



# FOR MERCY'S SAKE

## November 2022

the quarterly newsletter of Our Lady of Mercy Church

837 Bartlett Road Harborcreek, PA 16421  
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## The Season of Advent 2022

**Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception:**

Thursday, December 8—Masses 8:30 a.m. & 6:00 p.m.

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

**Reconciliation Service:** Wednesday's of Advent, 4:30 p.m.

Wednesday, December 14—7:00 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 2022-2023

### MASSES FOR CHRISTMAS

**Christmas Eve:** Saturday, December 24

6:00 p.m. & 10:00 p.m.

**Christmas Day:** Sunday, December 25

10:00 a.m.

### MASS FOR NEW YEAR'S:

**Feast of the Solemnity of Mary:**

**New Year's Eve:** Saturday, December 31 - 6:00 p.m.

**New Year's Day:** Sunday, January 1 —8:30 a.m. & 11:00 a.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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# Meet Fr. Matt



There is an old saying, "When God closes a door, God opens a window." This summer, when Fr. Ritchie died, it felt as if a door slammed shut, breaking our hearts in the process. Three months later, God has opened wide the doors to welcome Fr. Matthew Kujawinski into our community as our pastor, our priest, the newest member of our parish family.

Fr. Matt grew up in Erie on 13<sup>th</sup> and Wallace as the middle child of three boys. His family has been members of St. Stan parish for many years. He began his Catholic education at St. Stan parish school. He continued his studies at Cathedral Prep High School, Gannon Univ. and completed his work at St. Vincent Seminary.

Fr. Matt was ordained as a priest of the Diocese of Erie in 2003. He has served in parishes around the diocese, from Our Lady of Peace in Erie to Immaculate Heart of Mary in Mercer. For the past four years, he has also worked as the Administrator of the Office of Divine Worship in addition to serving in the parish.

This past July, Fr. Matt was named pastor of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel parish. So it was a shock when he received word from Bishop Persico that he was being called to be pastor of Our Lady of Mercy Parish. He considers it an honor and a privilege to serve in a parish known for its faith and deep sense of community.

Fr. Kujawinski balances his commitment to ministry with time for

personal relaxation. He enjoys reading, especially mysteries. Going to the movies is something else he likes to do in his free time. Traveling to visit friends or to Disney World allows him to step away from the demands of ministry for a few days. Four years ago, Mel entered his life. Anyone with a dog knows the pleasure our pets can bring.

Before he even moved in, the staff knew that Fr. Matt loves Christmas. He is able to look beneath all the commercialism to recognize and celebrate the beauty of the season. God became human and invited us into the Divine life of peace, joy and good will toward all. Fr. Matt is filled with gratitude for the gift that God has given and rejoices in the ability to give gifts to others in turn.

God has always been an important part of Fr. Matt's life. He has never resonated with the claim of being spiritual without being religious. The Church has played a central role in his spiritual growth. The community of believers is essential for him.

Some of his most powerful spiritual moments have been celebrating the Sacrament of Reconciliation with people. It is often here that people are most open to the love and mercy of God, most humbly seek God's goodness, most profoundly admit their total reliance on God and allow God's grace to break through.

Fr. Kujawinski has a keen sense of blessings in the ordinary moments that fill each day. Among these blessings has been all the wonderful people who have welcomed him so generously in his first three days at OLM. He is looking forward to the months and years ahead as together we journey with Christ.

welcome



**Give thanks**  
to the Lord, for  
He is good; His love  
endures forever.  
Psalm 107:1



## HARBORCREEK COMMUNITY THANKSGIVING SERVICE

Sunday, November 20th, 7:00 p.m.

Grace Church in Harborcreek

2420 Cumberland Rd, Erie, PA 16510

Rev. Tim Hoover (South Harborcreek UMC) preaching and Linda Peters (Director of Music at Our Lady of Mercy) leading music. The offering and a special collection of canned goods will support the Ella Cochran Food Pantry. Sponsored by the Harborcreek Ministerium.

If you are interested in joining the combined choir, please see the following information:

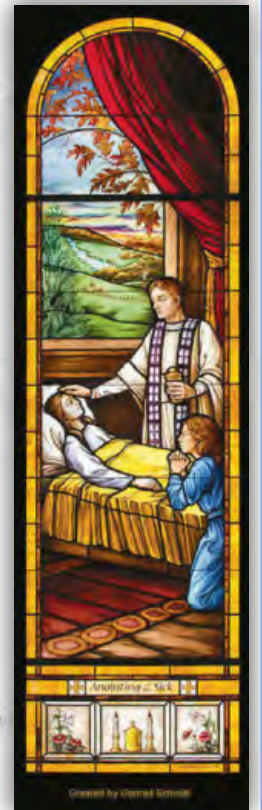
- † Rehearsal will be at Grace Harborcreek on 11/20 @ 5:45 p.m.,  
dinner will be provided.
- † There will be a total of 3x hymns sung during the hour-long service.
- † There is the potential for a solo if anybody is interested.
- † No experience/skill required,  
just a heart to help lead the community in worship.

## ANOINTING OF THE SICK

Our Parish Community will celebrate the **Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick at all Masses on December 3-4, 2022.** 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.





# Mass of Remembrance

Saturday, December 10, 2022  
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 10th, 2022 at 10 am. All members of Our Lady of Mercy are invited to attend this annual Memorial 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.

After the Mass, please join us for a social gathering in Sperry Hall sponsored by the members of the Bereavement Meal Ministry.

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](http://www.ourladyofmercychurch.org)



For the  
Religious Ed.  
Ministry

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

**SUNDAY,  
FEBRUARY 5**

**12:00 - 3:00 p.m.**

Sit Down & Take Out Tickets Available

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

# Good News... The OLM Photo Directory will be here soon!

Keep an eye out  
in the bulletin  
for more information!

## FAMILY MASS CHOIR

Linda Peters, our music director, would like to invite you to sing at our Family Mass on Christmas Eve at 6:00 p.m. This will be multi-generational! All ages are welcome.

Only 4 rehearsals on 11/29, 12/6, 12/13, and 12/20, Tuesdays from 5:30-6:00pm, in the Worship Space

Come and enjoy making music with us!

Email Linda at: [lpeters001@gmail.com](mailto:lpeters001@gmail.com), or call 607-731-5908 and let her know you'll be there!



## His Healing Touch

Luke 17:15 –

*“And one of them, realizing he had been healed, returned, glorifying God in a loud voice”*



Prompted by this reading and nearing a year since a major surgery I felt this note would be one way for me to give thanks and glorify God! And, perhaps it can be a piece of His work in motion to connect someone with rare disease to a resource that can help.

Beyond my own experiences, I have begun noticing God's working hand in rare disease –

Although any single rare disease impacts less than 200,000 people in the United States, in total there are 7000 rare diseases impacting 30 million in the United States and 350 million globally. Fewer than 5% of rare diseases have approved treatments.

In 2021, I learned of The Rare Initiative at Massachusetts General Hospital to find cures that can be leveraged across rare diseases. In an airport this September, I noticed a billboard for Oxford-Harrington Rare Disease Centre. This newly formed center is working to drive cutting-edge rare disease breakthroughs to address the unmet need in rare disease across the globe. So exciting to see these efforts in motion!

NORD (National Organization of Rare Disease; <https://rarediseases.org/>) is a website where individuals can learn more of their disease, connect with the medical teams that can best treat them and gain access to family and caregiver support.

**How wonderful you are, Lord!!!**

**So many reasons to give thanks for your continued hand in the healing of rare disease.**

*Joanne Fournier*



# FROM OUR SISTER PARISH

To our brothers in the Our Lady of Mercy community,

I am writing to send you my greetings and introduce myself, my name is Fr. Javier Jesús Castillo Domínguez, on the next month of September I will celebrate 1 year as the priest of Our Lady of the Assumption in Peto.

With the grace of the Lord, on August 1<sup>st</sup> I celebrated 22 years of Priestly Ordination and on the 6<sup>th</sup> of the same month was my 57<sup>th</sup> birthday.



I had previously heard of the Sister Parish Program, although this is the first time I get in contact with you, for which I feel very grateful, because starting a relationship of friendship and fellowship with the sisters and brothers of Our Lady of Mercy, is a great blessing.

The community of Peto is large. The Parish (town) population is approximate 25,000 people and this has 15 communities for its pastoral care, the extra 15 communities add another 5,000 people. I heard that a group Our Lady of Mercy were here in 2019 to meet and interact with this community. As it was at that occasion, it would be a great pleasure for us when someone wants to come visits us again.

As in the whole world, the pandemic hit us quite hard because the closure of the churches made pastoral action very difficult. There were several deaths in the community, they were even times of terror, of fear of the unknown; However, it was in those dark times that we saw the light of Christ most clearly since the solidarity on all levels allowed us to move forward.

We are currently in the process of reopening. With great difficulties, due to the fear of the people to congregate, we have just concluded the



pastoral year 2021-2022. We did so by celebrating the First Communion of 300 children and the confirmation of 159 kids throughout the Parish. They were celebrations full of faith and joy, which gave us back hope, because gathering to celebrate in the Name of the Lord taught us the way that we will return to being an Alive Church.

In the remaining days of August and the first days of September, the catechism of children and adolescents will be in the registration process to begin the new pastoral course 2022-2023 that, with the grace of God, we hope will come full of blessings for all.

We hope that more than 2,000 children and 500 teens will be enrolled throughout the parish in all grades. It has taken us much work to reactivate youth and family ministry. May God gives us strength to keep trying.

On the other hand, groups such as the Legion of Mary (especially of ladies), the men's nocturnal adoration, and the Charismatic Marian Team, undoubtedly with their prayer help us in the parish walk.

After these years of pandemic little by little life returns to our Church, the spiritual life, the life of community prayer is in full awakening and with the help of God the Parish of Our Lady of the Assumption will once again be the point of reference of our community. However, we have a



great concern because in 2019 we tried to restore the main altarpiece of the Church, this restoration has to start from the waterproofing of the roof and then the intervention of a specialist in the wood of the altarpiece. It is a great challenge but at the same time a great project, which with God's help and through his people we can carry out.

Dear brothers in very general terms this is what we have in our community, and we want to share it with you, because the sharing of our daily work is also sharing the faith.

We ask God the Good Father that we may strengthen the bonds of friendship, and that as we pray for one another, we may be filled with grace and blessing.

I say goodbye by putting myself as your servant in Christ

*Fr. Javier Jesús Castillo Domínguez*



FROM OUR SISTER PARISH

# GIFT CARD ORDER FORM

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

Raise money for the Church and  
do your Christmas shopping at  
the same time - Give gift cards  
for those hard to shop for people  
on your list or buy gift cards to  
use as you go shopping.

The cards listed below are those available in the Parish Office or visit RaiseRight mobile app or ShopWithScrip.com to see all 750+ brands and available denominations. There are 3 ways to order:

- Stop by the Parish Office after the weekend Masses or during the week between 9 and 2
- Fill out the order form below and drop it off or mail it to OLM 837 Bartlett Rd. 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

	Denomination	Quantity	Total Cost
Amazon	\$25		
Amazon	\$100		
Apple iTunes	\$25		
Applebees	\$25		
Arby's	\$10		
Barnes & Noble	\$10		
Bob Evans	\$10		
Bob Evans	\$25		
Buffalo Wild Wings	\$10		
Buffalo Wild Wings	\$25		
Burger King	\$10		
Cinnabon-Moes etc	\$25		
Chipotle	\$10		

	Denomination	Quantity	Total Cost
Country Fair	\$25		
Country Fair	\$50		
Country Fair	\$100		
Dairy Queen	\$10		
Darden Restaurants	\$25		
Domino's	\$10		
Giant Eagle	\$25		
Giant Eagle	\$50		
Giant Eagle	\$100		
Home Depot	\$25		
Kohl's	\$25		
Michaels	\$25		
Old Navy	\$25		
Outback Steakhouse	\$25		
Outback Steakhouse	\$50		

	Denomination	Quantity	Total Cost
Panera	\$10		
Panera	\$25		
Pizza Hut	\$10		
Stan's Garden Center	\$25		
Starbucks	\$10		
Starbucks	\$25		
Subway	\$10		
Target	\$10		
Target	\$25		
Target	\$50		
Tim Hortons	\$10		
Total Wine	\$25		
Walmart	\$25		
Walmart	\$100		
Wendy's	\$10		

The cards listed below can be ordered and are usually at the church one week after the order is placed. For more options visit the RaiseRight mobile app or ShopWithScrip.com to see all 750+ brands and available denominations.

	Denomination	Quantity	Total Cost
1-800 Baskets	\$50		
1-800-Flowers	\$50		
Ace Hardware	\$25		
AutoZone	\$25		
Bass Pro Shop	\$25		
Bed, Bath & Beyond	\$25		
Best Buy	\$25		
Boscov's	\$25		
Build-A-Bear	\$25		
Burlington	\$25		
Children's Place	\$25		
Chuck E Cheese	\$10		
Circle K	\$25		
Claire's	\$10		
Cold Stone Creamery	\$10		
Cracker Barrel	\$25		
CVS Pharmacy	\$25		
Dicks Sporting Goods	\$25		
Disney	\$25/\$100		
Domino's	\$10/\$25		
DSW	\$25		
Dunkin Donuts	\$10/\$25		

	Denomination	Quantity	Total Cost
Eat'n Park	\$10/\$25		
Famous Hair	\$25		
Field & Stream	\$25		
First Choice Haircutters	\$25		
Five Below	\$25		
Foot Locker	\$25		
Game Stop	\$25		
Great Clips	\$25		
Gymboree	\$25		
HomeGoods	\$25		
Honey Baked Ham	\$25		
Ihop	\$25		
JC Penny	\$25		
Jo-Ann Fabrics	\$25		
Krispy Kreme	\$10		
Land's End	\$25		
Lane Bryant	\$25		
LongJohn Silver's	\$10		
LongHorn Steakhouse	\$25		
Lowe's	\$25		
Macy's	\$25		
Marathon	\$25		
Marshalls	\$25		

	Denomination	Quantity	Total Cost
Men's Warehouse	\$25		
Moe's Southwest Grill	\$25		
O'Charleys	\$25		
Overstock.com	\$25		
Papa John's Pizza	\$10		
PetSmart	\$25		
Red Lobster	\$25		
Rite Aid	\$25		
Ross Dress for Less	\$25		
Sam's Club	\$25/50/100		
Sephora	\$25		
Sheetz	\$25/100		
Sonic	\$10/25		
Staples	\$25/100		
Steak'n Shake	\$10		
Supercuts	\$25		
T.J. Max	\$25		
Taco Bell	\$10		
Texas Roadhouse	\$25		
TGI Friday's	\$25		
Tops	\$50		
Visa Gift Card	\$50		
Walgreens	\$25		

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

In stock:	Total \$ _____	# Cards _____
Ordered:	Total \$ _____	# Cards _____
	Total \$ _____	# Cards _____





# KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS®

## KNIGHTLY NEWS FALL 2022

### MSGR. RITCHIE

The Knights joined the parish and the community in mourning the passing of Father Ritchie, who served Our Lady of Mercy for 32 years.

### FATHER KUJAWINSKI

On a more pleasant note, we offer a warm welcome to Father Matt Kujawinski who has become our new pastor. And who is a member of the Knights of Columbus.

### PRO-LIFE

We are excited to report a final total of \$109,821 from the Knights of Columbus 2022 Baby Bottle



Fundraiser. Our grand total including monies remaining from our 2021 Ultrasound Machine Fundraiser is \$120,475. Thanks to all of you for this tremendous effort! Our Celebration Thank You dinner on August 30th was attended by Bishop Persico, 56 Knights and volunteers. We presented a check for \$119,000 to the Women's Care Center of Erie County, toward their purchase of the Mobile Medical Unit. We are now pursuing the funding from K of C Supreme for the Mobile Ultrasound Machine that will be placed in the Mobile Medical Unit. The Mobile Medical Unit is expected to be delivered in November 2022.

### PARISH DANCE FEATURING THE GROOVE

The dance, sponsored by the Knights of our parish, was held in September in conjunction with the Parish Feast Day. This annual dance was unable to be held for the past two years due to Covid, for which there was still some concern. However, the turnout was good and the event was a success. Thank you to those who worked to make it so and to all who attended.

### TIME OF GIVING

As the cool weather approaches, we begin to hear of coat drives and of the needs of our brothers and sisters during the upcoming winter season and the

holidays. We are reminded to be generous with our giving. The Knights will donate to the Harborcreek Food Pantry and an anonymous OLM family at Christmas time.

### MERCY CENTER FOR WOMEN

The OLM Knights have joined with the Knights from St. Luke and Holy Rosary to make the best use of unneeded OTC items.



Many of us have now reached the age when we are on Medicare and have Medicare supplement. Let's face it, how many bottles of Advil or boxes of Band-Aids do we need to keep in the cupboard. From this reality was born the idea to leverage unused benefits from Medicare Advantage policies that provide a monthly or quarterly allotment for health care products either online or through a local pharmacy and donate them to the Mercy Center for Women. We would like your help. Boxes for donations are in the Gathering Space. Items needed: Children's Tylenol, Children's Ibuprofen, Children's Cough and Cold, Infants Tylenol, Infants Ibuprofen, Infants Motrin, Adult Cold and Cough, Adult Tylenol, Adult Ibuprofen, Adult Theraflu, Adult Cold and Sinus, Vicks, Pepto. Monetary donations are also accepted and checks should be made payable to: Mercy Center for Women. As always, we greatly appreciate your support.

### REMINDERS

Council meetings are held on the second Wednesday of every month in OLM's Sperry Hall. They begin promptly at 7:00 p.m. and last one hour or less. Refreshments follow for those who wish to stay for social time.

Let one of the Knights know if you are interested in joining the council.

# What Is Liturgy?

What is liturgy? One simple answer is that it is the Eucharist, the Mass, that we celebrate every Sunday. But liturgy is more than Mass. It includes the Sacraments, Morning and Evening prayer— what the Church calls the Liturgy of the Hours— and more. So, how do we recognize liturgy and distinguish it from other prayers and devotions?

The ancient church called liturgy, “the work of the people” stemming from an understanding of a corporate work, like building an amphitheater, something that was done as a community. How do you see our Sunday liturgy? What is the work being done and who is doing it?

For a moment, think about what happens in the first half of a Sunday Mass. We gather. We sing a song. We say the Sign of the Cross together. The presider proclaims an opening prayer. Then the lector proclaims an Old Testament Scripture; we sing a psalm; the lector reads a New Testament Scripture. We sing an alleluia; the priest or deacon proclaims the Gospel; A homily is given and the words of Scripture are broken open for us.

Gabe Huck, a noted liturgical writer, once said that three related elements describe liturgy: Ritual, Prayer, and Community. Let’s look for them in this overview of the beginning of Mass.

In Mass, we see a Ritual structure, a predictable form, repeated each week. We know it. In it are embedded prayers, such as, the Opening prayer or Collect, the Penitential Rite prayer and the Glory to God. After the homily these are followed by our common prayer of belief, the Creed, and then our prayers of intercession. When the community engages in these ritual actions by singing, praying with the presider and responding to the other

prayers, we have a liturgy, that is, a community engaged in common prayer and ritual.

But there is more to liturgy than we see at Mass. Its preparation involves many people. For instance, greeters/ushers welcome all and help those in need to access the gathering space and the worship space. These spaces are attractively prepared by an environment group for each liturgical season, e.g. Lent, Easter,

Ordinary Time, to further welcome the community. Presiders and deacons prepare homilies and intercessions; Musicians select music appropriate to the readings and the seasons. Readers, choirs and cantors practice and prepare to proclaim their part.

The familiar phrase “It takes a village” works for us as an analogy for liturgy. Liturgy requires a village: the engaged assembly, the readers, the presider, the greeters, the cantor, the environment ministers, the servers, the musicians. All are

necessary for liturgy to happen the way it is meant to.

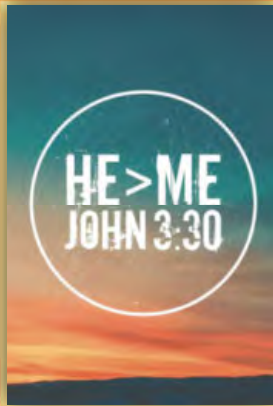
Seeking harmony and excellence among the various ministries undertaken by the community as part of the “big picture” of liturgy, requires still others, often a liturgy committee or a liturgist who seek to coordinate these various elements as the church moves through the liturgical year.

Now, think for a moment about the last liturgy you attended. How did it go? Did you participate? What role did you assume?



America Magazine

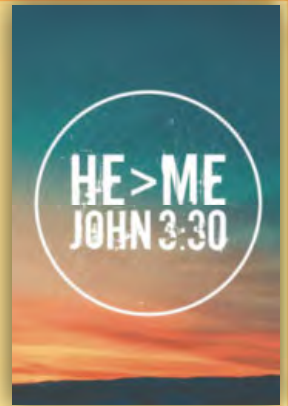
**Matthew Clark**  
Liturgy Director



# JOHN 3:30

He must become greater;  
I must become less.

*Lois Heise*



John the Baptist prepared the way for Jesus and encouraged his following. He prophesized in the wilderness there was one coming greater than himself who would baptize with the Holy Spirit. John's purpose was to preach salvation would come through the Messiah. He admitted he was not worthy to carry his sandals. Neither am I.

John baptized for the repentance of sin in the Jordan River, but when Jesus came to be baptized John hesitated knowing Jesus was the Messiah. But, in order to fulfill prophecy and God's will of our salvation, Jesus though sinless needed to be recognized by others as needing baptized. John fulfilled his ministry which in turn introduced Jesus as the Son of God and readied him with the Holy Spirit for his ministry. (Mark 3:1-17)

We too were baptized and equipped with the Holy Spirit through the sacraments. We know God is greater, but are we selfless? I don't always remember to ask God "What do you want me to do for you today?" When I do, something happens during that day showing me what his will for me exactly was. I always know the moment because I am open to receiving his presence. Living with God in mind means living differently than the popular world culture wants us to live. That can be very hard.

The apostles, saints and countless other

biblical people are wonderful examples of making God greater. There are so many biblical women who courageously said 'yes' to God's plan for them. All are examples of faith because they surrendered and trusted. Are we willing to allow Jesus access to every facet of our lives? It's hard to give over control in addition to totally trusting. That's a daily exercise for me with some days better than others.

Are we willing to make sacrifices to be less? There are so many ways to love and help our neighbors giving them hope, being Jesus here on earth. God takes the weak and makes them strong through the Holy Spirit's promptings. Aligning with God makes it easier for him to work through us.

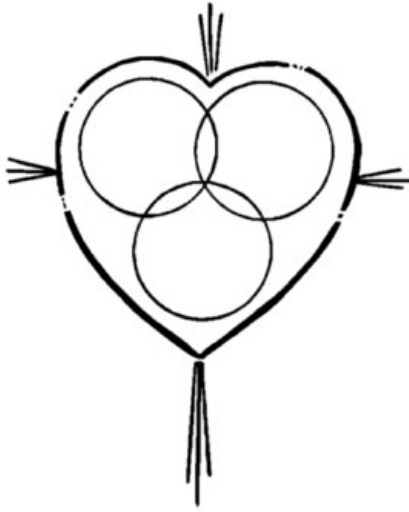
I have learned we are nothing without God. He has given us everything. Gratitude everyday is a way of life. We have heard about dying to our old self. When we allow God to enter into our lives making him greater, we make ourselves less. Its God's will not mine and I have to remember his plan is better.

No matter where you are in life, when Jesus is in his rightful place, in the center of our lives, in our hearts, we will be doing God's will and purpose in our lives as His disciples. We will be able to say "He must increase, but I must decrease."



# SANCTUS

*February 25, 2023*



**Retreat! Step back from the hectic pace of life to spend a day 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 Feb. 12.***

Questions? Call Irene @ 814-899-6132  
or email [ilucas@ourladyofmercychurch.org](mailto: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