



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-Fri	8:00 am
First Saturday Anointing	After 5:00 pm vigil
Sacrament of Penance	Call the parish office
Parish website address:	ourladyofmercy.church
Online Giving:	ourladyofmercy.church
Father Anthony email:	anthony.hewitt@olomcc.org

THIRD SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

JANUARY 26, 2025

Hurricanes Helene and Milton damaged our church, therefore,
Daily and Weekend Mass will continue to be celebrated in the **Parish Life Center (PLC)**.

Monday, February 3rd is the Feast of St. Blaise. The blessing of the throats will take place at the 8:00 am Mass.

**Ash Wednesday is March 5th
8:00 am Mass
5:00 pm Mass**

Monday-Friday 8:00 am
Saturday 5:00 pm vigil
Sunday 9:00 and 10:30 am

Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit, and news of him spread throughout the whole region. He taught in their synagogues and was praised by all. Luke 4:14-15

This Gospel passage reveals to us the very beginnings of Jesus' public ministry. He began His public ministry immediately

after spending forty days in the desert being tempted by the devil. As He began, He went to Galilee "in the power of the Spirit." Many people heard about Him and welcomed Him with much enthusiasm.

Though Jesus was initially welcomed with praise, we know that things quickly changed. Some eventually became so hostile that they put Jesus to death, but it's useful to ponder the initial response He received. This initial response is one that must become continuously new in our lives. The initial response was that He "was praised by all."

Jesus would later teach about this initial experience many would have toward the Gospel when He taught the Parable of the Sower. Recall that the seed that was sown on rocky ground, that fell among thorns, and that was sown in good soil all began to grow. Only that which was sown on the path failed to grow, because the birds came and ate it up. This latter case describes those who are completely indifferent to the Gospel. But in today's Gospel, the "all" are those who at least paid attention and initially responded with enthusiasm. The seed began to grow in these three scenarios—but, of course, in only one of those cases did the seed ultimately bear good fruit.

Another way to look at this initial encounter with the Gospel is to consider a child. In almost every case, when a child is presented with the Gospel, they will begin to respond and even find excitement in the faith. But, as many parents have seen, this initial welcome is sometimes followed by a rejection of the Gospel later in life.

When did you initially encounter the Gospel? For some it was during childhood. For others, there was a powerful experience of conversion later in life. Think of that initial encounter you had and the ways that you were excited by your newfound faith. Has that experience continued and grown in your life? Or has your initial praise of God and enthusiasm dwindled or even died?

God wants us to continuously experience the Gospel as something new and transforming. The newness of the life of grace must never wear off. Ponder this experience in your life and try to see yourself as one of the people in today's Gospel who heard Jesus for the first time. Ponder their enthusiasm and join in their praise of our Lord so that you will be motivated to let God, and the preaching of His holy Word continuously transform you, leading to our good Christian actions. Amen.

Catholic Faith Appeal (CFA) 2025 **Our Lady of Mercy Parish Assessment \$123,000**

By keeping our focus on the wholeness of the body of the Church, with Christ as our head, we are invited to take part in the Lord's work by being generous to the Catholic Faith Appeal. Together we can provide the help needed to serve our brothers and sisters throughout the Diocese who desire to live the Gospel of Jesus by offering them ministries and programs that enrich life, strengthen families, and both inspire and educate future generations of our shared faith. In the upcoming weeks we will be talking about our CFA 2025 and how your contribution to this assessment fund helps our parish meet its goal.

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 for further information. 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, also notify the diocesan Victims Assistance Coordinator, Susan Benton, at 941-416-6114.

Anniversary Masses in 2025 - Two Anniversary Masses will be offered in 2025, for married couples celebrating milestone anniversaries (25, 30, 35, 40, 45, 50 and 50 years plus). On February 1, 2025, an Anniversary Mass will be celebrated at St. Leo the Great Parish, 28290 Beaumont Road, Bonita Springs at 11:00 a.m., and on March 8, 2025, at St. Thomas More Parish, 2506 Gulf Gate Drive, Sarasota, also at 11:00 a.m. Both events will include Mass celebrated by Bishop Frank J. Dewane, followed by a reception, and the availability of a photo with Bishop Dewane. Couples must register through their Parish.

Jubilee Year 2025 - The 2025 Jubilee Year, as established by Pope Francis, has begun. Five locations in the Diocese of Venice have been designated as Jubilee pilgrimage sites by Bishop Frank J. Dewane. These pilgrimage sites are Epiphany Cathedral in Venice, St. John XXIII Parish in Fort Myers, St. John the Evangelist Parish in Naples, St. Paul Parish in Arcadia, and Our Lady of Perpetual Health Retreat & Spirituality Center in Venice. These five locations, located in each of the geographical regions (Deaneries) of the Diocese, were selected for the convenience of the faithful, so that they may take advantage of the grace of the Jubilee Year. The public schedule for each of the Diocese of Venice pilgrimage sites will be announced in the coming weeks and shared on the Diocese's website and on social media, with more events and activities to be announced.