

FOR MERCY'S SAKE

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER



The Feast of Our Lady of Mercy September 28, 2025

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

**Our Feast Day Mass
is at 9:30 a.m.**



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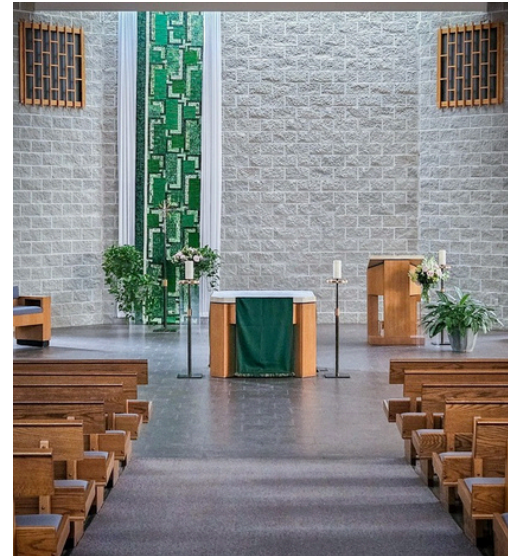
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THE FEAST OF OUR LADY OF MERCY SEPTEMBER 28, 2025

FEAST DAY MASS

**Sunday, September 28
9:30 a.m.**

Though Mass will be celebrated at 4:30 p.m. on Saturday, September 27th, we encourage our parish community to attend our special Feast Day Mass on Sunday September 28th.



**Join us for Mass
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

SMALL CHRISTIAN COMMUNITIES

As summer gives way to autumn and the abundance of the harvest, it is the perfect season to gather in the fruit of our life of prayer.

Small faith sharing groups are the perfect way to recognize the growth that the Holy Spirit is calling forth in our hearts.

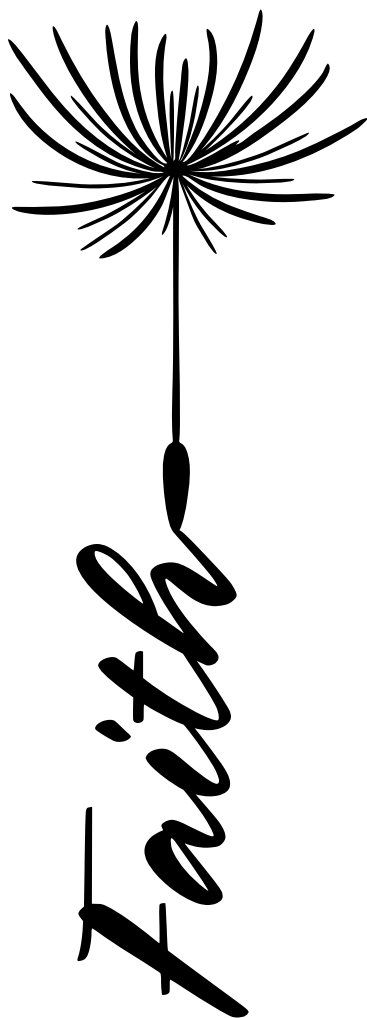
All are invited to try a Small Christian Community this autumn. There are groups for every schedule: daytime and evening, all female and mixed groups, those that meet weekly and those that meet less frequently. There is even a group for young parents.

What is a Small Christian Community? A Small Christian Community is a group of parishioners who meet consistently to reflect together on the Sunday readings. Each gathering begins and ends with prayer. Believing that God's Word is alive and deeply personal, participants allow the Scripture to speak to their hearts. The shared insights of each member help the others to grow in their understanding of what God is saying. As the members share their reflections on the biblical passage, they also share their lives, their hopes and dreams, their joys and sorrows and become the hands and voice of Christ to each other.

Anyone interested in trying a small faith sharing group can contact Irene in the Faith Formation Office at 814-899-6132 or ilucas@ourladyofmercychurch.org. Trying a small faith group does not obligate you to continue if the experience does not speak to you.

Are you reluctant to join a group that has been together for years? Consider forming a group with your own friends or parishioners you know. We will provide you with the training you need.

For more information, contact Irene at ilucas@ourladyofmercychurch.org or 814-899-6132



Encountering The God of Faith Hope and Love A SCRIPTURE STUDY



MONDAY, SEPT. 29 THRU NOV. 3
9:00-10:00 AM

OR

6:30-7:30 PM



Who is God? In the pages of scripture, God is revealed as the one who draws us into faith, sustains us in hope, transforms us in love. From the call of Abraham and Sarah to the Resurrection, this study will invite participants to a deeper encounter with the God of faith, hope and love. Whether you are new to reading the Bible or a veteran of Bible studies, this series will have something for you.

Material

Encountering the God of Faith, Hope and Love by Fr. George Smiga

Cost for book - \$12

[In order to get the bulk discount and have books in time for the first session,
please add your name to the list in the Gathering Space
or contact Irene Lucas by **Sept. 14**]

Knights of Columbus to Pray for Life Sponsoring Silver Rose Pilgrimage!

Join us **Thursday August 21st at 7:30 a.m.** Mass as the Silver Rose Pilgrimage, hosted by Knights of Columbus Council 519, visits Holy Spirit Parish.

Each year, eight Silver Roses, honoring Our Lady of Guadalupe and a Positive Pro Life Culture visit every Province and State in Canada, the US and Mexico. Prayers are offered at each Parish visited to create and encourage life from conception to natural death.

Our Lady of Guadalupe is the only known image of Mary as an expectant mother. The Rosary will follow Mass and there will be opportunities to photograph the Silver Rose.

Come and Pray for Life!

Knights Of Columbus Council 519



Parish Directories Missing from the Library



15 directories from several different parishes in the Erie Diocese were taken from the church library sometime in April. These are the books with pictures, history of the parish, and contact information in them. Directories missing include: St. Anthony, St. John, St. Bartholomew, Blessed Sacrament, St. Catherine of Sienna, SS. Cosmas and Damion, St. Francis Clearfield, St. Michael, Notre Dame Parish, St. Patrick, St. Stephen, St. Titus - Immaculate Conception. These were in the "Archive" section of the library and should have never been taken out.

If anyone has any information on their whereabouts, please contact Katie in the Parish Office or Theresa at 814-899-3809. If someone has these directories, please return them to the Parish Office or the library.

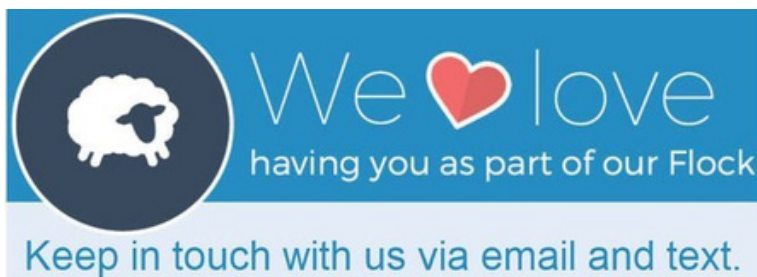
Parent Baptismal Prep Class

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 **10:30 a.m. on Sunday, October 5** 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.



Please join our “flock” by signing up at **olmharborcreek.flocknote.com** or using the QR code provided.



Religious Education Registration

Another school year will soon be underway. That means it is time for our children to be registered for religious education.

Registration for the 2025-2026 religious education program will take place both online and after Masses the weekend of **August 16-17**. This year, there will be the option of registering on-line. You can do so by using the QR code below.



**Scan Here to Register
for Religious Ed
2025/2026**



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, please call the parish and we will assist you.

Religious Education Fees

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:

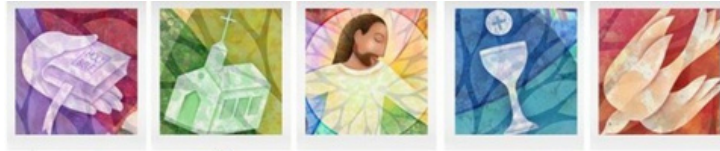
| | |
|---------|---|
| \$40.00 | Registration-One Child |
| \$50.00 | Registration-Two Children |
| \$60.00 | Registration-Three or more children |
| \$55.00 | Registration-Per Child Non-Parishioner |
| \$10.00 | Youth Ministry fee per child Gr 7-Confirmation |
| \$25.00 | Youth Ministry Fee for 3 or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

Religious Education Classes

Kindergarten religious education class is held on Sunday mornings from 10:30-12:00. Participants must be age 5 by September 1 and should be in the same school grade. The Kindergarten group meets in classroom #5.

Grade One religious education is required prior to participation in the Sacramental Preparation program. First grade religious education students meet in classroom #7 on Sunday mornings from 10:30-12:00.

First Reconciliation preparation is conducted on the second grade level. The First Reconciliation program, held 10:30-12:00 Sunday morning in classroom #6, 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.



Faith Formation Religious Education Classes

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. The school bus service for Harbor Creek School District brings children from the Harbor Creek elementary schools to the parish. 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 from 10:30–12:00. Combining fun activities, faith sharing, witness talks and prayer, 7th & 8th grade youth are invited into a deeper relationship with Christ and with His Body, the Church. The junior high group gathers in the gym. Diocesan policy mandates that youth participate in 7th & 8th grade faith formation prior to beginning Confirmation preparation. The Diocese of Erie requires 90% attendance at this level.

Confirmation Preparation takes place in 9th grade. 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 all requirements. Confirmation preparation takes place Sunday from 10:30–12:00. The group meets in the Ritchie Room.

Religious Education Policy

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 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 thrice during the school year during the Sunday morning program. 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.



Religious Education Policy

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) are mandated by diocesan policy to attend 90% of the sessions. Additional absences must be made up with the Director of Lifelong Faith Formation before the candidate can continue in the process. Additionally, this year of preparation includes 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 Sunday, September 7.
Religious Education calendars are available at the time of registration.

Faith-filled volunteers are essential to the success of our faith formation ministry. If you can teach a group of children on Sunday morning or Tuesday afternoon, can serve as a substitute, are willing to watch children who arrive early on Tuesdays, please contact Irene at ilucas@ourladyofmercychurch.org or 814-899-6132. Several mandated clearances must be obtained before anyone can volunteer with children.

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

OUR LADY OF MERCY
CELEBRATES
OUR SISTER PARISH
ON THEIR FEAST DAY

JOIN US FOR A
*Breakfast
Burrito
Bar*

SUNDAY AUGUST 17
AFTER 9:30 A.M.
MASS

IN SPERRY HALL

SPONSORED BY THE
OLM SISTER PARISH
COMMITTEE



END OF SUMMER FAMILY PICNIC

**SUNDAY AUGUST 24TH
AT 10:30**



Join us to celebrate
God's love and presence
and our thankfulness with
**FOOD, GAMES, PRIZES &
FUN for all ages!**

RSVP number attending
by Aug. 17 to
ilucas@ourladyofmercychurch.org
or (814) 899-6132



TRUNK OR TREAT

SATURDAY
OCTOBER 25
2-3:30 P.M.
OLM PARKING LOT

YOU ARE INVITED

A MERRY MERCY CHRISTMAS

AT OUR LADY OF MERCY CHURCH



DECEMBER

SUNDAY

14

1:00 p.m.-
5:00 p.m.

**A Christmastime Extravaganza
with something for all ages to enjoy!**

837 BARTLETT RD. HARBORCREEK, PA 16421