



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

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT DECEMBER 21, 2025



Christmas Mass Times

Wednesday, December 24: 5 pm Vigil, 8 pm (Midnight Mass)

Thursday, December 25: 7 am, 9 am, 10:30 am

Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God

Thursday, January 1, 9 am

The Annual Christmas Gift Tag Basket is at the entrance of the church. Each tag has a boy or girl with a corresponding age. Please provide an appropriate gift for the child and return the gift to the church or rectory with the tag attached. Gift cards are also appropriate gifts. Please return all gifts by December 23 and then the volunteers will distribute the gifts to the neediest children throughout Lee County. Hopefully, this Christmas morning each child we help will be filled with the joy of the Christmas Season.

Gospel of Matthew Reflection

Such was his intention when, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary your wife into your home. For it is through the Holy Spirit that this child has been conceived in her." [Matthew 1:20](#)

Joseph knew that the penalty for adultery was death by stoning. His heart must have been deeply conflicted. On one hand, the virtues of his betrothed wife, Mary, were abundantly clear. Mary radiated holiness. Impurity was foreign to her Immaculate Heart. Yet she was pregnant, and Joseph was not the father. What should he do?

To protect Mary from public shame, Joseph decided to do what he believed was the most merciful thing—he "decided to divorce her quietly. Such was his intention..." Though little is known about Joseph, this Gospel passage identifies him as "a righteous man." Many saints, popes, and Church documents highlight his unquestionable sanctity. He was not immaculate and free from sin as was his wife, but God the Father would have chosen a righteous and holy man to be the foster father of the Son of God. Joseph's dream was no ordinary dream. The Holy Spirit accompanied the angel and instilled the certitude of faith in Joseph's mind, empowering his will to obey God's will. Joseph became the father and guardian of the Savior of the World. On December 8, 1847, Pope Pius IX declared Saint Joseph to be the Universal Patron and Protector of the Catholic Church. Just as he protected the Son of God, so he intercedes for us who are members of Christ's body, the Church.

As our Advent season enters its final days, we are reminded of the role that Jesus' foster father played not only in the life of the Holy Family, but also about the role Saint Joseph continues to play in the life of the Church and in each one of our lives. His intercessory power from Heaven is great, and we should not hesitate to call upon his prayers, especially when we need protection, struggle with fear, or face some grave challenge. Turn to Saint Joseph in prayer and know that his powerful intercession will help protect us and win God's grace in the areas we need it the most. Amen.

2025 Christmas Message

Merry Christmas! Our Advent preparations have been completed, and we are now invited by our Lord to enter the glorious celebration of His birth!



How well do we understand the awe-inspiring mystery of Christmas? How fully do we comprehend the significance of God becoming a human, born of a virgin? Though many are quite familiar with the beautiful and humble story of the birth of the Savior of the World, that familiarity can have the surprising negative effect of keeping our intellect from deeply probing the depths of the meaning of what we celebrate.



Mother Mary was the one person who would have understood the mystery of the birth of her Son, the Son of God, the Savior of the World, far more deeply than anyone else. It was to her that Archangel Gabriel appeared, announcing her pregnancy and His birth. It was her who carried her Son, the Son of God, in her Immaculate womb for nine months.

It was to her that Elizabeth, her cousin, cried out, "Most blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb" (Luke 1:42). It was Mary who was the Immaculate Conception, the one who was preserved from all sin throughout her life. And it was she who gave birth to this Child, carried Him in her arms and nursed Him at her breast. Our Blessed Mother, more than any other, understood the incredible event that had taken place in her life.

One thing scripture tells us is that even Mary, the mother of Jesus and the mother of God, needed time to ponder, reflect and savor this most holy mystery. She never doubted, but her faith continually deepened, and her heart pondered the unfathomable and incomprehensible mystery of the Incarnation.



Ponder the Incarnation. Place ourselves into the scene that first Christmas. Hear the town. Smell the smells of the stable. Watch as the shepherds come forth in adoration. And enter the mystery more fully, acknowledging that the more we know about the mystery of Christmas, the more we know how little we know and understand. But that humble realization is the first step to a deeper understanding of what we celebrate this day and every day. God bless us all.

2026 church calendars are available at the entrance to the church. These calendars have the daily Mass schedule, the Holy Days and the Saints throughout the year highlighted. One per family please.

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

