

OUR LADY OF MERCY PARISH

Father Anthony Hewitt, JCL, Pastor

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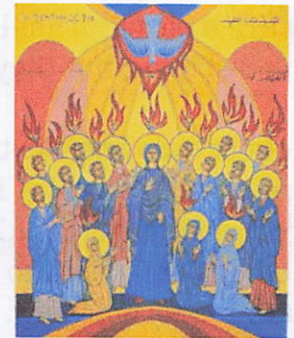
Mass Schedule:

Saturday	5:00 pm
Sunday	9:00 & 10:30 am
Mon-Fri	8:00 am
First Saturday Anointing	After 5:00 pm vigil
Sacrament of Penance	By appointment
Parish website address:	ourladyofmercy.church
Online Giving:	ourladyofmercy.church
Father Anthony email:	anthony.hewitt@olomcc.org
Office Hours: Monday – Friday	8:00am-4:00 pm

SOLEMNITY OF PENTECOST SUNDAY MAY 24, 2026

Gospel of John Reflection

Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you." And when he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. Whose sins you forgive are forgiven them, and whose sins you retain are retained." John 20:21-23



Today we celebrate the Solemnity of Pentecost, which took place fifty days after Jesus rose from the dead. Today's Gospel recounts Jesus' first appearance to the Apostles as a group—Thomas being absent—on the evening of the Resurrection. During this appearance, Jesus conferred on them the authority to forgive sins, a power foundational to the Sacrament of Reconciliation. This gift anticipates the fuller outpouring of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, when the Apostles were empowered to carry out their mission with boldness and divine strength.

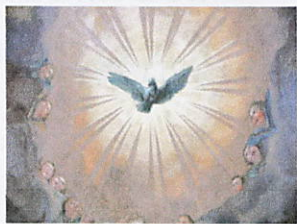
By breathing on the Apostles, Jesus recalls the creation account in Genesis, when God breathed life into Adam (Genesis 2:7). Now Christ, the New Adam, breathes new life—the divine life of grace—into His Apostles. While this breathing conveys the Holy Spirit in an anticipatory manner, Pentecost represents the full bestowal of the Spirit upon the Church, sanctifying and empowering the Apostles and all disciples.

Our knowledge of Pentecost comes to us from the Acts of the Apostles, Luke's continuation of his Gospel in which he details the beginning of the Church: "And suddenly there came from the sky a noise like a strong driving wind, and it filled the entire house in which they were. Then there appeared to them tongues as of fire, which parted and came to rest on each one of them" (Acts 2:2-3).

When the Holy Spirit came upon the Apostles at Pentecost, there were physical manifestations. God often accompanies significant biblical actions with visible signs to reveal the invisible reality of His presence and activity. Though the transforming reality of Pentecost was the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, the accompanying signs teach us about the Spirit's nature and work.

The "strong driving wind" that "filled the entire house" symbolizes the ongoing, life-giving

presence of the Holy Spirit. Like the wind, the Spirit is unseen yet powerful, moving where He wills and producing visible effects in the lives of believers. Though we understand the natural causes of wind today, its mystery and uncontrollable nature remain, reflecting the Holy Spirit's divine origin and unstoppable work in the world. He comes from God's hidden presence, unseen but active, bringing about a new creation in the Church and in every soul He touches. The "tongues as of fire" signify the Spirit's purifying and transforming action, burning away sin and igniting hearts with zeal for God's mission. Together, these signs reveal the Spirit as the powerful, life-giving, and sanctifying presence of God, animating the Church and guiding her to proclaim the Gospel to the ends of the earth.



Before Pentecost, the disciples hid in the Upper Room, fearful and uncertain. Though Jesus had taught them, performed miracles, and revealed His perfect love, their hearts were not yet fully transformed. At Pentecost, the Holy Spirit came as a divine fire, emboldening them to become fearless witnesses. When we receive the Sacrament of Confirmation, we receive the same gift bestowed upon the disciples at Pentecost. We might not feel a strong driving wind or see tongues of fire descend from Heaven, but the reality is the same. The signs at Pentecost were not only for the disciples, but they were also for us, revealing the Holy Spirit's workings and power in our lives.

Reflect today on the transforming power of the Holy Spirit. Have we experienced the Spirit's presence in our life? Like the first disciples, have we allowed the Holy Spirit to fill us with power from on high, emboldening us, purifying us, and setting us on fire with zeal to fulfill the mission God has entrusted to us? The Holy Spirit will transform us—if we let Him—setting our feet on the path to eternal glory. Amen.

Our Lady of Mercy Catholic Faith Appeal 2026

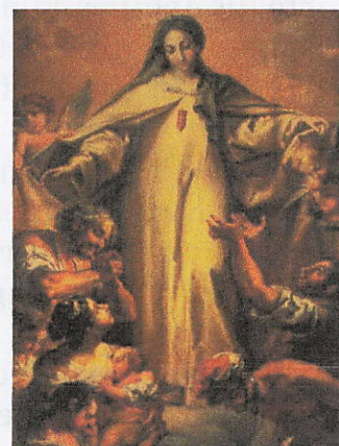
Parish assessment this year is \$144,000 (\$73,875.00 collected as of May 18) Envelopes are available at the front of the church. Please make checks payable to the *Catholic Faith Appeal* and *in the memo write Our Lady of Mercy Parish* so that we receive proper credit for your donation. Every dollar given to the CFA helps us reach our goal. May God continue to bless our generous parish. Fr. Anthony. We are hopeful that 100% of our Parish community will respond to the 2026 Catholic Faith Appeal to successfully meet and perhaps exceed our goal. Please prayerfully consider giving to the Annual Catholic Faith Appeal 2026, with a pledge or one-time gift. Thank you all for your time, talent, and treasure!



How to use a QR Code to Donate:

1. Open your smartphone camera and hover over the QR Code.
2. Click the pop up on your smartphone to open the giving webpage.

Safe Environment Training (SET) - As part of the Safe Environment Program, the Diocese of Venice Requires that all employees and those volunteers who work with children and/or vulnerable adults be fingerprinted and complete online training in SET prior to beginning employment or volunteering. Please visit the Diocese of Venice website. To report any abuse against minors to the Florida Department of Children and Families please call 800-962-2873. Further, if Diocesan personnel or volunteers are involved, notify the Diocesan Victims Assistance Coordinator, Susan Benton, at 941-416-6114.



Our Lady of Mercy, Pray for Us!