



# 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  |
| Monday – Friday          | 8:00 am  |
| Tuesday Adoration        | Suspended for the Summer   |
| First Saturday Anointing | After 5:00 pm vigil  |
| Sacrament of Penance     | Call the parish office   |
| Parish website address:  | <a href="http://ourladyofmercy.church">ourladyofmercy.church</a> |
| Online Giving:           | <a href="http://ourladyofmercy.church">ourladyofmercy.church</a> |

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21<sup>ST</sup> SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

AUGUST 25, 2024

**Jesus then said to the Twelve, “Do you also want to leave?” Simon Peter answered him, “Master, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. We have come to believe and are convinced that you are the Holy One of God.” John 6:67–69**

Today’s Gospel comes at the end of the beautiful Bread of Life Discourse in which our Lord taught clearly, “Amen, amen, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you do not have life within you.” At the beginning of today’s Gospel, upon listening to Jesus’ new teaching, many of His disciples murmured among themselves saying, “This saying is hard; who can accept it?” This teaching of Jesus is “hard” in the sense that it requires a profound faith to understand completely. But just because something is hard to accept does not mean that we should not accept it.

Peter’s statement quoted above gives us the words we should say whenever we find God’s will or His teaching difficult to accept. When that happens, we must hear Jesus ask us the same question He asked the Twelve: “Do you also want to leave?” Jesus will not try to manipulate us. He will not back down when He sees we are struggling. He will not lessen the requirement of being His faithful follower. Instead, He will give us the freedom to either believe or leave. And when we feel like leaving, we should always remember Peter’s words, “Master, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. We have come to believe and are convinced that you are the Holy One of God.”

Peter’s statement says all we need to know in the face of any interior conflict of faith. Sure, we could leave our Lord and do our own thing. But where would we go? To embrace the passing pleasures of the world? To what end? If we believe and are convinced that Jesus is the Holy One of God, then no matter how hard, no matter how demanding, no matter how difficult, we must embrace fidelity to God in all things. That act of fidelity, especially when we struggle with some interior conflict, is the key to unlocking the transforming power of God in our lives.

**Low-Gluten Hosts Available Please see Fr. Anthony at least ten minutes prior to Mass to request a low-gluten host.**

**Our Church is equipped with a Hearing Loop Assistive Listening System. Please switch your hearing aid or cochlear implant to "T" (telephone).**

### **Prayer to Protect Them Both**

Ever-living God, you give life and desire a future for all your children. Take hold of our nation, state, and community and awaken in every heart awe for the gift of life. Send your Spirit to strengthen us with wisdom and fortitude as we defend mothers and children in Florida from laws that disregard their health and safety. Mary and Joseph trusted in you and welcomed Jesus into our broken world. God Almighty, we ask their intercession to protect the preborn and their mothers, and to guide all parents in raising their children.

May they help us build a civilization of love by upholding the sacredness of life and accompanying pregnant women in need. We ask this through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Our Lady, Mother of the Family, pray for us!  
St. Joseph, protector of the unborn, pray for us!

### **Prayer to St. Michael the Archangel**

St. Michael the Archangel, defend us in battle. Be our defense against the wickedness and snares of the Devil. May God rebuke him, we humbly pray, and do thou, O Prince of the heavenly hosts, by the power of God, cast into hell Satan, and all the evil spirits, who roam about the world seeking the ruin of souls. Amen.

### **This Week in Saints**

Tuesday August 27: Memorial of St. Monica  
Wednesday August 28: Memorial of St. Augustine  
Thursday August 29: Memorial of the Passion of St. John the Baptist

Pope Francis Worldwide Prayer Intention for August

### **For political leaders**

We pray that political leaders be at the service of their own people, working for integral human development and for the common good, especially caring for the poor and those who have lost their jobs.