



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

PALM SUNDAY OF THE PASSION OF THE LORD

MARCH 29, 2026



HOLY WEEK 2026

<p>Tuesday, March 31 - No morning Mass 10:30 am Diocesan Chrism Mass at St. Leo the Great Parish</p>	
<p>Thursday, April 2 No morning Mass 6:00 pm Mass of the Lord's Supper Adoration until 8:00 pm</p>	
<p>Good Friday, April 3 No morning Mass 12 noon Community Way of the Cross 3:00 pm Liturgy of the Word, Veneration of the Cross, Communion</p>	
<p>Holy Saturday Vigil 8:00 pm Mass</p>	
<p>Easter Sunday 7:00, 9:00 and 10:30 am Masses</p>	

Our Lady of Mercy Catholic Faith Appeal 2026

Parish assessment this year is \$144,000 (\$22,025.00 pledged as of March 23). Envelopes are available at the front of the church. Please make checks payable to the *Catholic Faith Appeal* and *in the memo write Our Lady of Mercy Parish* so that we receive proper credit for your donation. Every dollar given to the CFA helps us reach our goal. May God continue to bless our generous parish. Fr. Anthony

Catholic Faith Appeal Prayer

O Lord, Giver of Life and Source of Freedom. We know that all we have is received from your hand. Gracious and loving God, you call us to be stewards of your Abundance, the caretakers of all you have entrusted to us. Help us always to use your gifts wisely and teach us to share them generously with those in need. Send the Holy Spirit to work through us, bringing your message to those we serve. May our faithful stewardship be a witness to the love of Jesus Christ in our lives. We pray with grateful hearts in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

Gospel of Matthew Reflection

And when he entered Jerusalem, the whole city was shaken and asked, "Who is this?" And the crowds replied, "This is Jesus the prophet, from Nazareth in Galilee." Matthew 21:10-11

The commemoration of our Lord's Passion has begun. Today, Mass begins with the reading of Matthew's account of Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem. Riding on a donkey, Jesus is greeted by a very large crowd who "spread their cloaks on the road, while others cut branches from the trees and strewed them on the road" (Matthew 21:8). The people welcome Him with shouts of: "Hosanna to the Son of David; blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord; hosanna in the highest" (Matthew 21:9). The word "Hosanna" in Hebrew means, "Save us, we pray!" Though it was originally a plea for deliverance, it became an expression of praise and joy, especially as it came to be associated with Messiah's arrival. The phrase "Hosanna in the highest" calls for God, enthroned in Heaven, to bring His saving power to earth. The crowds' acclamation reveals both a hope for salvation and a recognition of Jesus as the long-awaited Messiah.

During Passover week, Jerusalem's population increased several times over with pilgrims from across Israel. The atmosphere was vibrant with religious fervor and communal celebration. Merchants sold sacrificial animals, food, and provisions to the crowds. Central to the festivities was the Temple where sacrifices were offered and the Passover lambs were prepared for the sacred meal. Roman authorities increased security, wary of potential unrest, as the commemoration of Israel's liberation from Egypt stirred hopes of national deliverance. The Jewish authorities were also on high alert, concerned that any disturbance might provoke harsh reprisals from the Romans. Imagine the excitement, concern, and surprise that many of the religious and Roman leaders felt as large crowds professed their belief in Jesus as the Messiah. Was Israel's deliverance at hand? This public acclaim highlighted why some saw Jesus as a threat. The Pharisees feared that His messianic identity might undermine the religious authority to which they clung. Most of them dismissed the possibility that Jesus was the Messiah they awaited.

Jesus, however, had a very different understanding of the Passover that year. He knew it was the time for His hour of suffering and death, leading to His glorification. He had no interest in political maneuvering. His sole desire was to fulfill His mission as the Messiah by becoming the one perfect Lamb of Sacrifice whose blood would atone for the sins of many. Jesus was determined and confident as He rode into Jerusalem. Though He knew the suffering that awaited Him, His gaze was fixed on His mission of saving souls. In His sacred humanity, He overcame every temptation to fear or anxiety, allowing peace, strength, and joy to fill His heart.

Not only is Jesus our Savior and the one Mediator between God and us, but His human life also perfectly models how we are to live. Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem especially models for us how we are to face every difficult situation that tempts us to fear and anxiety. His courage must become our courage, and His determination our determination. As we embrace our own mission, we must not allow fear or anxiety to hinder us. Pray that the courage, peace, and steadfast love that Jesus embodied during that first Holy Week may flourish in our heart. Let go of fear, worry, and selfishness, and allow Jesus' love and strength to fill us, so that His mission may continue through us and, with our Lord, we may lay down our life for others. Amen.