

OUR LADY OF MERCY CHURCH

837 Bartlett Road • Harborcreek, PA 16421 • www.ourladyofmercychurch.org



MASS SCHEDULE

Saturday Vigil: 6:00 p.m.

Sunday: 8:30 a.m. & 11:00 a.m.

Weekday: 8:30 a.m.

Holy Day of Obligation: 8:30 a.m. & 7:00 p.m.

PARISH STAFF

Msgr. Gerald T. Ritchie, *Pastor*

Donna Clark, *Pastoral Minister*

Irene Lucas, *Director of Lifelong Faith Formation*

Brandon Vogt, *Director of Liturgy & Music*

Katie Stephenson, *Administrative Assistant*

Geri Hadlock, *Youth Minister*

Kirk Mientkiewicz, *Maintenance Coordinator*

Andrea Maille, *Lifelong Faith Formation Secretary*

CONTACT INFORMATION

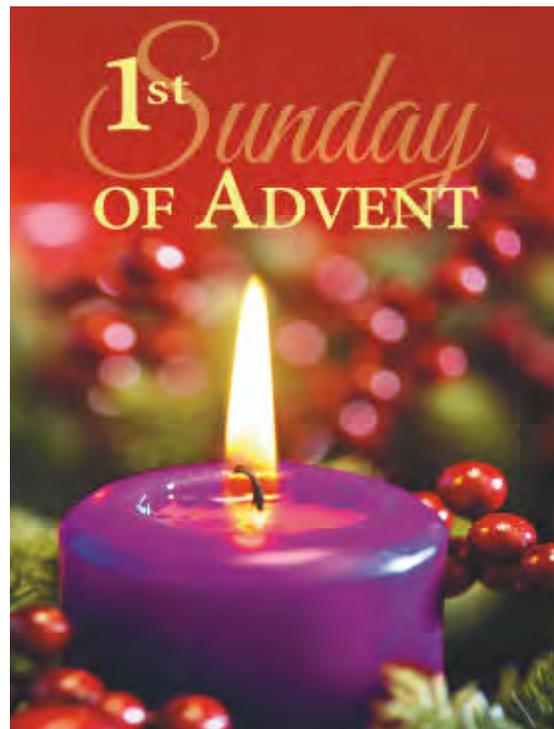
Parish Office: 814-899-5342

Office of Lifelong Faith Formation: 814-899-6132

Fax: 814-898-3306

Email: info@ourladyofmercychurch.org

December 2, 2018



MISSION STATEMENT

*We are a Eucharistic, Catholic Christian Community of Communities formed by the Word of God and the teachings of the Church.
We are empowered by the Holy Spirit to live the values of Jesus Christ in a prayerful, welcoming and nurturing environment.*

THE WEEK AHEAD

For a complete calendar of events, please visit ourladyofmercychurch.org/calendar

Mon. 12/03	6:00 p.m.	Sister Parish Committee
	7:00 p.m.	Healing Ministry Service
	7:00 p.m.	Pastoral Facilitator Meeting
Tue. 12/04	9:30 a.m.	Steel Magnolias
	9:30 a.m.	Potters Clay
	1:30 p.m.	Legion of Mary
	2:00 p.m.	Prayer Shawl
	4:00 p.m.	Religious Ed. Gr. 4-6
	5:30 p.m.	Children's Choir
	7:00 p.m.	Pastoral Council
Wed. 12/05	7:30 p.m.	AA Meeting
	1:00 p.m.	Diamonds in the Rough
Thur. 12/06	7:00 p.m.	Fruit of the Vine
	9:00 a.m.	Painting Class
	6:00 p.m.	Prayer Shawl
Fri. 12/07	6:45 p.m.	Choir Rehearsal
	7:00 p.m.	Holy Day—Vigil Mass
Sat. 12/08	Holy Day Feast of the Immaculate Conception	
	8:30 a.m.	Holy Day Mass
	10:00 a.m.	AA Meeting
	4:30 p.m.	Sacrament of Penance
Sun. 12/09	Second Sunday of Advent	
	9:30 a.m.	Religious Ed. Gr. K-2
	12:00 p.m.	Religious Ed. Gr. 7&8
	1:00 p.m.	Legion of Mary Annual Reunion

FEAST OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION



On Saturday, December 8th we celebrate the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary, patroness of the United States of America. It is a Holy Day of Obligation. **Holy Day Masses will be Friday at 7pm and Saturday at 8:30 am.**

SCRIPTURE READINGS

Mon. 12/03	Is 2:1-5	/ Matthew 8:5-11
Tue. 12/04	Is 11:1-10	/ Luke 10:21-24
Wed. 12/05	Is 25:6-10	/ Matthew 15:29-37
Thur. 12/06	Is 26:1-6	/ Matthew 7:21, 24-27
Fri. 12/07	Is 29:17-24	/ Matthew 9:27-31
Sat. 12/08	Gn 3:9-15, 20	/ Eph 1:3-6, 11-12
		/ Luke 1:26-38
Sun. 12/09	Bar 5:1-9 / Phil 1:4-6, 8-11	/ Luke 3:1-6

MASS INTENTIONS

Mon. 12/03	8:30 a.m.	Robert Jones (Barb Jones)
Tue. 12/04	8:30 a.m.	Sally & Francis Talerico (Daughter)
Wed. 12/05	8:30 a.m.	Leona Stankiewicz (Casey & Dan Pfeiffer)
Thur. 12/06	8:30 a.m.	Tim Eisert (Claudette & Jim Terrill)
Fri. 12/07	8:30 a.m.	Ruth Extein (The Extein Family)
Sat. 12/08	8:30 a.m.	John Walczak (James Walczak)
	6:00 p.m.	For the People of OLM
Sun. 12/09	8:30 a.m.	Diana Curtis (Family)
	11:00 a.m.	Fredrick Trester Sr. (Faye & Pete Froess)

PRAYER LINE

9:00 a.m.—4:00 p.m.
Call **Donna Smicker** at 899-9108
4:00 p.m.—9:00 p.m.
Call **Gerri Extein** at 899-6875
The **Hospital Visitor** for the week is **Florence Voelker**.



THIS SUNDAY'S REFLECTION

LUKE 21:25-28, 34-36



When God's people were taken to exile in Babylon, Jerusalem and the temple were destroyed; the king and kingdom were no more. With their glorious past and identity obliterated, the people began to doubt that God would fulfill the promises that gave them hope. The prophet Jeremiah implored them to be patient. Though the family tree of David seemed no more than a dead stump, it was about to come to life. A new king would spring forth, and the people would dwell secure in their land once more. They pray: "God my savior, for you I wait all the day."

Paul knew that before we can stand blameless and holy before our God, we need to learn how to live in a way that is pleasing to God. Our whole world may be shaken by forces that threaten to destroy us. We may be menaced by wars and natural disasters. We are in peril from self-indulgence, addictions, and anxiety. Yet by patient waiting and prayerful watching for our coming salvation, we can stand secure before our Lord. This Advent, as we strive to conduct ourselves in a way that is pleasing to God, we can take comfort in knowing that we are making slow but sure progress.

For Reflection: How can I exercise the virtues of patience and hope this Advent? In what practical way can I put these into practice?



SOCIAL JUSTICE COMMITTEE

POVERTY IN ERIE COUNTY

24.5% of all children living in Erie County live at or below the Poverty Threshold according to 2016 data from the US Census Bureau.

\$24,566 is the poverty threshold for a family of four as reported by the US Census Bureau.

Minimum Wage as reported by the Wage and Hour Division of the Department of Labor.

•Pennsylvania	\$7.25/Hour	\$15,080/Annual
•New York	\$10.40/Hour	\$21,632/Annual
•Ohio	\$8.30/Hour	\$17,264/Annual

Mathew 25:35-36: I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.

Possible Action Steps

- Volunteer or contribute to the Ella Cochran Food Pantry.
- Adopt a family for the holidays.
- Ask your elected officials to support an increase to the Pennsylvania **minimum** wage.

In Loving Memory

We remember **Ken Burt**, father of Sue McCreary; **Dawn Dingle**, niece of Roger Urmann; and **Chaz Magourik**, husband of Lindsey (Gredler)Magourik. Please keep them and their family in your prayers.

FINANCIAL SUPPORT

*Offertory for the weekend of **November 18, 2018***

Envelopes sent:	392	
Envelopes returned:	115	\$4,045.00
Faith Direct Deposits:	118	\$3,122.00
Loose Change:		\$ 134.00
TOTAL OFFERTORY:		\$7,301.00

FINANCIAL SUPPORT

*Offertory for the weekend of **November 25, 2018***

Envelopes sent:	392	
Envelopes returned:	109	\$3,730.00
Faith Direct Deposits:	118	\$3,122.00
Loose Change:		\$ 100.00
TOTAL OFFERTORY:		\$6,952.00

QUESTION OF THE WEEK WINNER
 The Question-of-the-Week Winner for the week of Nov. 20 was **Alexandra Bryan**, Gr. 1, who knew that the Bible is the Word of God. 

Advent Family Party



Join us **TODAY, Sunday, Dec. 2** from **noon to 2:00 PM** for a time to "Prepare for Christmas in an Old Fashioned Way". Bring a treat that reminds you of Christmases of old. If you have a picture or ornament from your childhood Christmases, please bring it to share. There will be crafts and activities for children, fellowship and memories for adults, and the chance of a surprise guest for all. The event is free and open to everyone.

Study on Prayer

On **Jan. 6**, we will begin an 8-week series on prayer. This study will use video presentation and guided discussion. It will be held in the Conference Room from **9:45-10:45 Sunday mornings** (between the Masses). If you have ever wondered how to recognize the voice of God in prayer, struggled with distractions, wished you could pray with more attention or simply wished you knew how to get started with regular prayer, this study is for you. Both those new to a regular prayer life and those who have been faithful to prayer for years will find this study helpful. The study is free and there is no need to register or to commit to every week. The study is free, but a \$15 workbook is available for anyone who wants one. If you want a workbook, **contact Irene Lucas at 899-6132 by Dec. 15** so she can order it.



A TIME TO HEAL

Are you or someone you know struggling with physical, mental, emotional or spiritual issues? The Healing Ministry of OLM will be offering "A Time to Heal" on **Monday December 3rd at 7 pm** for anyone who has a need for healing in any area and on any level of their lives. The evening will include prayer, music, laying of hands and quiet reflection and is open to anyone who seeks healing and calm. Bring yourself and feel free to bring a friend.



Women's Luncheon

One last hurrah before the temperature drops. Join us on **Tuesday, Dec 4 at 1pm** at the Freeport Restaurant. If you are a widow or live alone and are looking for companionship and laughter please join us. Questions? **Call Donna Clark in the parish office.**





CHILD PROTECTION AND CREATING SAFE ENVIRONMENTS

KEEPING GOD'S CHILDREN PROTECTED AND SAFE

To know that we are children of God is to live in complete love, with deep abiding security and the ability to dream, to sing, to create, to laugh, and to play without worry. As we grow older, we face a new reality—we cannot approach all God's creation with the same trust and confidence. We learn, through sometimes hurtful and damaging experiences, that some people reject the ability that God gave them to love and respect others—they ignore God's call. The Diocese of Erie's program to safeguard children helps remind us of these very facts. With the help of this program, the faithful are guided and educated about the responsibility of how to keep God's children protected and safe. To see what the Diocese of Erie is doing to help create safe environments, check out <http://www.eriecd.org/protectyouth.htm>

"Liturgy is Life" PowerPoint

If anyone who was not able to attend all of the "Liturgy is Life" presentations by Brandon this October would like a copy of the PowerPoint presentations emailed to them, please contact Brandon via email at music@ourladyofmercychurch.org



MEN'S NIGHT OUT SAVE THE DATE



The Men's Night Out Committee is very pleased to announce our next event. Our featured speaker will be The Honorable John J. Trucilla, (President Judge, Erie County Court of Common Pleas) **Wednesday January 2nd, 2019 at 6:00p.m.** in Sperry Hall. See you there!

Overflow Shelter for the Homeless

Our Neighbors' Place is a faith based overflow shelter for the homeless. St. John the Baptist hosts two sessions every year. Parishioners from the Eastside Roman Catholic Churches are the backbone of this shelter. Dates for 2019 are: Session 1: **January 16th thru January 29th** and Session 2: **February 27th thru March 12th**. The shelter is open from 7:00pm to 7:00am daily. We need **fifteen volunteers** each night for three shifts. We need food; breakfast and dinner are served each day, enough to feed 60 people. If you would like to provide food, money or volunteer your time to the shelter, please contact **Mary Hoffman 873-2981** mymary14@gmail.com **Mary Ellen Lieb 873-1284** melieb4@gmail.com Make checks payable to "St. John the Baptist Outreach." They also accept donations of winter coats, boots, gloves, hats, sweatshirts, sweatpants, and jeans.



Operation Assisting Santa Thanks You

Thank you to all who participated in Operation Assisting Santa by donating an unwrapped gift for a child of a Veteran. Thank you for your generosity and continued support.—Janet Smith and Moochie Zielweski.



Getting Through the Holidays after Losing a Loved One

Monday December 17 at 7pm is the monthly Grief Support group. At this session, we will have materials for the family to make a special Christmas ornament and list other ways to create meaning in the midst of grief. The first year of holidays can be difficult after losing someone we love because of all the traditions surrounding these events; the absence of our loved one feels more intense. **Questions – contact Donna Clark in the parish office.**



Ministry Sign ups

Anyone can sign up for a new ministry at any time. Just visit the Ministry brochure stand. There you will find brochures about all of our ministries and sign-up sheets. Turn in the sheets at the main office. Looking to retire from a ministry? Simply **contact your ministry leader or call Donna in the parish office.**



Blue Christmas -Light of Hope Worship Service



For those in pain Christmas can be a difficult time; it is not joyful nor is it a season of peace. The United Methodist Church on McGill Rd will host the service of Light and Hope on **Wednesday December 19 at 6:30pm**. The service is for anyone who is going through a difficult time because of grief, sickness, loss of job or a relationship or any other type of struggle. For more information, **contact Donna Clark in the parish office.** Fr Ritchie and Donna Clark will be participating in the service.

Christmas Caring Tree Program

The Ella Cochran Food Pantry would like to remind anyone who took a name from the Christmas Caring Tree to please return a wrapped gift to the Gathering Space by the deadline next weekend, **December 8 & 9.**



Diocese Launches Free e-Newsletter



Have you subscribed to the *Diocese of ErieE-news*? It is easy to do and it's free. To receive your email edition each week, simply visit nwpaCatholic.com, click on the "subscribe" button, and provide a few lines of basic information. Every Monday morning, you will receive headlines and photos with links to diocesan, national and Vatican news. You will also see a tweet sent out from Bishop Lawrence Persico or from the diocese. Sign up today and stay in the know!

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Another year has passed, and we are again approaching the annual collection for retired religious on **December 8th** and 9th. This event has significant benefits for our retired sisters here in the Diocese of Erie, and the 31,000-retired religious throughout our country.

The **Retirement Fund for Religious** offers financial support for those Catholic Sisters, brother and religious order priest who worked for years for small stipends, asking little of the Church in return. Your generous gift provides vital support for their health care. Last year, the collection in this diocese netted nearly \$200,000, and when it was returned to the religious of this area, it helped defray costs of medication, nursing care, physical and occupational therapy, transportation, medical equipment, and other necessary needs of our elderly Sisters.

Senior religious are our treasure in the Church. Their dedication and hard work laid the foundation for Catholic schools, religious education programs, hospitals, social service agencies and countless other ministries throughout our diocese, and many still serve our Church today. All we must do is look around to see the good work religious have done and continue to do throughout Northwestern Pennsylvania. Such examples are: St. Mary's Homes, Benetwood Apartments, the mercy Center on Aging, the Inner-City Neighborhood Art House, or the Sisters of St. Joseph Neighborhood Network, Mercy Terrace, Emmaus

Ministries, the House of Mercy, Erie Dawn, Young People Who Care, and the Bethany Adult Retreat Center, all stand as a legacy to those generous women who gave their lives in service to this diocese. Rural ministry centers in Oil City, Port Allegany, and DuBois still involve Sisters in the lives of many people in those vicinities. Prince of Peace Center in Ferrell grew under the direction of religious women and continues to serve people in the Sharon area. I join you in praising God for their faithful and generous service to the Church, in the past, present and into the future.

I understand that you are asked to support many worthy causes. I invite you only to give what you can. Most importantly, please pray for an increase of vocations to the consecrated life and for God's continued blessing on all our women and men religious. Know you remain in their prayers. Please join me in supporting the **Retirement Fund for Religious**.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

+Lawrence T. Persico

The Most Reverend Lawrence T. Persico, JCL
Bishop of Erie



OREMUS: A Catholic Study on Prayer

We know we should pray. We want to pray. But often we don't know how to start or where to go. Our prayer is empty. Distractions and life's demands pull us away from prayer. So, we pray half-heartedly, sporadically, tiredly. Oremus is a eight-week study for those who want to pray better, both those who are not sure they know how to pray and those who have been praying for many years and want to deepen or enrich that life of prayer. Learn new ways to pray, how to hear God when you pray, how to handle times of struggle in prayer and more.

This is an 8-week program

Each week will include a video presentation and facilitated conversation on one aspect of prayer. A workbook is available for \$15, but it is not necessary to purchase the workbook to participate.

When: Sunday morning @ 9:45-10:45

Sunday, Jan. 6–Mar. 2
Conference Room

There is no need to commit to every week.

Coffee and sweets provided. All welcome!

No cost except if you want a workbook. Contact Irene at 899-6132 by Dec. 16 if you want the \$15 workbook ordered for the first class.



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