



# 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 (December 2 forward)

8:00 am

First Saturday Anointing

After 5:00 pm vigil

Sacrament of Penance

Call the parish office

Parish website address:

[ourladyofmercy.church](http://ourladyofmercy.church)

Online Giving:

[ourladyofmercy.church](http://ourladyofmercy.church)

---

OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST KING OF THE UNIVERSE

NOVEMBER 24, 2024

Due to the damage from Hurricanes Helene and Milton to the church  
**Daily and Weekend Mass** will continue to be celebrated in the **Parish Life Center (PLC)**.

## Mass Schedule

November 25-29

Monday-Wednesday and Friday 12 noon

**Thursday November 28, 2024**

**Thanksgiving Day Mass**

9:00 am

**Effective Monday December 2 the daily Mass time will be at 8:00 am**

Saturday 5:00 pm vigil

Sunday 9:00 and 10:30 am

My dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

I write this letter to you on the Solemnity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe, with the end of our church liturgical year and the beginning of Advent next weekend. In years gone by we have marked the passage of time with such moments: Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day, Easter Day, but now we also mark the passage of time with Hurricane Days. As you know, in a most unusual stretch of two weeks here at the parish along with the island community we experienced two major hurricanes: Helene and Milton. The Hebrew meaning of Helene is light or torch and Milton means to mill. Helene did indeed show us the light of what was to come as our church and preschool building were flooded by two to three feet of storm surge water. Cleaning and drying out both buildings took place within 24 hours of impact with diocesan support. Then, 12 days later Milton came, and the storm surge water flooded the church, the preschool, the garage and underneath the rectory/office with five feet of muck, sand, water and the occasional propane tanks. The two hurricanes impacted our ability to celebrate Mass in the church building since Wednesday September 25 the day before Helene arrived. We are truly blessed to have the Parish Life Center where daily and weekend Mass have been celebrated since Saturday September 28.

It has been challenging to secure licensed contractors to come out to provide repair estimates to restore power, replace damaged HVAC units, replace the flooring in the sacristy and the storage room. The coquina coral of which the altar, ambo, and altar steps are made of require skilled professionals to clean and sanitize. The organ, the keyboard, audio equipment replacement cost estimate is still an



ongoing process. All the precious wooden doors to the church are swollen due to flood water and no longer close or lock properly, all of this must be restored before we can return safely to the church for sacraments.

Fortunately, we are beginning to make headway, an electrician out of Sarasota came to inspect the church and was able to provide a proposal of how best to repair and replace the outdated electrical panels and raise the ones that were compromised by flood water as well as solve the flooding problem with the outlets. That contract was submitted and is awaiting approval from the chancellor of the diocese. Grande Aire was able to submit a proposal for two new 5-ton HVAC units and the new air handler and all new duct work as well as raising the platforms outside of the church that the AC units sit on, and to raise the power outlet another two feet up. This proposal was accepted and approved by the chancellor of the diocese, and they have begun the work. A proposal for the new flooring, sink, shelving, and painting of the inside of the church was submitted and is awaiting approval from the chancellor. Landscaping has also submitted a bid, and they have already begun the project. The bids are as follow: electrical replacement: \$12,000, interior replacement: \$36,000, air conditioning replacement: \$36,000, landscape replacement: \$46,000. The pews and kneelers sat under flood water and their repair will need to be addressed. Flood water has loosened the mortar of the brick floor in many areas of the church, and this too will need to be replaced.

Many of you have reached out to ask how to help pay for the repair and replacement costs of our beautiful church. Please make check payable to Our Lady of Mercy Parish. In the memo line: **Hurricane Milton repairs**. Donations can also be made online. I want to thank the faithful who have already made a donation to begin our recovery and rebuilding process.

I also want to thank those who came out to share their time and talent in critical times with minor repairs, the altar for the PLC was built, a donated new crucifix was installed in the PLC among other things. To those who helped set up the chairs, our lectors, altar server and other volunteers. So many of the faithful have helped that the list of names would be long. I am grateful to the parishioners and their generosity. An art conservator was on site this Saturday to assess the damage to our precious art in the church. It was a fascinating experience to watch her inspect the reredos around the tabernacle and the other extraordinary pieces of catholic art that we have. She will submit her estimate and suggestions in how best to preserve what we are blessed to have.

Your prayers, your patience, and your trust in God is humbling. We will rebuild what has been damaged, not just better than before, but for the future parishioners and visitors who come to our beautiful church to see God's work in action, and to truly feel the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Please continue to look at the parish website [ourladyofmercy.church](http://ourladyofmercy.church) for all the updates.

May God continue to bless us all,

Father Anthony Hewitt, JCL

Pastor

### **Christ the King of the Universe**

Jesus, the great King, will return in all His splendor and glory to establish His unending Kingdom on earth, when He unites Heaven and earth into the new and resurrected Kingdom yet to come. On that day, Christ "will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead and his kingdom will have no end," and we will all share in "the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come" (Nicene Creed). As we celebrate this glorious solemnity, the last Sunday of the Church's liturgical year, deepen our faith in the mystery it celebrates, and strengthen our resolve to embrace the Kingship of Christ in our life, so that through us, His Kingdom will become even more present in the world. God bless.