



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

By appointment

Parish website address:

ourladyofmercy.church

Online Giving:

ourladyofmercy.church

Father Anthony email:

anthony.hewitt@olomcc.org

Office Hours, Monday – Friday 8:00am-4pm

FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER APRIL 26, 2026



Our Lady of Mercy Catholic Faith Appeal 2026

Parish assessment this year is \$144,000 (\$58,825.00 collected as of April 20)
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



SCAN TO GIVE

Catholic Faith Appeal (CFA) Prayer

O Lord, Giver of Life and Source of Freedom. We know that all we have is received from your hand. Gracious and loving God, you call us to be stewards of your Abundance, the caretakers of all you have entrusted to us. Help us always to use your gifts wisely and teach us to share them generously with those in need. Send the Holy Spirit to work through us, bringing your message to those we serve. May our faithful stewardship be a witness to the love of Jesus Christ in our lives. We pray with grateful hearts in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

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.

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.

Gospel of John Reflection

"When he has driven out all his own, he walks ahead of them, and the sheep follow him, because they recognize his voice. But they will not follow a stranger; they will run away from him, because they do not recognize the voice of strangers." John 10:4-5

Young children are often frightened by strangers. Infants, for example, form a strong bond with their mothers who feed them, hold them close, talk to them, and lavish love upon them. It often happens that when other family members, such as grandparents or even the father, attempt to hold the child, tears emerge until the child is placed once again in the familiar and safe arms of his or her mother.

An infant's reaction to strangers can teach us much about today's Gospel on Jesus, the Good Shepherd. Like an infant, sheep become familiar with the voice and presence of their shepherd. The shepherd lives with the sheep night and day. He calls them, speaks to them, keeps them safe, and leads them to green pastures and water. If a stranger were to call them, they would not listen, like how an infant reacts to a stranger.

Jesus' teaching is in response to the criticism He received from the Pharisees after He healed a man born blind. After healing the man, Jesus said, "I came into this world for judgment, so that those who do not see might see, and those who do see might become blind" ([John 9:39](#)). When the Pharisees heard Jesus say that, they inquired whether He was suggesting that they were blind, to which Jesus replied, "If you were blind, you would have no sin; but now you are saying, 'We see,' so your sin remains" ([John 9:41](#)).



An infant's unfamiliarity with a stranger is instinctive and innocent, yet it teaches us about the deeper spiritual reality Jesus describes. Just as sheep recognize the voice of their shepherd and follow him because they trust in his care, so too does a soul attuned to God respond to His voice. In contrast, the Pharisees, who prided themselves on their religious knowledge, failed to recognize Jesus as the true Shepherd. This failure was not innocent ignorance; it was willful blindness rooted in their rejection of His divine mission. The healed blind man perceived Jesus' voice with the simplicity of faith, while the Pharisees, claiming to 'see' with their own wisdom, remained in sin because they refused to hear and follow the voice of the Good Shepherd.

The Pharisees saw Jesus as a stranger to their religious beliefs and practices. They labeled Him an imposter. Unlike the innocent reaction of an infant or the natural response of sheep, the Pharisees' unfamiliarity with Jesus was a sin stemming from pride. It was a blindness of their own making that closed their hearts to the comforting and supernaturally familiar voice of God. To recognize Jesus' voice is to respond to the call of grace, trust in His teachings, and follow into the fullness of life He offers. Only by humbly admitting our need for His guidance can we, like the sheep, allow Him to lead us to green pastures and salvation.

Reflect today on the fact that God calls out to us day and night. Do we recognize His voice? Or do we, like the Pharisees, turn away from Him? Following the Good Shepherd begins with an intimate familiarity with His divine presence in our lives. We must become as familiar with Him as an infant is with the mother or as sheep are with their faithful shepherd. Failure to recognize the Good Shepherd's voice leaves us lost and unable to care for ourselves. Jesus desires to lead us, care for us, and bring us to the abundant pastures of new life. Become familiar with Him and listen to His voice alone, and like the blind man, we will begin to see in ways we never have before, through the eyes of faith. Amen.

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.

Thank you all for your time, talent, and treasure!