------------	-----------------------

Adult & Teen Volunteers

(Teens must be entering 9th Grade or above - Adults MUST provide current clearances)

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Email Address: _____

Please indicate which area you would like to help out:

Teacher: _____ Story Time: _____ Craft: _____ Games: _____ Music: _____ Aide: _____ Kitchen: _____

Set-Up: _____ Other: _____



Women's Summer Scripture Study

7:00 PM
June 14, 21, 28
July 12, 19

This past year has been filled with anxiety, loss and fear. There has been more tears than laughter, more pain than joy. Many of the greatest religious teachers have spoken of the importance of joy to a life of holiness. Fr. James Martin invites us to cultivate joy in our spiritual life and to take time to laugh long and loud. Join us this summer as we discuss Between Heaven and Mirth by Fr. James Martin. We will read 2 chapters per week.

Home of
Irene Lucas
1019 Bartlett Rd.
Patio if weather permits
(extra lawn chairs appreciated)
Inside if weather is bad
All Welcome...
No Need to Register



Enjoy a cold drink, a casual summer evening and laughter with sisters in faith.



For the second year, the *Coronavirus Pandemic* has resulted in the cancelation of the Golf & Sports Raffle. However, with undampened spirit and some adjustment, the council remained active and has been meeting the needs of our church, community and council.

Jim Perrotto's recent efforts resulted in the formation of an *OLM Degree Team*. It presented the council's first self-directed degree last October where five gentlemen became Knights (John Abate, Brian Bronson, Mark Kozmowski, Aaron Ollinger and Gary Smith). Others attending in order to move up in degree level were Paul Barko, Paul Sacco and Dave Seyboldt. Please congratulate all of them.

Jim Perrotto is compiling a list of achievements in each of four categories (Life, Faith, Family and Community) in order to apply for the Star Council Award. He will make certain we also qualify for The Columbian Award, which is mandatory for becoming a star council.

Phil Legler, Dave Lefaiver, Tom Palisin, Tim Fuhrman and Fr. Ritchie were present at the dedication and blessing of the new ultrasound machine gifted to the Women's Care Center of Erie. Also present was OLM parishioner Brie Bliel, ultrasound tech and operator of the machine. Perhaps you remember the Care Center making a presentation at one of our OLM Nights Out. They are Pro-Life and we began an affiliation at that time, which resulted in this machine. It will be an instrument in helping women choose life over abortion. Co-sponsors were OLM and St. Gregory Councils, with Phil becoming one of the driving forces. During fundraising, an unexpected, anonymous donor came forth with a generous donation to honor her husband, whom she had recently lost. This

enabled the goal of \$21,000 to be met immediately. Funds remain, perhaps the beginning of fundraising for another machine. Total cost of the machine was \$42,000, half of which was a match by the Knights of Columbus Supreme Council.

Scholarship applications will be accepted. This initiative began shortly after the formation of the council, where a portion of the golf raffle proceeds are earmarked for college-bound high school seniors who, along with their parents are members of the parish. With some uncertainty, we move forward, thanking you in advance for supporting fund-raising to offset the loss of golf raffle revenue. Please see the OLM website or contact the church office. Along with an application, a brief essay is required and a certified, most-recently available transcript from the applicant's school. Application deadline is Friday, June 4th. Please spread the word and watch the website and bulletin.

More good news! Many parishioners are returning to church to celebrate liturgy. However, we are all aware and miss the social activities to which we are accustomed. They are gradually returning also. The Knights would like to help and are arranging a fun-filled evening in conjunction with the parish feast day. A contract has been signed with the The Groove for another Parish Dance. The date is September 17, so Mark your calendar and Save the date. The contract includes a contingency clause in the event of cancellation. A 50/50 fundraiser is being arranged. Watch for information and sale of tickets.



KNIGHTS ULTRASOUND INITIATIVE

On April 14th, Father Ritchie blessed the new state of the art ultrasound machine at the Women's Care Center of Erie County. This purchase was made possible through fundraising initiated by the Our Lady of Mercy Knights of Columbus. This machine will save the lives of many unborn children, as approximately 80% of abortion bound women chose life after viewing their sonogram images.

In 2020, 87 lives were saved as a result of the Women's Care Center's remarkable efforts. Our Knights have pledged to continue their support of this most worthy Christian agency.



BUILDING AND GROUNDS COMMITTEE



Like many other organizations Covid has put a crimp on our activities. However the Committee was able to complete a number of outside projects over the past year:

- The Ash Borer has decimated about 40 large Ash trees on the Church property. We cut the trees down, cut them up, disposed of the limbs, had the stumps ground, filled in with topsoil and planted grass. It was a huge effort and thanks to the Committee we were able to do all of the work except the stump grinding ourselves to keep the costs down.
- Early last fall the committee repainted the parking lot lines. Most of them are fairly straight.
- The exposed structural beams at the Dutton Road entrance were wire brushed and repainted. The Bartlett Road beams will be done this summer.
- The Food Pantry was fitted with new doors as a final step in the complete renovation. All that needs to be done to finish the project is some trim work. Thanks to John Madigan and his crew for completing this significant project.

Work planned for this spring and summer includes:

- April work party to mulch the exterior of the church, plant flowers in the Rose Garden and do general clean up and repair outside. Wash Sperry Hall, classroom and inside Gathering Space windows.
- Repair the pot holes at the parking lot aprons. (\$6,000-\$7,000)
- If you look about 50 feet up at the cross at the corner of the church you can see where the exposed steel beams are rusted. We are looking for a painting company with a high lift to clean and repaint the beams before rust damages the mortar joints. (\$3,800)

Helping the Homeless



On May 29, EUMA and Highmark will sponsor a 5K walk to raise money for services to provide for those who are homeless in Erie County. There are three ways that you can join this effort. You can join the walk at 10:00 on May 29 at the Refuge and ending at Liberty House. You can walk 5K anytime, anywhere in the month of May and send the money you raise to EUMA. You can support a walker, including the members of the OLM Social Justice Committee by bringing a donation to Irene at the church before May 29.

How do we define “homeless”? We often think of the single man, dealing with mental health issues or addiction problems, living on the streets, and occasionally taking advantage of soup kitchens and shelters. However, there is much more to homelessness and many more people are affected. According to HUD, anyone who “lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence” is homeless. Additionally, anyone who will lose their housing in 14 days is homeless. Children and families are considered homeless when they have not had a lease for housing for 60 days. Finally, anyone fleeing a dangerous situation without a place to stay is considered homeless. An example you can easily imagine is a family staying with relatives because they cannot afford a place of their own. They are considered homeless. How much of a problem is this in Erie County? Every year, a “Point in Time” count of the homeless is taken throughout the country. The most recent count in Erie was in January of 2020. It found only 8 people who were sleeping on the streets, but there were 996 individuals who would qualify as homeless using the criteria listed above.

Due to the pandemic, the count was not able to be accomplished this year. However, we know that maintaining employment has been difficult during this crisis. Other contributors to homelessness, such as mental health issues and/or addiction problems, have all been exacerbated by the pandemic. A count this year may have found even more people in need.

The good news is that there are many programs helping the homeless in Erie County. Some of them are government programs with funding from federal, state, county or city resources. Others are private non-profits – many of them faith-based. All of them are working to meet the needs of the homeless and find a way to help them maintain housing. You can help! Our parish usually volunteers at the winter emergency shelter and will probably do so again after the pandemic. Watch the bulletin for how to volunteer. And, of course you can donate money through the walkathon or on your own.

As St. John Chrysostom said, “Not to share one’s wealth with the poor is to steal from them and to take away their livelihood. It is not our own goods which we hold, but theirs.”