

FOR MERCY'S SAKE

August 2023

the quarterly newsletter of Our Lady of Mercy Church

837 Bartlett Road Harborcreek, PA 16421 814-899-5342 • www.ourladyofmercychurch.org

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FEAST OF OUR LADY OF MERCY

September 24, 2023

A time to celebrate being the faith community of Our Lady of Mercy.

OUR FEAST DAY MASS is at 10:00 a.m.

Followed by a pot luck meal in Sperry Hall.

Please bring a dish to share for the luncheon according to your last name:

A-G Casserole or Fruit H-O Salad or Appetizer P-Z Dessert or Snack Gluten-free items are welcome.



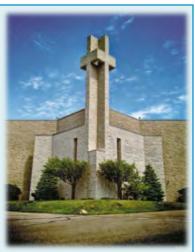
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Vision Statement

Encountering Christ. Growing in His Love. Serving in His Name.



Discipleship Pathway
Listening to our hearts, we respond to the Lord's invitation to journey together on the path of discipleship.

Encountering the Lord
We strive to build an environment for you to recognize and experience God, feeling his profound presence so that you want more. At Our Lady of Mercy, all people are provided with opportunities to continually meet Christ in a real, personal, and intimate way.

Growing in His Love

We at Our Lady of Mercy work to gradually become more faithful followers of Christ with lives transformed by the Gospel and guided by the Holy Spirit. We provide pathways to nurture your desire to respond in love and come to know what God's desire is for your life.

Serving in His Name

We encourage you to share your experiences with God, letting God's love permeate everything you do so that others can encounter him. Sent by the Spirit to be the hands and voice of Christ, we seek opportunities to serve those in need.

FAMILY BONFIRE AT OUR LADY OF MERCY SATURDAY, AUGUST 19TH AT 7 PM

at the PAVILLION AREA! ALL ARE INVITED!



Please bring a blanket or chair to sit on, bug spray, and a marshmallow roasting fork.

S'More ingredients and water will be provided.

BAPTISMAL PREPARATION SESSION

Are you expecting a new child? Has a baby recently blessed your family? Is the celebration of the Sacrament of Baptism with your child something that you are planning for some time in the next year? If so, mark your calendar for noon on Sunday, October 15 for our semi-annual Baptismal Preparation Session.

All parents/guardians and godparents are asked by the Diocese of Erie, to prepare their hearts and spirits to celebrate this wonderful Sacrament with their child by attending a special session just for them. Because these

sessions are only held twice a year here at Our Lady of Mercy, you will want to take advantage of the opportunity now.

To register for the Baptismal Preparation Session, parents/guardians are asked to call the Parish Office at 814–899–5342. Questions can be asked at that time. Or, check out our web page to see the answers to the most frequently asked questions about child Baptism.

If the session scheduled at Our Lady of Mercy does not fit your calendar, you may attend a Baptismal Preparation Session for Parents at any Catholic parish in the area. If you call the area parishes, you should find a session that meets your time constraints; evening and weekend classes are available.

Our Lady of Mercy Pastoral Staff

Rev. Matthew Kujawinski

Fr. Matt arrived as pastor of Our Lady of Mercy in October of 2022. While people understand that he is responsible for everything at OLM, he only undertakes this role with the help of the OLM staff. Fr. Matt's primary attention is directed to the celebration of the sacraments and to helping the OLM community care for the sick and homebound of the parish. Many do not realize that Fr. Matt has a second job. Since the spring of 2020, Fr. Matt has been serving the Diocese of Erie as the administrator of the Office for



Divine Worship and has recently been named its director. In this job Fr. Matt assists Bishop Persico to prepare for the many celebrations he leads throughout the diocese. The Office for Divine Worship also assists parishes with minister formation and offers guidance on the best practices for the celebration of the sacraments.

Brandon Voqt



Brandon returned to OLM in July as Director of Music and Liturgy. Seeing the position advertised in May, he discerned that it was time to return home to OLM. You will see Brandon at the celebration of Sunday Mass. He will be taking on the responsibility of forming and directing the parish choir and also hopes to establish a children's choir. Brandon will also assist in the preparation of parish celebrations and the formation of liturgical minsters. He will meet grieving families in the preparation of funeral liturgies and work with couples for the celebration of their wedding.

Donna Clark

Donna has been part of the team at OLM since 2003, she began her ministry at OLM as a Pastoral Minister but quickly took on additional responsibilities. Her role grew to the point where it now touches many aspects of parish life at OLM. Over the last few years, as life changed at OLM, Donna sensed God pulling her in new directions. However, it was only during this past Spring that she was able to take time for reflection, prayer, and discernment and recognized the need to take a step back. As a result, Donna has chosen to move into a part-time position as managing steward for the parish, handling



financial and administrative tasks. This will allow her more time to develop her Spiritual Direction Ministry and to pursue interests that bring her joy and peace.



Irene Lucas

Irene has been part of the team since 1995 as Director of Lifelong Faith Formation. At this point, a conversation about any changes to her position has not taken place. But as the roles of each member of the team shift, she is looking forward to the opportunity to grow and to serve this community in both familiar and new ways.



Jane Mallin

Jane joined the OLM pastoral team this past June. She filled the position of Lifelong Faith Formation Secretary upon the retirement of Andrea Maille. Jane stepped right in. She will take up the role of assisting the parish in its lifelong formation efforts.

Katie Stephenson

Katie has been part of the parish staff since 2018. She provides a warm hello on the phone and a smile that lights up the office when you enter. She edits the weekly bulletin and the "For Mercy's Sake" Newsletter. Katie recently took on the responsibility of scheduling liturgical ministers. Katie is taking on several new roles: As Social Media Coordinator, she will work to give OLM a strong presence on social media. She will also coordinate the schedule of liturgical ministers, and she will extend her presence in the office by working an extra hour each day. The



parish office will now open at 8:00 am and close at 3:00 pm! Katie had worked as the youth minister at OLM for a time but gave that up to be more present to her family.

Nick Heise



Nick is no stranger to the OLM family. Having concluded his work in St. Marys PA at the end of May, he discerned that at this time God is calling him to work with our youth and young adults. Since Nick will be doing so much more than "youth ministry," a new title has been created just for him. Nick will be known as our "Parish Impact Coordinator." His position at OLM is 10 hours a week. Nick's other 30 hours of work are dedicated to similar ministry at St. Jude the Apostle Parish.

Deacon Paul Barko

Deacon Paul, too, is no stranger to the OLM family. He began his official ministry as part of the parish staff when he was ordained a deacon in 2021. Deacon Paul helps prepare for the liturgical celebrations of the parish. In addition to his participation in many ministries of the parish, including catechesis for our young, Deacon Paul will assist Fr. Matt with caring for the spiritual needs of the OLM family, assisting in the formation of ministers and attending to the sick and homebound.



Another summer has flown by. Soon the yellow school buses will be making their way down our roads. As families prepare for a new school year, OLM is getting ready to start another season of religious education.

Registration for the 2023-2024 religious education program will take place after all liturgies the weekend of August 19-20. If you have found that you have missed the general registration weekend, please stop by the Office of Lifelong Faith Formation during normal working hours. All families with children intending to participate in the 2023-2024 Rel. Ed. program are asked to register at this time. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated.



Again this year, there will be a \$10 discount on the registration fee for those families who provide the parish with current clearances for at least one parent. If you already submitted clearances and they are less than 3 years old, the discount will apply. As most of you know, all those who volunteer with children must have government issued clearances, both Criminal Background checks and Child Abuse Clearances. This law applies to parents helping with a classroom party, chaperoning a field trip, religious education substitutes and the like. These clearances are free for volunteers. However, they must be on file with the sponsoring organization before any volunteer can assist with any aspect of any program.

Our Lady of Mercy believes that parent participation in the religious education ministry is essential to its success. Whether parents can volunteer on a weekly basis or assist with a one-time project, we value your gifts and time. The only way that we can involve parents is if we have their clearances on file.

Many of you already have obtained these clearances for school, scouting, sports or other programs. If you do not already have these documents, you can apply on-line. All links can be found at the diocesan website http://eriercd.org. If you have any difficulty completing the on-line application for these clearances, call the parish and we will assist you.

Program Fees may be paid at the time of registration. Checks should be made payable to Our Lady of Mercy Religious Education. Program fees are:

\$40.00	Registration-One Child
\$50.00	Registration-Two Children
\$60.00	Registration-Three or more children
\$55.00	Registration-Per Child Non-Parishioner
\$10.00	Youth Ministry fee per child Gr 7~12
\$25.00	Youth Ministry Fee for 3 or more children Gr. 7-12

For a family who has current Criminal Background Checks and Child Abuse Clearances on at least one parent on file at OLM, the fee schedule is:

\$30.00	Registration-One Child
\$40.00	Registration-Two Children
\$50.00	Registration-Three or more children
\$45.00	Registration-Per Child Non-Parishioner
\$10.00	Youth Ministry fee per child Gr 7~12
\$25.00	Youth Ministry Fee for 3 or more children Gr. 7-12

If we have current clearances on file, a notation will appear on your registration form. If you present clearances at time of registration, the registration fee will be adjusted accordingly.

Kindergarten religious education class is held on Sunday mornings from 9:30~10:45. Participants must be age 5 by September 1 and should be in the same school grade.

<u>Grade One</u> religious education is required prior to participation in the Sacramental Preparation program. First grade religious education students meet on Sunday mornings from 9:30~10:45.

First Reconciliation preparation is conducted on the second grade level. The First Reconciliation program, held 9:30-10:45 Sunday morning, is open to all students in Grade 2 or older who have previously been involved in at least one year of religious instruction and who have been baptized. No child can be registered for the grade 2 RE class who has not attended one year of formal religious education classes at a Catholic parish. In order to qualify as successfully completing 1 year of instruction, the child must have been present for a minimum of 3/4th of the schedule classes or provide a letter of completion from the pastor or director of the parish program they attended stating such. Participation in a 3-hour preparatory retreat is required prior to the celebration of the sacrament. The celebration of First Reconciliation occurs in March. Parental support and involvement is essential during periods of sacramental preparation.

lucation Registration

First Eucharist preparation is the curriculum for the third grade program. Individuals must have celebrated the sacraments of Baptism and Reconciliation prior to the celebration of their First Eucharist. First Eucharist is celebrated in May. Students are required to participate in an April retreat day as part of the preparation program. Parental involvement and support is essential during periods of sacramental preparation.

The Intermediate Program encompasses grades 3-6. Students participating in religious education on this level gather for classes on Tuesday afternoons from 4:00-5:30. Our Lady of Mercy arranges for bus transportation from the Harbor Creek public elementary schools to the church. Parents are responsible for picking up their children at class end.

Behavior for the Rel. Ed. bus follows the same policies as that enforced by the Harbor Creek School District. Failure by any student to behave in an appropriate fashion while riding the bus to religious education classes will result in the suspension of the privilege to receive this transportation for the remainder of the academic year.

Junior High youth meet Sunday immediately after the 11:00 Mass. Sessions for 7th & 8th grade youth take place from 12:00-1:30 every other Sunday. The policy of the Diocese of Erie mandates that youth participate in the Jr. High religious education ministry prior to enrolling in Confirmation preparation during high school. According to the diocesan policy, youth must attend 90% of the sessions in order to begin the Confirmation preparation process.

Confirmation Preparation takes place in 9th & 10th grades. Those attending a Catholic high school must prepare for the sacrament in their home parish. This program includes small group Sessions, service projects, retreat days, etc. Those celebrating the sacrament of Confirmation must be in the second semester of 9th grade or older, have been baptized, and have completed <u>all</u> requirements.

Days of Retreat are provided for students in the formal religious education program. All program provided retreat experiences are free to participants. Attendance at these events is required for those preparing for a sacramental celebration (Grade 2 First Reconciliation, Grade 3 First Eucharist and Grade 9-10 Confirmation). All other experiences are encouraged, but not mandatory. These days combine fun with spiritual growth.

Family Faith Days are opportunities for families to share in the faith formation process with their children. Currently, these are scheduled three times during the school year during the Sunday morning program (the first day of class, late autumn, winter). On these specially designated mornings, all children in Kindergarten through gr. 2 are joined by parents, siblings and any extended family members to share in a special morning of prayer and fun.

Parent Meetings enable family members to best support the faith development of their child. Every year we hold a series of parent meetings designed to inform parents of curriculum topics, special projects and other details of interest. All parent meetings are designed to be informative and brief. All parents and guardians are highly encouraged to attend these meetings. Please consult the religious education calendar and the bulletin for specific times and dates.

Absentee Policy: Preparing for a sacramental celebration is a very important process. Extra care and attention is directed to these parts of the program by the R. E. Office, the catechists and the families. To ensure that youth are as well prepared as possible, attendance policies are in place for these years. Children preparing for First Reconciliation and First Eucharist (grades 1, 2 & 3) must be present for a minimum of ¾ of scheduled classes. Any child absent for more than a quarter of the scheduled classes will not be approved to celebrate this sacrament. (Any first grade student who has missed more than a quarter of the scheduled classes will not have met the requirement of completing a year of religious ed necessary to enter the First Reconciliation program.) Jr. High youth are required to attend 90% of the 7th & 8th grade sessions before enrolling in Confirmation preparation. Confirmation candidates (grade 9 & 10) are permitted a maximum of 2 absences per year. Additional absences must be made up with the Director of Lifelong Faith Formation before the candidate can continue in the process. Additionally, these years of preparation include work to be done at home. All homework must be completed and returned before the individual will be approved for the sacramental celebration.

To all returning catechetical ministers, students and families, I look forward to seeing you soon. To all new participants in the religious education program, I welcome you. To all members of this parish community, I encourage your comments, ideas and suggestions.

Religious Education Classes begin on Tuesday, September 6. Religious Education calendars are available at the time of registration.

May you continue to deepen your love for God and one another. May the remaining weeks of the summer season bring many blessings.

GOD'S EVERLASTING LOVE

By: Margaret McCurdy

Recently, I was blessed with an experience of knowing Christ's presence. During a mission talk at my other church in Florida, the priest/speaker did a short guided meditation. He asked everyone to close their eyes and place themselves in a beautiful meadow. Then he said to imagine someone in the distance running toward us. Soon we realize it is Jesus, and He is gazing at

"I have loved you with an everlasting

- 60d

us with a huge smile. When we meet, He holds us in a huge, warm embrace. Well, when He held me, I heard Him say these words to me, "I have loved you with an everlasting love. I have called you and you are mine." (Those words are the actual refrain of a hymn we sing, but I heard them coming from a man's voice.) This was a special moment of knowing I belong to Him, and how very precious each of us is to Him.



GOD HEARS US

By: Lois Heise

I don't remember the exact date, but it was before spring flowers sprouted this year. I was at Mass one Saturday night when I had an experience I'll not forget. I had been praying for several people, one passionately. It was time to receive the Eucharist and as always I paused a moment to put it in my

mouth in front of the cross. It was then I heard a voice say "It's going to be alright." I was stunned for a moment in disbelief. I turned left to walk up the aisle to my pew with tears welling. As I knelt to pray I felt peace and tried not to cry.

Was it the answer to all my prayers or the one? I believed it was the one because I asked God to literally touch the person with his own hand to make them whole. I shared this with the person I was praying for a few days later. I wanted to assure them they didn't have to worry and to trust in God no matter the outcome. The day of truth came. Not only did everything turn out alright, it was perfect!

Writing this I realized receiving Eucharist was the perfect time for God to reassure me with his peace and love. God doesn't always answer our prayers the way we want nor do we know when he will. No answer is still an answer. But, we can be assured it will be alright. I didn't know how it would turn out for sure, but I did know with God in my life, it would be alright.

Children's Liturgy of the Word

Children's Liturgy of the Word is returning to Our Lady of Mercy. Thank you to all those who responded to our request indicating your interest. Based on what we heard, CLW will begin this September during the 8:30 Mass.

What is Children's Liturgy of the Word?

CLW is an opportunity for children age 3 to 6 years to experience the first portion of the Mass in a way that is accessible to their developmental level. A trained CLW minister will lead the children through the prayers, will proclaim the Sunday readings and will break open the Word of God in a fashion that will allow young children to understand the content of the Scripture of the day.

How does Children's Liturgy of the Word work?

Children attend Mass with their families. After the opening prayer, little ones are invited forward for a blessing from the priest. The CLW minister leads them to a specially designated space where they hear the Scripture readings from a Children's Lectionary, are offered a children's homily, recite a Children's Creed and join in intercessory prayer. As the gifts are processed forward, the children rejoin their families for the Liturgy of the Eucharist. This is not baby-sitting or play time, but is an opportunity for the children to experience a portion of the Mass in a context they can comprehend.

Who can be a CLW Minister?

Any faith-filled adult who has a heart for young children are invited to become a CLW minister. All volunteers must provide all required clearances before serving in this ministry. Training will be provided. For more information, contact Irene Lucas at ilucas@ourladyofmercychurch.org or 814-899-6132.

BLESSING OF STUDENTS DURING ALL MASSES WEEKEND OF AUGUST 26/27, 2023

A wonderful way to start the school year and a beautiful way to show our students that they are truly a part of our Community at Our Lady of Mercy, and we support them through all of their endeavors.



KNIGHTLY NEWS FALL 2023

30th Anniversary

The anniversary of OLM Council's founding on June 27, 1993 was celebrated by Knights sitting together at Mass, accompanied by spouses, family members and those of special importance in our lives. Many wore our new, sportier shirts which arrived just before the golf raffle. (If you did not receive yours and would like one, let one of us know) Parish members were invited to Sperry Hall afterward where donuts were served as a way of saying thank you for supporting our fundraisers and initiatives over these 30 years. Your support in turn benefits our church, its members, the diocese, and people in need both locally and around the world. A few words were offered to explain what the Knights are about and how we reach out to others. Please consider joining if you are not already a member.

Golf & Sports Raffle

The 28th Golf Raffle since the councils founding and the second since restarting after Covid, was a success! Thanks to all of you who contributed in any way to the success of the Golf & Sports Raffle. Once again, this event has proven to be one that the people of Harborcreek look forward to and support.

Degrees

Six members made their next and final degree - the 4th. Patriotism is the principle. They are: Paul Barko, Tom Carney, Craig Fournier, Mark Kosmowski, Brian Meyer and Gary Smith.

Knights of Columbus Scholarship

Avery Ollinger has been awarded a Knights of Columbus scholarship. She graduated from Mercyhurst Preparatory School and will be attending The University of Mount Union this fall. Please congratulate her for her impressive achievements. Our Lady of Mercy Council of the Knights of Columbus awards scholarships annually to high school seniors who attend our parish. This is one of the many ways in which The Knights, and

indirectly those of you who support the fundraisers, contribute to the parish and its members.

Recent Council Meeting Hosts

The July council meeting was graciously hosted by Dave Cottrell, his wife, son, and helpers at their home. They served a multicourse meal and opened their pool for a great time and enjoyable evening. "Fun Time" followed a brief meeting. Thank you, Dave, and all!

Baby Bottle Fundraiser

The collection for the second year of this diocesan-wide fundraiser ran from Mother's Day through Father's Day with proceeds earmarked for ultrasound machines and related expenses of the Women's Care Center of Erie in their Pro-Life outreach. Money is still being counted. In addition to checks and paper currency, a huge number of coins came in.

Phil Legler of OLM and its K of C Council, along with Greg Penco, Grand Knight of Erie's Mount Carmel Council, play key roles in this continuing fundraiser. Last year it caught the attention of the Columbia Magazine which published an article in the January/February issue. The new van and equipment were taken to several churches, including ours, so that people might view what their donations had partly purchased and tour it. Great job Phil, thank you.



Our Lady of Mercy Scrip Program

Gift Card Order Form

Our Lady of Mercy earns cash with every gift card purchased. (1.7% - 14% depending on the gift card)

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

3 ways to order:

- Stop by the parish office after the weekend Masses or during the week between 9 and 2.
- Fill out the 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

Store	Denomination	Quantity	Total Cost
Amazon	\$25		
Amazon	\$100		
Apple/Itunes	\$25		
Applebees	\$25		
Arby's	\$10		
Barnes & Noble	\$10		
Bath & Body Works	\$10		
Bath & Body Works	\$25		
Bob Evans	\$10		
Bob Evans	\$25		
Buffalo Wild Wings	\$10		
Buffalo Wild Wings	\$25		
Burger King	\$10		
Chipotle	\$10		
Chipotle	\$25		
Cinnabon-Moes etc	\$25		
Country Fair	\$25		
Country Fair	\$50		
Country Fair	\$100		
Dairy Queen	\$10		
Darden Restaurants	\$25		
Domino's	\$10		
Dunkin	\$10		
Dunkin	\$25		
Giant Eagle	\$25		
Grant Eagle	\$50		
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Store	Denomination	Quantity	Total Cost
Home Depot	\$25		
Kohl's	\$25		
Michaels	\$25		
Old Navy	\$25		1
Outback Steakhouse	\$25		
Outback Steakhouse	\$50		
Panera	\$10		
Panera	\$25		
Pizza Hut	\$10		
Sonic	\$10		1
Sonic	\$25		
Stan's Garden Center	\$25		
Starbucks	\$10		
Starbucks	\$25		
Subway	\$10		
Target	\$10		
Target	\$25		
Target	\$50		1
Tim Hartons	\$10		
Total Wine	\$25		
Ulta	\$25		
Walmart	\$25		
Walmart	\$50		
Walmart	\$100		
Wendy's	\$10		

Instock

Cards

Total S

Check #

or Cash

istomer Info:		
Name:		
Phone #	Email:	

Looking for individuals willing to sell gift cards after weekend Masses. If interested, please fill out the form below or call/text Pat Marshall (814)440-4890 or call the office (814)899-5342. Thank you!

Name:		Mass:
Phone:	email:	

Parish Festival

2023 Results

REVENUE

Take-out Dinners \$10,309.00 Dinner \$5,898.00 After Dinner Chicken Sales \$780.00 Total Chicken Sales \$16,987.00
Grand Award
Chinese Auction
Lottery Tree \$1,069.00 Restaurant Tree \$810.00 Wine Basket \$550.00 Quilt \$580.00 Limo Service \$267.00 Craft Beer \$528.00 Total Raffle \$3,804.00
Book Sale
Misc. donations \$2,031.00

EXPENSES

ChickenRefrigerated TrailerChicken Dinner FoodDinner Supplies CharcoalPit Area	\$598.90 \$2,235.49 \$845.44 \$630.71
Grand Award50/50	\$1,000.00 \$500.00
Advertising Raffle Tickets. Lottery Tree Funnel Cakes Children's Tent Bingo License Refreshments	\$630.70 \$50.00 \$124.99 \$118.58 \$15.00
Indirect Expenses	\$221.77
TOTAL EXPENSES Credits NET EXPENSES	\$(152.92)
TOTAL PROFIT	\$21,823.94



Festival 2022 Results

TOTAL INCOME \$33,702.85

Income	\$30,418.03
Expenses	. \$9,346.33
Profit	

Festival 2019 Results

Income	\$30,551.81
Expenses	\$9,614.73
Profit	\$20,937.08

Festival Winners

Grand Prize - Patty Sacco Restaurant Cards - JS King Lottery - Michelle Hullings 50/50 - Cindy Fabin Quilt - Brian Edwards Wine Basket - Steve Bretz Craft Beer Basket - Tim Tyzinski Limo Service - Joe Tarquinio

Congratulations to all of our prize winners!