



FOR MERCY'S SAKE

the quarterly newsletter of Our Lady of Mercy Church

837 Bartlett Road
Harborcreek, PA 16421

814-899-5342

www.ourladyofmercychurch.org



November 2021



The Season of Advent 2021

Mass of Remembrance: Saturday, December 4—10:00 a.m.

Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception:

Wednesday, December 8—Masses 8:30 a.m. & 7:00 p.m.

Reconciliation Service: Saturdays of Advent, 4:30 p.m.

Wednesday, December 15—4:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.

There will be three priests available

*Because of the pandemic there will be no Advent Penance Celebration
with our neighboring parishes*

The Season of Christmas 2021-2022

MASSES FOR CHRISTMAS

Christmas Eve: Friday, December 24
6:00 p.m. & 10:00 p.m.

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



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HARBORCREEK COMMUNITY THANKSGIVING SERVICE

Sunday, November 21st, 6:00 p.m.
Our Lady of Mercy Church

Our Lady of Mercy is honored this year to host the Harborcreek Community Thanksgiving service.

You are invited to join the other church communities of Harborcreek to come and give thanks. All are invited to attend. The offering will go to the Ella Cochran Food Pantry.

Because of Covid, unfortunately there will be no gathering after the service.

Our Parish Community will celebrate the **Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick at all Masses on December 4-5, 2021.** Jesus spent the greatest amount of his time healing both spiritually and physically. It is said that we spend our time on those things which are most important to us. If this is true, then healing must have been a very important value to Jesus. Our Mission Statement reminds us that we are a community that lives the values of Jesus Christ. Our celebration is not just for the sick. The faith community gathers with them to show their concern for the sick of our community, and to pray with and for the sick of the community.

Who may celebrate this Sacrament? Those who are suffering any serious physical or mental illness; those who are suffering any chronic illness; those who are about to undergo surgery; the elderly who cannot get around as well as before.



Families of young and old are invited to celebrate Advent in Sperry Hall on December 5, 2021 from noon until 2pm. Guests are asked to bring a pot of soup to share for lunch.

There will be:

- Crafts
- Games
- There's even a possibility of a special holiday surprise guest!

Homemade Soup's are needed for lunch. Please sign-up to bring soup on the display in the Gathering Space.

Soup For The Advent Soul





WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!

Cameron & Sydney Anderson
3997 Markwood Dr
Erie PA 16510-2323

Mario & Maria Casillas
Absidy-Marie, Addison-Miley
4101 Maple Grove Dr
Erie PA 16510-6601

Patrick & April Damond
Patrick Jr., Alexandria, Hannah
105 Pine Tree Lane
North East PA 16428-6713

Giorgina & Raymond Pearson
Mila, Milton, Maceio
5124 Iroquois Ave
Erie PA 16511-2459

Adam & Ariel Spelling
Brielle
13695 W Washington St Lot 40
Corry PA 16407

Ms. Kathleen Stryker
2718 Athens St
Erie PA 16510-2414



A PRAYER CUBE

a gift for you this Thanksgiving
from OLM's
Small Christian Communities...

Simply roll the cube at mealtime
and recite the prayer that comes up.

It's a fun way to involve your family
and learn new prayers.

(some assembly required!)



SMALL CHRISTIAN COMMUNITIES



GATHERED IN HIS NAME

Mass of Remembrance

Saturday, December 4, 2021 at 10 a.m.

Each December, we gather together to celebrate a special Mass of Remembrance, hosted by members of the Bereavement Ministry. Join together in prayer on Saturday, December 4, 2021, at 10 a.m. All members of Our

Lady of Mercy are invited to attend this annual Mass to support the families of our parish who have lost loved ones during the past year. During this service, votive candles will be lit for the deceased family members. Please join us for this special celebration.

Due to the COVID 19 pandemic, some of our parishioners may be uncomfortable attending this Mass, although they would dearly want to attend. Our parish will be live streaming the Mass, through YouTube or, Facebook from the OLM website at www.ourladyofmercychurch.org





SCHOLARSHIPS

This year's winners of Ed Cudicio Memorial Scholarships are Kathryn Lucas and Megan Smith. Katie will be attending Duquesne University and Meghan will go to Slippery Rock University. We wish them well in their studies. Both are Harborcreek High School graduates and have impressive accomplishments.

Our Lady of Mercy Council of the Knights of Columbus awards scholarships annually to high school seniors of our parish. The scholarship program is named in honor of one of our founding members, Ed Cudicio, who was instrumental in establishing the program.

Normally, scholarships are funded from our annual Golf and Sports Raffle, but since we did not have one this year, we dipped into our rainy-day fund for the second year in a row to continue this important program.

DEGREES FOR NEW KNIGHTS

Initiation degrees were held September 8th and our council has two new Knights. Please welcome, Tim May and Dan Pius. Contact an officer or any member if you or someone you know may be interested in becoming a Knight. Officers are: Dave Lefaiver (Grand Knight), Tom Palisin (Deputy Grand Knight), Gus Manna (Treasurer), John Skuce (Secretary) and Dan Szczesny (Financial Secretary).

PARISH DANCE

Unfortunately, the dance featuring the Groove Band had to be canceled for the

second time due to a widespread increase in Covid infections. The agreement with the GROOVE BAND has been extended to next year and we will try again.

50-50 RAFFLE

The raffle went on as planned with the drawing having been held at the conclusion of the 10:30 AM Mass on our feast day. The winner, Tim Andrews, was present and generously donated his winnings (\$580) back to the council. Thank you very much Tim.

SPAGHETTI DINNER FUNDRAISER

Your OLM Knights of Columbus completed our first ever spaghetti dinner fundraiser on September 25th at St. Gregory's School in North East. It was a great success as we served over 300 dinners in a combined effort with our brother Knights from St. Gregory's Parish. We look forward to expanding our success with a 2nd annual dinner next year. Thanks to all who gave their time in the areas of cooking, traffic flow, meal serving and to those who purchased meals. The recipient will be The Women's Care Center.

CHARITY

As we approach Thanksgiving and Christmas, we are reminded to be generous with the less fortunate, such as those who depend on the food pantry or those who might not have such a good Christmas without a little help.

**DECEMBER 12
FEAST DAY**

**OUR LADY OF
GUADALUPE
PATRONESS
OF
THE AMERICAS**

**“MARY IS OUR
MOTHER, THE
MOTHER OF OUR
PEOPLES...THE
MOTHER OF OUR
HEARTS”**

**POPE FRANCIS
12/12/2019**

THE STORY OF OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE

A poor Indian named Cuauhtlatohuac was baptized and given the name Juan Diego. He was a 57-year-old widower, and lived in a small village near Mexico City. On Saturday morning December 9, 1531, he was on his way to a nearby barrio to attend Mass in honor of Our Lady.

Juan was walking by a hill called Tepeyac when he heard beautiful music like the warbling of birds. A radiant cloud appeared, and within it stood an Indian maiden dressed like an Aztec princess. The lady spoke to him in his own language, Nahuatl, and sent him to the Bishop of Mexico, a Franciscan named Juan de Zumarraga. The Bishop was to build a chapel in the place where the lady appeared.

Skeptical, the Bishop told Juan to have the lady give him a sign. About this same time Juan's uncle became seriously ill. This led Juan to try to avoid the lady. Nevertheless, the lady found him and assured him that his uncle would recover. She guided Juan to a hill with Spanish Castilian roses blooming in the middle of winter for him to carry to the bishop in his tilma. Believing the roses to be the miracle, Juan carried them to the Bishop.

On December 12, 1531 when Juan Diego opened his tilma in the Bishop's presence, the roses fell to the ground, and the Bishop sank to his knees. On the tilma where the roses had been, appeared an image of Mary exactly as she had appeared at the hill of Tepeyac. He immediately set out to build a chapel as Our Lady had requested. To this day, the tilma has remained intact throughout the centuries, and resides at the Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe in Mexico City. The feast day for Saint Juan Diego is on December 9th.



SYMBOLISM AND IMAGERY OF OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE

With her dark complexion and mixture of indigenous and Spanish features, Our Lady of Guadalupe represents the unity of all people. She gazes downward with the tender, loving expression of a mother gazing at her child. For Mexico's indigenous people, the image contained rich symbolism. The aureole or **luminous light** surrounding the Lady is reminiscent of the "woman clothed with the sun" of Rev. 12:1. The light is also a sign of the power of God who has sanctified and blessed the one who appears. The rays of the sun would also be recognized by the native people as a symbol of their highest god, Huitzilopochtli. Thus, the lady comes forth hiding but not extinguishing the power of the sun. She is now going to announce the God who is greater than their sun god.

The Lady is **standing upon the moon**. Again, the symbolism is that of the woman of Rev. 12:1 who has the "moon under her feet". The moon for the Meso-Americans was the god of the night. By

standing on the moon, she shows that she is more powerful than the god of darkness. However, in Christian iconography the crescent moon under the Madonna's feet is usually a symbol of her perpetual virginity, and sometimes it can refer to her Immaculate Conception or Assumption. The **eyes** of Our lady of Guadalupe are looking down with humility and compassion. This was a sign to the native people that she was not a god since in their iconography, the gods stare straight ahead with their eyes wide open.

The **angel** supporting the Lady testifies to her royalty. To the Meso-American Indians only kings, queens and other dignitaries would be carried on the shoulders of someone. The angel is transporting the Lady to the people as a sign that a new age has come.

The **mantle** of the Lady is blue-green or turquoise. To the native people, this was the color of the gods and of royalty. It was also the color of the natural forces of life and

fecundity. The limbus or gold border of her mantle is another sign of nobility.

The **stars** on the Lady's mantle shows that she comes from heaven. She comes as the Queen of Heaven but with the eyes of a humble and loving mother. The stars also are a sign of the supernatural character of the image. The research of Fr. Mario Rojas Sánchez and Dr. Juan Homero Hernández Illescas of Mexico (published in 1983) shows that the stars on the Lady's mantle in the image are exactly as the stars of the winter solstice appeared before dawn on the morning of December 12, 1531.

The **gold-encircled cross brooch** under the neck of the Lady's robe is a symbol of sanctity.

The girdle or **bow around her waist** is a sign

of her virginity, but it also has several other meanings. The bow appears as a four-petaled flower. To the native Indians this was the *nahui ollin*, the flower of the sun, a symbol of plenitude. The cross-shaped flower was also connected with the cross-sticks which produce fire. For them, this was the symbol of fecundity and new life. The high position of the bow and the slight swelling of the abdomen show that the Lady is "with child". According to Dr. Carlos Fernández Del Castillo, a leading Mexican obstetrician, the Lady appears almost ready to give birth with the infant head down resting vertically. This would further solidify her identification with the woman of Rev. 12 who is about to give birth.

Traditionally, the parish of St Stephen of Hungary (San Esteban) has hosted a bilingual Mass for the Diocese of Erie on December 12th

WOULD YOUR CHILD LIKE TO PARTICIPATE IN A CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS CHOIR?

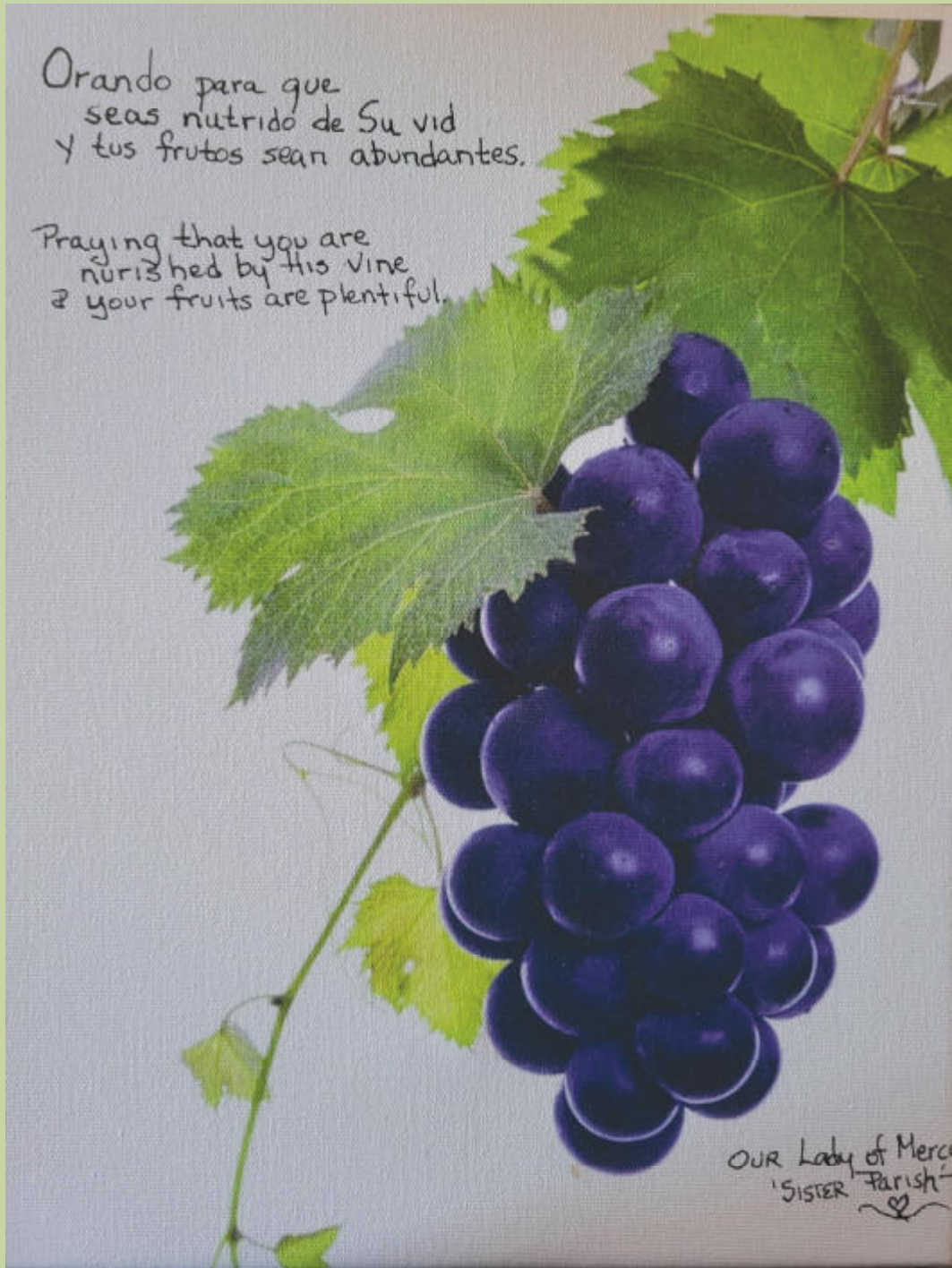
Patti Reavel, our music director, would like parents' feedback regarding their child's interest in participating in a Children's Christmas Choir which would sing at the children's Christmas eve liturgy, at 6:00 p.m. on Friday, December 24, 2021. Rehearsals would be minimal. If you have an interested child, please email Patti at preavel@gmail.com. Please include your child's age and the best contact email and/or phone.



SHARING A BIT OF HARVEST WITH OUR SISTER PARISH

We are delighted to share that a delegation from Erie is visiting our Sister Parish giving us an opportunity to send a little something to let them know they remain in our thoughts. Seeing it is harvest time we decided on a grape canvas with the following prayer. Please join us in thinking of our extended community at Our Lady of the Assumption and praying the following for them.

MAY YOU BE NOURISHED BY HIS VINE AND YOUR FRUITS BE PLENTIFUL!





For the
Religious Ed.
Ministry

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

**SUNDAY,
FEBRUARY 6**

12:00 - 3:00 p.m.

Sit Down & Take Out Tickets Available

\$10 for Adults \$5 for Children 10 & Under

Youth Ministry News

Our Lady of Mercy's Youth Ministry program is on FIRE! The Youth Ministry Core Team has been hard at work planning events and retreats for our youth in grades 7-12. We are so excited for our upcoming events!

Youth Ministry Core Team

The Core Team is always open and looking for new members to help with planning, events and retreats. If you are interested, please contact Katie at

youthminister@ourladyofmercychurch.org

Youth Ministers of Harborcreek

The Youth Ministers of Harborcreek churches have recently began meeting. During our meetings, it was made apparent that there is a need in our community for our youth to come together, regardless of religious denomination. Our Lady of Mercy Youth Ministry is proud and excited to be teaming up with the Youth Ministry programs of Harborcreek First Presbyterian, Harborcreek Faith Lutheran and South Harbor United Methodist Church. To find out more about what our Youth Communities are doing, keep an eye on the bulletin, or stop by the Parish Office to talk to Katie.

Youth Ministry Baby Sitter's Club

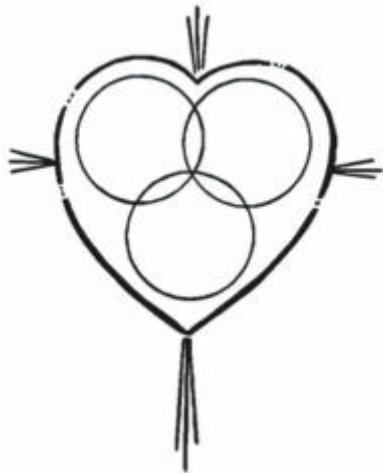
Our Lady of Mercy's Youth Ministry Program is starting a "Baby Sitter's Club". Mom and Dad...do you need a night out? Maybe a nice dinner ALONE? Do you need to get some Christmas shopping done? Or maybe you just need a nap....The OLM Baby Sitter's Club is here to help. The Youth Ministry Program (supervised by the adult YM Core Team, of course) , will hold its first Baby Sitter's event on Friday, December 3, 2021 from 6 - 9 p.m. in Sperry Hall/Gym. Dinner for your solid food eating child will be provided. Please email Katie to sign up to take advantage of our new services. There is no fee, but donations will be accepted and will go towards future Youth Ministry events.

Mission Trip 2022

We are excited to announce that the youth in grades 8 and up can now register for the 2022 Mission Trip! We will be spending the week of June 19-25 serving the community of Stuebenville, OH. If you are interested in attending, please let Katie know immediately as spots are limited.

SANCTUS

February 18-19, 2022



Retreat! Step back from the hectic pace of life to spend 24 hours with God. Give yourself the gift of time to hear afresh the story of God's great love, to renew your faith and deepen your walk with Christ. Join us for prayer, reflection, sharing and renewal.

Meals are provided.  There is no cost.

To register, complete the bottom portion of this flier and return it to the RE Office or in the collection basket by February 1

*Questions? Call Irene @ 814-899-6132
or email ilucas@ourladyofmercychurch.org*

Space is limited



Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Email _____

Do you have any special needs? _____

Check All That Apply

Female Male

Married registering w/ Spouse Married registering alone

Single Divorced Separated Widowed

Catholic Non-Catholic

GIFT CARD ORDER FORM

Our Lady of Mercy earns cash with every gift card purchased
2.5% to 14% depending on the gift card

The cards listed below are those available in the parish office or visit the RaiseRight mobile application or ShopWithScrip.com to see all 750+ brands and available denominations

Three ways to order:

- ❑ Stop by the parish office after the weekend Masses or during the week between 9 a.m. and 2 p.m.
- ❑ Fill out the form below and drop it off or mail it to OLM, 837 Bartlett Road, Harborcreek PA 16421
- ❑ Text (814) 440-4890 or email pmm1955.erie@gmail.com

Please make checks payable to Our Lady of Mercy Church
For questions or more information please call Pat Marshall at 814-440-4890

Vendor	Amount	Quantity	Total Cost
Amazon	\$25		
	\$100		
Apple /iTunes	\$25		
Applebee's	\$25		
Arby's	\$10		
Barnes & Noble	\$10		
Bob Evans	\$10		
	\$25		
Burger King	\$10		
Buffalo Wild Wings	\$10		
	\$25		
Country Fair	\$25		
	\$50		
	\$100		
Dairy Queen	\$10		
Darden Restaurants	\$25		
Giant Eagle	\$25		
	\$100		
Home Depot	\$25		
Kohl's	\$25		
Kwik Fill	\$25		
	\$50		
	\$100		
Michael's	\$25		

Vendor	Amount	Quantity	Total Cost
Old Navy	\$25		
Panera	\$10		
	\$25		
Stan's Garden Center	\$25		
Starbuck's	\$10		
	\$25		
Subway	\$10		
Target	\$10		
	\$25		
	\$50		
Tim Hortons	\$10		
Walmart	\$25		
	\$100		
Wendy's	\$10		

Enter Vendor Name	Amount	Quantity	Total Cost

Name _____

Phone _____ Email _____