



# 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](http://ourladyofmercy.church)

Online Giving:

[ourladyofmercy.church](http://ourladyofmercy.church)

Father Anthony email:

[anthony.hewitt@olomcc.org](mailto:anthony.hewitt@olomcc.org)

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THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

DECEMBER 15, 2024

Due to the damage from Hurricanes Helene and Milton to the church  
**Daily and Weekend Mass** will continue to be celebrated in the **Parish Life Center (PLC)**.

Monday-Friday 8:00 am

Saturday 5:00 pm vigil

Sunday 9:00 and 10:30 am

A gift to the parish community is the Advent 2024 book "**Emerge Into Great Joy**" by S. James Meyer. One copy per family please.

## Christmas Giving Tags

My dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

In my 25 years of being a priest, at the parishes I served, with the help of some volunteers, Christmas Gift Tags were prepared for the local community. This remarkable opportunity to give gifts to children in the Lee County area has been very successful over the years. Thousands of toys, gift cards, and clothing have been distributed to children who otherwise would have no gifts to call their own on Christmas Day, the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ.

In the vestibule of the parish hall in a basket, you will find Christmas Gift Tags with the age and gender of the child. If you are able, please purchase any age-appropriate toy, clothing, or gift card (Wal-Mart, Target) and bring the gift unwrapped with the tag attached back to the parish hall so that they may be collected and distributed before the Christmas Season begins. All tags and gifts can be returned up to **December 23<sup>rd</sup>**.

Through our generosity as a loving and merciful parish we will be able to bring smiles and laughter to children, parents and grandparents on Christmas Day. They will remember the love of Jesus Christ for the rest of their lives because of what we do for them this season. God bless us all.



## Christmas Season Mass Schedule

Parish Life Center Only

**Tuesday, December 24, 2024**

5:00 pm and 8:00 pm

**Wednesday, December 25, 2024**

9:00 am and 10:30 am

**Wednesday, January 1, 2025**

9:00 am

**Congratulations Father Anthony:** Father Anthony celebrated his 25th ordination anniversary on October 22, 2024. Due to the hurricane damage, a parish celebration has been postponed until the spring. Watch the bulletin for plans to celebrate in the Parish Life Center once the church repair is complete. A gift of a golf cart for Father Anthony is in the works from the parish community. If you would like to contribute to the ordination gift for father, please contact Angela Steffan, [aksteffan@gmail.com](mailto:aksteffan@gmail.com) or 941-855-1277.

### **The crowds asked John the Baptist, “What should we do?” Luke 3:10**

Among those within the crowds who were asking Saint John the Baptist this question were tax collectors, soldiers and ordinary people. John gave an answer to them all, first telling them to turn away from the sins that they struggled with the most. Sin takes on many forms and often is closely associated with our daily duties in life. Some sins are sins of

commission, meaning sins we commit by an intentional act. Some sins are those of omission, meaning a lack of certain virtues or a failure to do what we ought to do.

After addressing the sins that those in the crowds were struggling with, John then turns their attention to Christ. He states to them that “one mightier than I is coming” and that “He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.” In other words, John was giving the people a twofold command. First, work to overcome sin. And second, turn your eyes to Him Who is coming to you. Repenting from sin is not enough. Once we repent, we must then fill the void within our souls with the presence of Christ. Advent, just like Lent, is an important time within our liturgical year to heed these messages. Though it’s true that we must work to overcome sin and turn to Christ every day of the year, God knows we need a special time each year when we give concerted effort to these spiritual endeavors. Before Advent passes us by, heed the words of the Baptist and take some time to examine our conscience thoroughly. Perhaps one could utilize a detailed list of the Ten Commandments or the Seven Capital Sins. Once one does that, seek out an opportunity to celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Doing so is essential to a fruitful Advent season; God call us to a healing opportunity. Amen.

**Anniversary Masses in 2025** - Two Anniversary Masses will be offered in 2025, for married couples celebrating milestone anniversaries (25, 30, 35, 40 years, etc.). On February 1, 2025, an Anniversary Mass will be celebrated at St. Leo the Great Parish in Bonita Springs at 11:00 a.m., and on March 8, 2025, at St. Thomas More Parish in 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; registration information is forthcoming and will be mailed to Parishes directly.

**Pope Francis Prayer Intention for December** - We pray that this Jubilee Year strengthen our faith, helping us to recognize the Risen Christ in our daily lives, and that it may transform us into pilgrims of Christian hope.

**Safe Environment Training** - 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 Safe Environment 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.