



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:

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FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

MAY 18, 2025

Church Restoration Update

Great news! Our pews are scheduled to return and be reinstalled on Tuesday, May 27th. These have been deep cleaned, sanded, stained, and sealed. The kneelers have new hardware, pads, and coverings. The repair and restoration of the pews took place in North Carolina and the work has taken the better part of four months. We look forward to seeing these pews back in place. The artwork in the church has been returned cleaned and restored after the damage from flood waters that splashed up and all around. The *reredos* above the tabernacle, has been cleaned as well. I invite you to take some time after Mass to really look at our magnificent art that depicts key moments of our Catholic faith, particularly the stations of the cross paintings and the crucifix that hangs next to the ambo. We have new altar candle holders that burn beeswax candles. This will help reduce the damage to the artwork in the church. Many of the liturgical items were damaged by the flood waters and they have been polished and brought back to life. And finally, our new organ is ready for the first payment of **\$134,165.70** to be paid which begins production. This represents 65 percent of the total \$218,915.00. If you would like to donate to this much-needed instrument for the enhancement of our liturgy in our historic church, please do so and include in the memo line: New Church Organ. A big thanks to those who have already donated to the *New Church Organ* and/or general hurricane repairs, you are in my prayers as we walk through our recovery process in our parish and community.

Fifth Sunday of Easter Reflection

Today's Gospel passage speaks of Jesus' coming death as His glorification. "Now is the Son of Man glorified, and God is glorified in him." Jesus spoke these words right after Judas left the Last Supper to betray Him. From an earthly perspective, it is unlikely that anyone would consider their betrayal and brutal death as the moment when God is glorified. But from a heavenly and eternal perspective, Jesus' death was the greatest glorification He could offer to the Father. This only makes sense when we put on the mind of God.

As we continue to celebrate our Easter Season, we look beyond the suffering of Christ to see the fruit of His suffering. We see that death was defeated and that Jesus will now forever live in His glorified and resurrected body in Heaven. He will forever carry the marks in His hands, feet and side, and those marks will forever glorify the Father. The Resurrection of Christ changes everything, including death. For that reason, we must continually work to put on the mind of God and see our human lives as He sees them.

What is it that we live for in this life? What are our goals and ambitions? If we find that we focus excessively upon immediate pleasures, material wealth, selfish objectives and passing ambitions, then it is time to ponder the

lesson of Jesus' glorification. By facing His own death as an opportunity to glorify the Father, Jesus made it possible for us to do the same. And though there will always be a healthy sorrow associated with the passing of a loved one, the hope of Heaven and eternal glory must become the lens through which we see all things in this life.

When we look at our life, it is essential to see the cross that God has given to us. That is because our cross is the gateway to this eternal glory. Each person's cross will be different. A cross is not simply our suffering; it's our call to live sacrificially. This is love. It's the calling we are given to lay our lives down for others. To serve others. To forgive every wrong, to love every sinner, to show mercy and compassion toward those in need. And to do all of this in response to God's perfect will. The crosses in our lives are opportunities for love in its purest form. This is how Jesus saw His Cross and this is how we must see ours.

Reflect, today, upon death, but try to look at it as a calling to give of ourselves sacrificially out of love. The best way to prepare for a glorious death is to live in the love of God here and now. To the extent that we can do that, God will be glorified as we share in the glory given to Christ. Amen.

Catholic Faith Appeal (CFA) 2025

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

Pledged as of May 10: \$77,165.00

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.** *Envelopes and CFA pamphlets are available on the table at the door in the church. 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.

Saint of the Week

Saint Cristóbal Magallanes and Companions' Story

Like Blessed Miguel Agustín Pro, SJ, Cristóbal and his 24 companion martyrs lived under a very anti-Catholic government in Mexico, one determined to weaken the Catholic faith of its people. Churches, schools, and seminaries were closed; foreign clergy were expelled. Cristóbal established a clandestine seminary at Totatiche, Jalisco. He and the other priests were forced to minister secretly to Catholics during the presidency of Plutarco Calles (1924-28). All of these martyrs except three, were diocesan priests. David, Manuel and Salvador were laymen who died with their parish priest, Luis Batis. They all belonged to the Cristero movement, pledging their allegiance to Christ and to the Church that he established, to spread the Good News in society—even if Mexico's leaders had made it a crime to receive baptism or celebrate the Mass. These martyrs did not die as a single group but over 22 years' time in eight Mexican states, with Jalisco and Zacatecas having the largest number. They were beatified in 1992 and canonized eight years later. Every martyr realizes how to avoid execution but refuses to pay the high price of doing so. A clear conscience was more valuable than a long life. We may be tempted to compromise our faith while telling ourselves that we are simply being realistic, dealing with situations as we find them. Is survival really the ultimate value? Do our concrete, daily choices reflect our deepest values, the ones that allow us to "tick" the way we do? Anyone can imagine situations in which being a follower of Jesus is easier than the present situation. Saints remind us that our daily choices form the pattern of our lives.