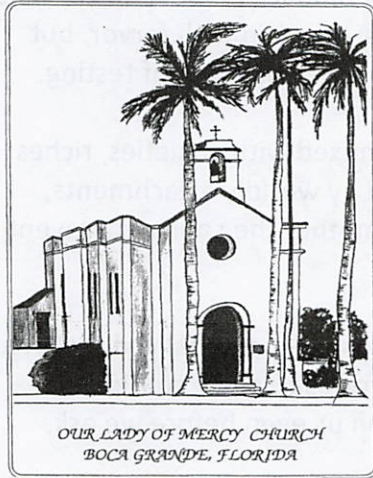




OUR LADY OF MERCY PARISH

Father Anthony Hewitt, JCL, Pastor

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 181, Boca Grande, Florida 33921

(941) 964 - 2254

Mass Schedule:

Saturday:

5:00 pm

Sunday:

9:00 & 10:30 am

Mon-Friday:

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

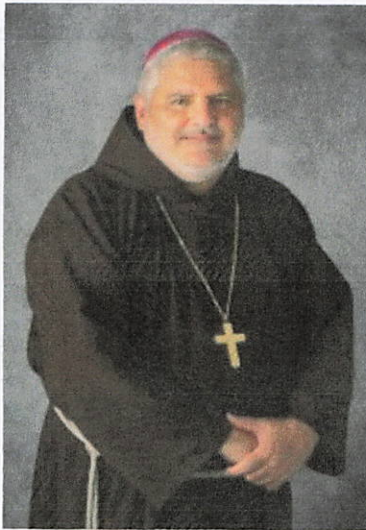
Office Hours, Monday – Friday:

8:00am-4:00 pm

Business Manager Erin Sifrit:

erin.sifrit@olomcc.org

FIFTEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME, JULY 12, 2026



Saturday, July 11, 2026, the faithful of the Diocese of Venice is filled with an abundance of joy as we welcomed our newly ordained third bishop, Bishop Emilio Biosca, OFM Cap. The ordination was a magnificent experience. The church was filled with Cardinals, Archbishops, Bishops, Priests, Deacons, Religious Sisters and Brothers, Seminarians, and the lay faithful from all over the world. To have a new bishop means we have a new shepherd leading us in our growing diocese. May God continue to bless the Diocese of Venice and all who worship here. Fr. Anthony.

Gospel of Matthew Reflection

"A sower went out to sow. And as he sowed, some seed fell on the path, and birds came and ate it up..." Matthew 13:3-4

In today's Gospel, the Parable of the Sower is delivered from a boat, as Jesus addresses a large crowd along the shoreline. Jesus uses the natural acoustics of the water to carry His voice to the eager multitude who came to hear Him. Their earnestness offers us an opportunity for self-examination: Am I among that crowd, attentively listening as God speaks to me today? Do I go out of my way to seek, listen, and respond to the Word of God?

A parable is a method that both reveals and conceals. It reveals divine truth to those who are humble and receptive and conceals that same truth from those whose hearts are closed. The truths of the Kingdom are not concepts that can be quickly grasped. They are divine mysteries that must enter the soul and be pondered and nourished. Only the spiritually docile can penetrate their depths and allow God's Word to transform their lives.

The Sower is Christ. The seed is the Word of God, and the soil represents the human heart, in all its various conditions of readiness and receptivity. Some souls await God's Word like freshly tilled, moist, and fertilized soil. As soon as the seed enters, it begins to grow rapidly—until fully grown and producing good fruit.

Other souls are less receptive. Like the path, some hearts are hardened, stubborn, refusing to receive divine truth. The Word is heard but not truly received. The enemy snatches it away before it can penetrate.

Hearts that are like rocky ground are those who initially receive the Word with joy but lack perseverance. When trials come, they fall away. They may attend Mass, read Scripture, or begin with fervor, but without deep interior conversion rooted in prayer, they cannot endure the heat of testing.



The thorny heart is the divided heart, where the Word of God is mixed with anxieties, riches, and pleasures. The Gospel is heard—perhaps even cherished—but it is suffocated by worldly attachments, ambition, or fear. Earthly anxieties and the fascination of riches are thorns that smother the soul and prevent it from growing.

The good news is that God, the Divine Sower, is not passive. He sows the seed Himself—personally, directly, and abundantly. He is not like a remote monarch seated on a distant throne, waiting for us to come to Him. No—God always takes the initiative. He goes forth like the Sower, casting His seed upon us even before we ask.

The seed comes to us in two essential ways: truth and grace. As truth, God's Word enlightens the intellect to know His eternal mysteries. As grace, God's Word strengthens the will to embrace and live those truths with faith and charity.

The Divine Sower sows lavishly. He casts the seed everywhere—on the path, among the rocks, amidst thorns, and upon rich earth. This is not careless, but the work of Divine Mercy. God desires that all be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth. Even where the ground seems hardened, shallow, or choked with thorns, He still sows. He never ceases to speak, to reach out, to invite. He sows even in places we might deem hopeless—until the final moment, when the time for sowing is ended.

Reflect today on God's generous and continuous sowing in our soul. He never ceases speaking to us, calling to us, and planting His Word within us. How receptive are we? Which soil best describes our soul? It's never too late to respond in this life. God's Word can grow rapidly within us when our souls are fertile and receptive. Remove the rocks, cut down the thorns, and till the hardened path, so that the abundant seed will make its way into our heart. Amen.

Second Collection July 18 and 19 is for Solidarity Fund for the Church in Africa.

Our Lady of Mercy Catholic Faith Appeal 2026

Parish assessment this year is \$144,000 (\$91,200.00 collected as of July 6) 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. 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.



Pope's July prayer intention: 'for respect for human life'. May we proclaim, in words and actions," he said, "that every human life is worth the total gift of ourselves."

<https://www.vaticannews.va/en/pope/news/2026-07/pope-july-prayer-intention-2026-for-respect-for-human-life-leo.html>

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, Senton, at 941-416-6114.