



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



HIGHLIGHTS OF OUR LITURGIES AND EVENTS

We keep Lent together as one parish family.
We put aside our business-as-usual to support each other
In prayer, fasting and almsgiving.
We turn to God to enlighten us and purify us
throughout the lengthening brightness of this holy season.

February 2019

ASH WEDNESDAY

Wednesday, March 6
8:30 a.m. & 7:00 p.m.
Mass with Distribution of Ashes

LENTEN PASTUS

Wednesdays of Lent
March 13, 27; April 3
5:30 p.m.—Mass
6:10 p.m.—Soup Supper
7:00 p.m.—Presentation

ANOINTING OF THE SICK

Saturday/Sunday, March 16,17
at all weekend Masses

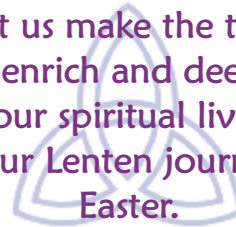
PARISH MISSION

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday
March 18, 19, 20
7:00 p.m.

COMMUNAL RECONCILIATION SERVICE

Wednesday, April 10
7:00 p.m.

Let us make the time
to enrich and deepen
our spiritual lives
on our Lenten journey to
Easter.



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The season of Lent begins this year on Ash Wednesday, March 6, 2019 and concludes when the Paschal Triduum of the Passion, Death, and Resurrection of the Lord begins at the start of the evening Mass of the Lord's Supper on Holy Thursday evening, April 18, 2019.

The following regulations are promulgated and binding for all Latin Rite Catholics in the Diocese of Erie for Lent and the Paschal Triduum, 2019.

1. Traditional Lenten practices of PRAYER, FASTING, and ALMSGIVING and other forms of self-denial are recommended most warmly by the Church. Daily Mass is particularly encouraged.
2. ASH WEDNESDAY, ALL FRIDAYS IN LENT, and GOOD FRIDAY are days of abstinence from meat for those 14 years of age and older.
3. ASH WEDNESDAY AND GOOD FRIDAY are also days of fasting for those ages 18 to 58 inclusive. *On these days, those bound by the law of fasting may take one full meal. Two smaller meals, sufficient to maintain strength according to one's needs, are also permitted. Eating between meals is not permitted, but liquids including milk and fruit juices are allowed. When health or work is seriously affected, the law does not oblige.*

GIVE † PRAY † FAST



HOLY WEEK



SCHEDULE

PARISH SEDER MEAL

Monday, April 15 — 7:00 p.m.

PILGRIMAGE THROUGH THE SYMBOLS OF HOLY WEEK

Wednesday April 17 — 7:00 p.m.

HOLY THURSDAY LITURGY

Thursday, April 18 — 7:00 p.m.

GOOD FRIDAY SERVICE

Friday, April 19 — 3:00 p.m.

Outdoor Stations will be at 1:00 p.m.

BLESSING OF FOOD

Saturday, April 20 — 11:30 a.m.

EASTER VIGIL

Saturday, April 20 — 9:00 p.m.

EASTER LITURGIES

Sunday, April 21 — 8:30 a.m. & 11:00 a.m.

CELEBRATIONS OF HEALING 2019

We know from the scriptures that Jesus spent the greatest amount of his time healing both spiritually and physically. Since we spend most of our time on those things which are most important to us, 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.



This value of Jesus that deals with physical healing is called the *Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick*. As a community we celebrate this sacrament at all Masses on the weekend of March 16th and 17th.

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.



Lent is a beautiful season to celebrate the **SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION**

The prayers and practices of this season help us call to mind our sins and God's forgiveness.

As we grow in awareness of our faults, we can bring them to God in a spirit of repentance, open to growth in grace, awaiting the full expression of mercy and love.

Communal celebrations of the sacrament of reconciliation remind us that continued conversion is a journey we make together as the Body of Christ.

We will gather as a local faith community on the following days:

Sunday, April 7	3:00 p.m.	at St. Mark
Tuesday, April 9	7:00 p.m.	at Saint James in Wesleyville
Wednesday, April 10	7:00 p.m.	at Our Lady of Mercy in Harborcreek

Parish Mission 2019

An Intimate Encounter With The Trinity

Fr. Michael DeMartinis

Mark Your Calendar

Monday, March 18-Wednesday, March 20
7:00-8:00 PM

At the heart of all existence, at the heart of each human story, is the Mystery of the Holy Trinity. The Trinity is a community of Divine Love so intimate that there is only one God, a Divine Love so expansive, it draws us into the Divine embrace. In this 3 day parish mission, Fr. Michael DeMartinis will invite participants to a renewed and deepened awareness and experience of the enfolding and empowering love of the Trinity.

Monday: Good, Good God

God loves us with a relentless love. During this first night of the mission, Fr. DeMartinis will help us to look at God in new ways.

Tuesday: A Savior's Job Is To Save

We call Jesus "Savior", but do we understand what we are saying? On the second night of the mission, Fr. DeMartinis will invite us to a fuller appreciation of Jesus, our Savior, and to discover what makes Christianity unique among world religions.

Wednesday: Abundant Life Now

The Holy Spirit, the Font of Life, dwells in us through our Baptism. Because of this gift, the eternal life we long for is already unfolding with in us. On the final night of the mission, Fr. DeMartinis will encourage us to rejoice for we already know the end of the story and we win!

Fr. Michael DeMartinis is a priest of the Diocese of Erie. He was raised in Hermitage where he attended Notre Dame Parish. He was ordained in April 1997. He has served in a number of parishes around the diocese including Our Lady of Peace, Blessed Sacrament, St. Joseph, St. Andrew and Mount Calvary, as well as ministering as faculty member and campus minister at Cathedral Prep and Villa Maria High Schools.

Lenten Pastus Speaker Series



Wednesday evenings during Lent have become an important part of the observation of Lent at Our Lady of Mercy. Our traditional Pastus series feeds the spirit, the body and the head as we pray, eat and learn together. This year, our Pastus series will focus on the call to justice.

March 6 7:00 PM Ash Wednesday Mass

Let us begin this holy season of preparation and conversion joined together around the Eucharistic table and the Word of God.

March 13 “Sent to Give Sight to the Blind”, Dr. Douglas Vilella 5:30 PM Mass, 6:10 PM Soup Supper, 7:00 PM Program

For more than 2 decades, Dr. Vilella has been traveling to Central America to provide free eye care to some of the world’s poorest patients. With hospitals in Guatemala, Mexico, Haiti, Nicaragua and Peru, Vision For the Poor treats around 300,000 patients each year. Operated and staffed by indigenous doctors, the 8 hospitals run by this organization are largely self-supporting for operating costs.

Dr. Douglas Vilella has been the Executive Director of Vision for the Poor since 1995. In addition to serving as staff eye doctor for Community Health Net and Health South Rehab, he has been in private practice with Bayfront Eyecare since 1987. Born in Punxsutawney, he graduated from St. Bonaventure Univ and Pennsylvania College of Optometry. He served as captain in the U.S. Army before moving to Erie.

March 18-20 7:00 PM Parish Mission

“An Intimate Encounter with the Trinity”, Fr. Michael DeMartinis

March 27 “Immigration, Refugees, and the Catholic Church: A Dialogue”, Fr. Shane Mathew 5:30 PM Mass, 6:10 PM Soup Supper, 7:00 PM Program

From DACA to border walls, from the fear of terrorists to the images of children separated from parents, from government shut-downs in the U.S. to riots in Europe, immigration has captured headlines. We may know what Democrats and Republicans, President Trump and Chancellor Merkel have to say about this important social issue, but do we know what our faith has to say? Fr. Shane Mathew will help us to see this current crisis in light of the Gospel and Catholic Social Teaching.

Father Shane Mathew is a professor of theology at Gannon University and weekend assistant at Our Lady of Peace Church. He was born and raised in Erie and was ordained a priest in 2005.

April 3 “Care for the Environment: A Call to Humility and Transformation”, Ann McCarthy, O.S.B. 5:30 PM Mass, 6:10 PM Soup Supper, 7:00 PM Program

In *Laudato Si!: Care for Our Common Home*, Pope Francis calls the Church and the world to acknowledge the urgency of our environmental challenges and to join him in embarking on a new path. The crisis demands that we reevaluate and shift our attitudes, beliefs and behaviors. A fresh look at ancient Christian wisdom offers insights for deep transformation and for living a new relationship with the planet as individuals and communities.

Anne McCarthy, OSB, member of Mount St. Benedict Monastery, Erie, PA, coordinates Benedictines for Peace in Erie and is on staff with Benetvision and Monasteries of the Heart. She holds an MA in Theology from St. John’s University, Collegeville with a concentration in monastic studies.

April 10 7:00 PM Parish Penance Service

April 17 7:00 PM A Holy Pilgrimage Through Holy Week

Pack your bag. Leave your cell phone and day planner behind. Come and join us for a pilgrimage through Holy Week.

Catholic Services Appeal 2019

2019 Catholic Services Appeal

The theme for Our Catholic Services Appeal for 2019 is Appeal is **“Forward Together, with Truth, With Hope, With Christ.”**

As an individual parish, we are called upon to ensure continued excellence in the works of religion, education and charity throughout our diocesan church community. Many of these needs are beyond the scope and resources of any individual or parish. The CSA makes this important work possible. Only through our support can we meet the needs of our brothers and sisters in the 13 counties of the Diocese.

Our Catholic Services Appeal Assessment for 2019 is **\$66,459.00**. In our Parish, we rely on the funds collected above this amount to work on repairs on roofs, heating units, boilers, furnaces, parking lot, gas wells, along with things that show up everyday.

Please be assured that funding from the annual CSA is strictly designated for spending on the ministries and services coordinated through diocesan offices. No funds donated to the CSA have been or will be used to defray expenses related to the sexual abuse scandal.

I encourage you to support the Catholic Services Appeal. Because of you, we will move forward together, with truth, with hope, with Christ to help our brothers and sisters.

Thank you,
Fr. Ritchie

LOOKING FOR WAYS TO LOWER YOUR TAXABLE INCOME?

If you are age 70-1/2 or older IRS rules require you to take a required minimum distribution (RMD) from your tax deferred retirement account.

To reduce the impact of RMD income investors may want to consider making a “Qualified Charitable Distribution” (QCD).

A QCD is a direct transfer of funds from an IRA custodian, payable to a qualified charity. (OLM qualifies). Contributions can be excluded from your taxable income, thus reducing your tax bill.

You could consider OLM.....



For further information or questions call Tom Palisin at 899-9268 or 572-5437.





KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS®

KNIGHTLY NEWS

C.O.A.L. SWEEPSTAKES

There were no OLM winners this year. However, our youth won since the proceeds were used to pay for Bibles for those who have just begun Confirmation classes. We thank all who Supported this fundraiser this year and in the past.

CHRISTMAS GIFTS FOR FAMILIES

The Knights purchased and gave *Keep Christ in Christmas* refrigerator magnets to parishioners and visitors during Advent.

KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS OLM SCHOLARSHIPS

Scholarships, as in the past, will be offered to graduating high school seniors of our parish. A portion of the proceeds from the upcoming Golf and Sports Raffle will be earmarked for them. The process earlier will begin in a couple months. Watch the bulletin for details.

26th ANNUAL GOLF & SPORTS RAFFLE

Planning has begun for this event which is in its 26th consecutive year. It will be bigger and better than ever - thanks to all the Knights, Ladies of the Knights, parishioners and friends who so generously offer their help and support.

BINGO/PIZZA NIGHTS V.A. MEDICAL CENTER

Once per quarter, a group of Knights go to the V.A. and

provide and evening for the veterans. Social time after bingo is always rewarding. Come join us if you can. We recently had one in January and the next will be in April.

MENS NIGHT OUT

These events have become something to which many look forward and do not miss. During the past year we have had excellent, well-known speakers such as PA Representative Glenn Thompson, Gannon basketball coach John Reilly and most recently Judge John Trucilla. Each shared how their faith has played a prominent part in their personal and professional life. They were as impressed with our parish as we were with them. Please attend the next one; you will not be disappointed. The bus trip to an Indian's game will be here before you know it.

PRO-LIFE MARCH

Members of our parish recently returned from the Pro-Life March in Washington DC. Last year they visited Representative Glenn Thompson. Through that visit, he came to speak here. Who knows what they have arranged this year? Guess we'll find out when we get their trip report.

NEW KNIGHTS

During the past few months, there has been an increase in membership as several gentlemen have become Knights.

Building and Grounds Committee



GAS WELL DRYERS

We recently completed installation of gas dryers on the two locations where gas enters the building from our wells. Problems with the boiler in the Sperry Hall kitchen storage area that was causing soot due to incomplete burning necessitated the dryers. You may have noticed the small enclosures at the north east corner of the gym and behind the garage that house the dryers.

FOOD PANTRY RENOVATION

With the help of the Building & Grounds committee crew headed by John Madigan the inside of the Food Pantry was completely renovated with new racks and carpeting installed. This renovation along with the installation of the walk in freezer and enclosure last year now complete this project. Funds for this major project came from the many donations to the food pantry fund in recent years.



During Lent, we are called to penance, service and prayer. Operation Rice Bowl, sponsored by Catholic Relief Services, is an excellent tool to help families embrace the spirit of Lent. As is the tradition at Our Lady of Mercy, religious education families and the entire parish community are invited to participate in Operation Rice Bowl.

Operation Rice Bowl is a project sponsored by Catholic Relief Services. CRS is a Catholic developmental organization assisting the poorest and most desperate of our brothers and sisters around the world. Through Operation Rice Bowl, we are given an opportunity to share our abundant blessings with those in need.

Rice Bowl cardboard banks and family calendars will be distributed to all of the children enrolled in our Rel. Ed. Program the first week of Lent. Additional Rice Bowls and calendars are available for families not connected with religious education.

The calendars offer excellent suggestions for keeping the needs of others before us during Lent. Information on the causes of hunger and poverty in various regions of the globe are given in a way that is easy for all to understand.

As we give up luxuries such as chocolate or eat a simple meal once a week, we are invited to place the money we save into the Rice Bowl bank. In this way, our acts of self-sacrifice are not tests of our self-will, but opportunities to help others. The money in each bank is turned in to the Rel. Ed. Office during the Easter season. From there, it is mailed to Catholic Relief Services to help the hungry and homeless, those without access to education or medical care around the world.



Cursillo Corner



Cursillo is alive and well and looking forward to a busy 2019.

The Cursillo weekends will start his year with Women's Cursillo #254. It will take place March 14 through 17. Please look around your busy lives for possible candidates and keep the team in your prayers.

April is off due to Easter! Men's Cursillo #248 will be May 16 through 19. Our Lady of Mercy's own Nick Heise will be Rector of the weekend. Please come out and support Nick and his team with lots of candidates and prayers. A little known fact...Nick also serves as the current Sunday Coordinator for Cursillo.

We are still looking for a Parish Coordinator couple or G.R. to sign on for Our Lady of Mercy. Please contact Tim or Norma Lynch if you can help fill this position, 814-899-2681.

De Colores,
Timothy Lynch
Cursillo President

Celebrating A Growing Relationship with Our Sister Parish

While we are working to have a fun-filled evening in support of our sister parish on March 2nd, it is a good time to update you on recent sister parish activities. Yes, there is a lot of buzz and growing excitement around the upcoming Mardi Gras celebration. Even more exciting is all the recent activity and our growing relationship with our sister parish, Our Lady of the Assumption in Peto, Mexico.

Our Lady of the Assumption has been working diligently to revamp their nun's chapel and have successfully completed the project. We can all feel a part of this success because of our donation to support the effort.

The Virgin of the Star statue given to us by Our Lady of the Assumption last year has found a home in Mary's Chapel. As those who frequent the chapel know, we change her attire often to match the liturgical seasons. We, in kind, hired an artist to render a picture of Our Lady of Mercy to give to Our Lady of the Assumption and are happy to announce that it is complete.



Father Jorge Oscar Herrera Vargas, their pastor, recently wrote to share that they had a beautiful Christmas season and patronal feast day for the Virgin of Peto. He specifically mentioned that they pray for us (as we hold them in our prayers). And, their next building project will be for their Christianity House for spiritual retreats. This house is in use now but from pictures below you can see that it is in need of renovation.

Gift for Our Lady of the Assumption



Pictures of the Christianity House

Finally, we are in the planning stages for a mission trip to Peto, Mexico this fall. Although details are not finalized, the Dresses for Missions ministry will provide dresses and more for the sister parishes in Peto. We are looking forward to this opportunity to strengthen our relationship with our brothers and sister in Christ!



Healing the Hurt

Within our faith journeys, we may struggle from time to time with our image of God, with our faith, or with the institutional church. Perhaps there was an experience or an exchange of words that stimulated the struggle, which became a hurt and fostered anger, despair or discouragement. If you or someone you know is struggling with their faith or spirituality and would like to talk in confidence, call 814-303-9282. This is a google voice number set up to receive calls outside of our regular church channels. Donna Clark is the person receiving these private calls.

New Members!

If you live near these new parishioners please send a card or stop in to say hello.

Catherine Altieri
7723 E. Lake Rd.
Erie PA 16511

Kerri Hunt—Kayden
6659 East Lake Rd
Erie PA 16511

Dan Ott
3903 Main Street
Erie PA 16511

Lee & Erin Eighmy—Eoin,
Lachlan
5361 Glacier Dr.
Erie PA 16510

Courtney Johnson—Addilyn
4817 S. Eaglewood Dr.
Erie PA 16511

Patricia Rowicki
641 Troupe Road
Harborcreek PA 16421

Timothy & Stephanie Gwinn
64 E. Division St.
North East PA 16428

Ines Massella
7400 East Lake Road #205
Erie PA 16511

Ronald & Berdena Schwartz
2930 Depot Rd.
Harborcreek PA 16421



OLM Sister Parish Mardi Gras Celebration

Join us for a night of fun to help benefit our sister parish in Peto, Mexico.

When: Saturday, March 2, 2019 – 7:00PM-10:00PM

Where: Our Lady of Mercy Sperry Hall – Bartlett Road, Erie, PA

How Much: \$10 Admission Ticket

Admission will include Taco Dinner, Beer, Wine, Pop and entertainment including:

- *Murder Mystery - Prize Drawing*
- *Homemade Brew and Wine Contest - Cash Prize*
- *Tip Boards*
- *Reverse Raffle - Grand Prize \$500.00*
 - Admission ticket gives you one chance at the reverse raffle. Attendance not needed to win.



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, March 24 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 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.