



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

TWENTY-FIRST SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

AUGUST 24, 2025

Gospel of Luke Reflection

Jesus passed through towns and villages, teaching as he went and making his way to Jerusalem. Someone asked him, "Lord, will only a few people be saved?" He answered them, "Strive to enter through the narrow gate, for many, I tell you, will attempt to enter but will not be strong enough." Luke 13:22-24



The context of this passage provides insight into Jesus' mission and His concern for each person. Note that Jesus was traveling toward the large and populous city of Jerusalem. But as He traveled, He passed through "towns and villages" and taught the people as He went. This might seem like a small detail, but it is also a significant one. A city like Jerusalem was large and often had wealthy, influential, and "important" people.

The less-populated towns had borders and often some form of local government. Villages were much smaller rural areas, often made up of poorer, less educated, less influential, and simpler people. One historian, Josephus, wrote that there were about 240 villages throughout Galilee at the time Jesus lived. It's interesting to note that Jesus wanted to teach everyone. He didn't care if they were wealthy and powerful people in the large city or peasant farmers and shepherds from the countryside. His mission was to all. One thing this teaches us is that we also must have love and concern for everyone, regardless of their social status. Each person is equal in dignity. From the president of a large country to the beggar in an alleyway, everyone deserves our respect and attention in an equal way.

Our fallen human nature experiences various forms of temptation. Among them are temptations for riches, power and prestige. For that reason, we tend to admire those who have obtained worldly success because we want it for ourselves. As a result, we tend to show greater respect for those who have achieved what we covet and give less attention to those who do not have that success. This, of course, goes to the heart of the problem.

When we think about the people whom we have encountered recently, what comes to mind? Perhaps our "encounter" was to read about someone's great success in the financial world. Or perhaps it was to read about someone's demise in another way. Perhaps a neighbor has done well and purchased a new car, or a friend got fired from a job. Whatever the case may be, it is important

to consider the level of personal respect and love we show for each person. It must be equal. World status cannot determine how we treat others. This is hard to avoid.

The teaching that Jesus gave to those in the towns and villages was an exhortation to holiness. "Strive to enter through the narrow gate, for many, I tell you, will attempt to enter but will not be strong enough." And at the end of today's Gospel, Jesus says, "For behold, some are last who will be first, and some are first who will be last." The latter statement must have especially resonated with those who felt somewhat insignificant and unimportant in life. Those who felt like they were "last" would have received a certain hope. This tells us that God never measures us by our successes from a worldly standpoint. He measures us only on the level of our fidelity to His holy will.

Reflect, today, upon how we look at all people. Do we see every person in the way that God sees them? Do we see everyone with equal dignity and worth? Or do we elevate those whom we envy and whose success we covet? Seek to eliminate all worldly ways of looking at others so that we will only look at others through the lens of their dignity and fidelity to the will of God. Amen.

O.C.I.A.



Have you ever wanted to become a baptized Catholic? Missing the Sacraments of Confirmation or First Communion and you are an adult over the age of 18 then the Order of Christian Initiation of Adults is the parish program for you. Father Anthony will be instructing the catechumens (non-baptized) and candidates (baptized) this year leading up to the Easter Vigil Mass on Saturday April 4, 2026, when the Sacraments of Initiation will be supplied. If you are interested in this, please email Father Anthony at Anthony.hewitt@olomcc.org and he will send you the registration form. Classes will begin on Saturday morning at 11:00 am in the PLC October 4, 2025.

Catholic Faith Appeal (CFA) 2025

Our Lady of Mercy Parish Assessment: \$123,000.00

Pledged as of August 16: \$122,615.00

Envelopes and CFA pamphlets are available on the table at the door in the church or donations can be made online, designate Our Lady of Mercy Parish
<https://dioceseofvenice.org/ways-to-give/cfa/>

Save the date! Rosary Congress 2025 – The Diocese of Venice will host its annual Rosary



Congress October 4-10, 2025, with a growing number of Parishes throughout the Diocese participating. The theme of this year's Rosary Congress is My Soul Magnifies the Lord (Luke 1:46). The Rosary Congress begins with the celebration of daily Mass and ends with Mass at the same time the next day. During these designated 24 hours, the Blessed Sacrament is exposed for perpetual Adoration, and the five decades of the Rosary are prayed by the faithful every hour, on the hour. Many Parishes will also have Confession available. Stay tuned for a list of participating Parishes, and how you can be part of this beautiful opportunity to adore and grow closer to our Lord. For more information, contact Jim Gontis, gontis@dioceseofvenice, 941-486-4754.

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 for sharing your Time, Talent, and Treasure!