



# OUR LADY OF MERCY PARISH

Father Anthony Hewitt, JCL Pastor

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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:	<a href="http://ourladyofmercy.church">ourladyofmercy.church</a>
Online Giving:	<a href="http://ourladyofmercy.church">ourladyofmercy.church</a>
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**FEAST OF THE BAPTISM OF THE LORD**

**JANUARY 12, 2025**

Hurricanes Helene and Milton damaged our church, therefore,  
**Daily and Weekend Mass** will continue to be celebrated in the **Parish Life Center (PLC)**.

**Second Collection next weekend  
January 19 is for the Church in Latin  
America**

*Thank you for sharing your time, talent  
and treasure. May the Lord continue to  
bless you abundantly.*

Monday-Friday 8:00 am  
Saturday 5:00 pm vigil  
Sunday 9:00 and 10:30 am

"The people were filled with expectation, and all were asking in their hearts whether John might be the Christ. John answered them all, saying, "I am baptizing you with water, but one mightier than I is coming. I am not worthy to loosen the thongs of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire." After all the people had been baptized and Jesus also had been baptized and was praying,

heaven was opened and the Holy Spirit descended upon him in bodily form like a dove. And a voice came from heaven, "You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased." Luke 3:15-16, 21-22

The Feast of the Baptism of the Lord concludes for us the Christmas Season and transitions us into the beginning of Ordinary Time. From a Scriptural point of view, this event in Jesus' life is also a transitional moment from His hidden life in Nazareth to the beginning of His public ministry. As we commemorate this glorious event, it's important to ponder a simple question: Why was Jesus baptized? Recall that John's baptism was one of repentance, an act by which he invited his followers to turn from sin and to turn to God. But Jesus was sinless, so what was the reason for His Baptism?

First, we see in the quoted passage above that Jesus' identity was made manifest through His humble act of baptism. "You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased," spoke the voice of the Father in Heaven. Furthermore, we are told that the Spirit descended upon Him in the form of a dove. Thus, Jesus' baptism is in part a public declaration of Who He is. He is the Son of God, a divine Person Who is one with the Father and the Holy Spirit. This public testimony is an "epiphany," a manifestation of His identity for all to see as He prepares to begin His public ministry.

Second, by His baptism, Jesus' incredible humility is made manifest. He is the Second Person of the Most Holy Trinity, but He allows Himself to become identified with sinners. By sharing in an act that was focused upon repentance, Jesus speaks volumes through His action of baptism. He came to unite Himself with us sinners, to enter our sin and to enter our death. By entering the water, He symbolically enters death itself,



which is the result of our sin, and rises triumphantly, allowing us to also rise with Him to new life. For this reason, Jesus' baptism was a way of Him "baptizing" the waters, so to speak, so that water itself, from that moment onward, would be endowed with His divine presence and could be communicated to all who are baptized after Him. Therefore, sinful humanity is now able to meet divinity through baptism.

Lastly, when we share in this new baptism, through water that has now been sanctified by our divine Lord, we see in Jesus' baptism a revelation of who we become in Him. Just as the Father spoke and declared Him as His Son, and just as the Holy Spirit descended upon Him, so also in our baptism we become the adopted children of the Father and are filled with the Holy Spirit. Thus, Jesus' baptism gives clarity as to whom we become in Christian baptism.

As baptized Christians, we show the face of God through our actions. *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 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.

**Wednesday January 22nd is the USCCB "Day of Prayer for the Legal Protection of Unborn Children."**  
[www.respectlife.org/9-days-signup](http://www.respectlife.org/9-days-signup)

*"A great prayer for life is urgently needed, a prayer which will rise up throughout the world. Through special initiatives and in daily prayer, may an impassioned plea rise to God, the Creator and lover of life, from every Christian community, from every group and association, from every family and from the heart of every believer."* Pope Saint John Paul II *Evangelium vitae*

On January 22, 1973, the Supreme Court legalized abortion throughout the United States in its companion decisions *Roe v. Wade* and *Doe v. Bolton*. Since that time, millions of children have lost their lives, and millions of women and families have been wounded by abortion.

On June 24, 2022, the *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization* decision overturned *Roe v. Wade*, and we praise God for the great opportunity state and federal legislators now must protect pre-born children. While God, in His mercy, ended the nearly fifty-year nationwide regime of abortion on demand, right now state and federal laws, in many instances, are still hostile to pre-born children. So, great prayer and advocacy is still greatly needed.

In all the Dioceses of the United States of America, January 22 shall be observed as a particular day of prayer for the full restoration of the legal guarantee of the right to life and of penance for violations to the dignity of the human person committed through acts of abortion.

How to Participate Go to Mass, Abstain from meat, Pray the Divine Mercy Chaplet, Fast, Give up TV and movies for the day, Offer A Prayer for Life to Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament, Sacrifice some of your free time to do a small act of service for someone else.

**Thank You** - Our deepest gratitude to those who have already made a contribution to our parish hurricane recovery. Your contribution helps us repair and restore our church.