



# **OUR LADY OF MERCY PARISH**

## **Boca Grande, Florida**

Father Anthony Hewitt, Pastor

Mailing Address:

P.O. Box 181, Boca Grande, Florida 33921

(941) 964 - 2254

Mass Schedule:

Daily (except Saturday)

8:00 A.M.

Saturday Vigil

5:00 P.M.

Sunday

9:00 & 10:30 A.M.

Confessions: Saturday

By Appointment

Web address:

[ourladyofmercy.church](http://ourladyofmercy.church)

OnlineGiving

<https://dioceseofvenice.org/ways-to-give/parish->

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**TWENTY-FIRST SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME**

**AUGUST 27, 2023**

### **SPECIAL COLLECTION – FIRES IN MAUI**

(Letter from Bishop Dewane)

In recent days, the nation has watched as a terrible and devastating fire struck the Hawaiian island of Maui. Though the full extent of the impact is not yet known, over 110 people have died and there is extensive destruction, especially in the community of Lahaina.

Throughout Southwest Florida, there is an understanding of the dangers of natural disasters, and many can remember the destruction in our local communities from Hurricane Ian, less than a year ago. A great deal of help was needed, and the goodness of others was clearly evidenced.

Our Catholic Faith calls each of us to care for those in need, and at this time in particular, for those who are suffering in the wake of this terrible fire on Maui. Recognizing the need of those who have been so severely impacted by the fire, a second collection will be held in Parishes of the Diocese of Venice on the weekend of August 26-27. Funds collected will be sent to Catholic Charities in the Diocese of Honolulu to help address the significant need.

Your generosity and your prayers for the people of Maui are deeply appreciated. May Almighty God bless you and your families.

### **MEMORIAL OF THE MARTYRDOM OF JOHN THE BAPTIST – AUGUST 29**

The drunken oath of a king with a shallow sense of honor, a seductive dance and the hateful heart of a queen combined to bring about the martyrdom of John the Baptist. The greatest of prophets suffered the fate of so many Old Testament prophets before him: rejection and martyrdom. The “voice crying in the desert” did not hesitate to accuse the guilty, did not hesitate to speak the truth. But why? What possesses a man that he would give up his very life? This great religious reformer was sent by God to prepare the people for the Messiah. His vocation was one of selfless giving. The only power that he claimed was the Spirit of Yahweh. “I am baptizing you with water, for repentance, but the one who is coming after me is mightier than I. I am not worthy to carry his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire” (Matthew 3:11).

Scripture tells us that many people followed John looking to him for hope, perhaps in anticipation of some great messianic power. John never allowed himself the false honor of receiving these people for his own glory.

He knew his calling was one of preparation. When the time came, he led his disciples to Jesus: “The next day John was there again with two of his disciples, and as he watched Jesus walk by, he said, ‘Behold, the Lamb of God.’ The two disciples heard what he said and followed Jesus” (John 1:35-37). It is John the Baptist who has pointed the way to Christ. John’s life and death were a giving over of self for God and other people. His simple style of life was one of complete detachment from earthly possessions. His heart was centered on God and the call that he heard from the Spirit of God speaking to his heart. Confident of God’s grace, he had the courage to speak words of condemnation, repentance, and salvation.

### **TOGETHER IN HOLINESS MARRIAGE CONFERENCE**

Married and engaged couples are invited to the third annual ***Together in Holiness*** marriage conference on **October 21, 2023, from 9:00 am - 4:00 pm at St. John XXIII Catholic Church in Fort Myers**. This one-day conference will help you strengthen your relationship with your spouse and discover God’s plan for your family. Registration: \$64/couple and \$5/child for on-site childcare. An Early Bird discount is available through August 28 as well as scholarships upon request. This conference is presented by the St. John Paul II Foundation and the Diocese of Venice. For more info, visit [togetherinholiness.org](http://togetherinholiness.org) or email [ellen@forlifeandfamily.org](mailto:ellen@forlifeandfamily.org).

### **PRAYER FOR SAFETY IN HURRICANE SEASON**

O God, Master of this passing world,  
hear the humble voices of your children.  
The Sea of Galilee obeyed Your order  
and returned to its former quietude.

You are still the Master of land and sea.  
We live in the shadow of a danger  
over which we have no control:  
the Gulf, like a provoked and angry giant,  
can awake from its seeming lethargy, overstep  
its conventional boundaries, invade our land,  
and spread chaos and disaster.

During this hurricane season we turn to You,  
O loving Father. Spare us from past tragedies  
whose memories are still so vivid  
and whose wounds seem to refuse to heal with

passing of time.

O Virgin, Star of the Sea, Our beloved Mother  
we ask you to plead with your Son on our  
behalf,  
so that spared from the calamities common to  
this area  
and animated with a true spirit of gratitude,  
we will walk in the footsteps of your Divine Son  
to reach the heavenly Jerusalem, where a  
stormless eternity awaits us. Amen.

[Composed by Most Rev. Maurice Schexnayder  
(1895-1981).

Second Bishop of Lafayette (1956-1973),  
following Hurricane Audrey in 1957