



# OUR LADY OF MERCY PARISH

Father Anthony Hewitt, JCL, Pastor

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(941) 964 - 2254

## Mass Schedule:

<b>Saturday</b>	5:00 pm
<b>Sunday</b>	9:00 & 10:30 am
<b>Mon-Fri</b>	8:00 am
<b>First Saturday Anointing</b>	After 5:00 pm vigil
<b>Sacrament of Penance</b>	By appointment
<b>Parish website address:</b>	<a href="http://ourladyofmercy.church">ourladyofmercy.church</a>
<b>Online Giving:</b>	<a href="http://ourladyofmercy.church">ourladyofmercy.church</a>
<b>Father Anthony email:</b>	<a href="mailto:anthony.hewitt@olomcc.org">anthony.hewitt@olomcc.org</a>

FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT

MARCH 30, 2025

Our church is still under repair due to Hurricanes Helene and Milton damage, therefore, **Daily and Weekend Mass** will continue to be celebrated in the **Parish Life Center (PLC)**.



**Stations of the Cross**  
Fridays in Lent  
8:30 am  
in the Parish Life Center

**Lenten thought for this week:** "I pray to you, O Lord, for a time of your favor. In your great mercy, answer me, O God with your salvation that never fails."

**Catholic Faith Appeal (CFA) 2025**

**Our Lady of Mercy Parish Assessment: \$123,000.00**

Pledged as of March 22: \$53,715.00

Today is a great opportunity for every family in our parish to participate in the Catholic Faith Appeal. I ask each of you to pray about making your own sacrificial gift to the Catholic Faith Appeal. As you pray about your gift, remember that the Catholic Faith Appeal supports three critical areas of our Catholic Faith: **to boldly proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ; to share the Faith through the celebration of the Sacraments and Catholic formation; and to care for the poor, sick, and vulnerable.**

We are blessed to have a faith-filled and generous parish family. Your sacrifice positively impacts our Southwest Florida Catholic Family. All parishes throughout the diocese will be working towards this mission through the CFA.

*Envelopes and CFA pamphlets are available on the table at the door in the PLC. Thank you for sharing your time, talent, and treasure.*

**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. 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, notify the diocesan Victims Assistance Coordinator, Susan Benton, at 941-416-6114.

**Second Collection this weekend of March 29<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup>, parishes throughout the Diocese of Venice will take up the 2025 Catholic Relief Services Collection (CRS).**

## **Special Lenten Presentation**

**Tuesday, April 8<sup>th</sup>, 5-7 pm in the PLC**

### **The Four Last Things: Death, Judgment, Heaven, and Hell...Plus a Bit on Purgatory!**

This presentation will be focused on what are traditionally referred to as The Four Last Things...the most important things...Death, Judgment (Particular and General), Heaven, and Hell. We'll also talk about Purgatory, which, while not a Last Thing, is most certainly an Important Thing. Are Heaven and Hell places or states of being? Does the Church still believe in Purgatory? What does it mean when we say in the Creed, "I believe in the resurrection of the body?" Do we mean that literally or figuratively? What does the Bible mean when it talks about a new Heaven and the new Earth. Finally, how can I get holy, and get to Heaven? How do I overcome evil and avoid Hell? Does all this have anything to do with why I was made? Sound interesting? It is! Come join us for this presentation on the Four Last Things and learn more!

### **Fourth Sunday of Lent Gospel Reflection**

Chapter 15 of Luke's Gospel and serves as an introduction to three subsequent parables. First, our Lord tells the Parable of the Lost Sheep, then the Parable of the Lost Coin, and then the Parable found in the rest of today's Gospel passage, the Parable of the Lost Son. In the first parable, the shepherd who finds his lost sheep rejoices. In the second parable, the woman who finds her lost coin rejoices. And in the parable, we read today, the father who finds his lost son rejoices and throws a party to celebrate.

Return, again, to the passage above that introduces these three parables: "Tax collectors and sinners were all drawing near to listen to Jesus." Once they drew near, Jesus spoke to them about the joy of finding that which was lost. Perhaps as Jesus initially spoke about the finding of the lost sheep and lost coin, this would have resonated with these tax collectors and sinners to a certain degree. But then our Lord tells them the long and detailed story about this boy who disrespects his father, takes his inheritance, squanders it on illicit living, and ends up with nothing. The story expresses the confusion of this boy, his desperation, his guilt and his shame. We learn of his interior thinking, reasoning, fears and anxiety.

As you ponder this parable, try to understand the effect that it would have had upon the tax collectors and sinners who all drew near to our Lord. They were spiritually hungry, just as the prodigal son was. They had a past full of regret, just as this boy. They were unsatisfied in life and were looking for a way out, just as this son of the loving father was. For these reasons, those tax collectors and sinners who drew near Jesus would have been mesmerized by all that Jesus taught them and filled with hope that they, too, could share in the joy that was so generously bestowed upon this wayward son.

Pray about the touching image of these tax collectors and sinners drawing near to Jesus. Though they may have had a certain fear and caution, they would have also had hope. Try to understand what they must have thought and felt as they heard this story of the father's abundant mercy. Think about how they would have related as they discovered that there was hope for them, too. If you struggle with being like the scribes and Pharisees, reject that temptation. Instead, see yourself as one of those sinners who drew near to our Lord, and you will be the cause of joy in the Heart of the Father in Heaven. Amen.

**Sacrament of Reconciliation** in the PLC on Friday April 11<sup>th</sup> from 5-7 pm and Saturday April 12<sup>th</sup> from 10-12 noon.

**Community Way of the Cross** on Good Friday, April 18<sup>th</sup> at 12 noon. Begin at Our Lady of Mercy Church on Park Ave. and walk the 14 stations of the cross to remember our Lord's passion and death on this holy day.