



# 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](http://ourladyofmercy.church)

**Online Giving:**

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

**Father Anthony email:**

[anthony.hewitt@olomcc.org](mailto:anthony.hewitt@olomcc.org)

## **FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT, NOVEMBER 30, 2025**

### **Gospel of Matthew Reflection**

*"Therefore, stay awake! For you do not know on which day your Lord will come. Be sure of this: if the master of the house had known the hour of night when the thief was coming, he would have stayed awake and not let his house be broken into. So too, you also must be prepared, for at an hour you do not expect, the Son of Man will come." Matthew 24:42-44*

How does one "stay awake" as our Lord commands us? We receive this holy exhortation as we enter a new liturgical year. In Advent, we begin at the beginning. We ponder the Incarnate Son of God dwelling as a human Child in the precious womb of the Blessed Virgin Mary. We anticipate the celebration of His birth into the world at Christmas. As the liturgical year progresses, we will prayerfully walk through each moment of His life, from the events of His childhood to His public ministry, and ultimately His death, resurrection, and ascension into Heaven.

Our Lord's exhortation to stay awake invites us to be attentive to the ways that the Son of God's human life speaks to us, calling us to become fully united to Him to share in the glorious gifts of holiness in this life and eternal salvation in the next. After exhorting us to stay awake, the Son of God said, "For you do not know on which day your Lord will come." Of course, we know He came into this world over 2,000 years ago in physical form. This exhortation is not only a call to ponder that event long ago; it's also an invitation and exhortation to become continuously more attentive to the effect that His historical coming has upon us today. Advent is a season that invites us to reflect on Christ's first coming in Bethlehem, His daily coming to us in grace, and His final coming at the end of time. These moments are intimately connected, as each prepares us more fully for the next.

From Heaven, the Son of God continues to descend to us, inviting each of us to conceive Him in our souls by grace, to be attentive to His divine presence within us, and to nurture His divine presence so that He will grow and live within us, making us true members of His Body, the Church. Staying awake means being aware of Christ's presence in every moment and cultivating a personal relationship with Him that is alive and growing. This Advent, ask yourself: How am I nurturing my relationship with Jesus so that I am ready to meet Him whenever He comes?

Jesus calls us to be prepared at every moment of every day, "for at an hour you do not expect, the Son of Man will come." Though this is a promise that He will return one day to judge the living and



the dead at the end of time, it is also a promise that He relentlessly pursues us here and now, communicating to us by grace and inviting us to be transformed more fully, so as to love Him and manifest His love to the world around us. As we mature in our faith, God often speaks in subtler ways, inviting us to listen with the ears of our hearts. These gentle whispers of grace require us to be even more attuned to His presence, ready to respond to His call in the quiet moments of our day. To stay spiritually awake, cultivate habits that keep us attuned to God's presence: set aside time for daily prayer, receive the sacraments frequently, and be mindful of opportunities to serve others. These practices will help us remain vigilant and ready to encounter Christ at any moment. Search for Him this Advent and never tire of loving Him in our prayer. By building a spiritual habit of being prepared, we will meet and love Him every day. Amen,

Through the generosity of a parishioner the booklet: **ADVENT 2025 Turn Toward a New Light Daily Reflections, Practices and Prayers** by S. JAMES MEYER will be free to all. This handy series of daily reflections will help us turn our heart toward Christ this Advent. This inspiring booklet invites us to embrace renewal, transforming darkness into light, despair into joy, and division into unity. Let each day's reflection move us closer to the life God calls us to live.

**The Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception  
is a Holy Day of Obligation.**

The Mass is on Monday, December 8 at 9:00 am.



**Save the Date! 2026 Butterfly Ball** - OLPH is celebrating its 30th anniversary this year. Join us as we celebrate the last 30 years and toast to the next 30 at our Butterfly Ball on January 24, 2026. For more information on how you can support or participate in the celebration, visit the [olph-retreat.org](http://olph-retreat.org).

Monday, December 1-3, **Bishop Dewane and the priests of the Diocese of Venice** will be here on convocation. Monday and Tuesday from 1:45 to 4:15 pm, **Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament**, will be available in the church. This is a wonderful opportunity to pray before our Lord and to pray for an increase in vocations. All are invited to spend some time in prayer.

**Advent Retreat** - Contemplate prayer and the spiritual journey with Fr. Murchadh O'Madagain, Ph.D. **December 12-14**, 5:00 pm Friday through 1:00 pm Sunday. Guided conferences, shared silence, and spiritual reflection is the perfect way to prepare to welcome our Savior at Christmas! Fr. Murchadh is pastor of St. Vincent de Paul Parish in Fort Myers. He has a doctorate in spiritual theology and is author of several books. Please visit [olph-retreat.org](http://olph-retreat.org) or call (941) 486-0233 to register.

**Safe Environment Training** - 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 Safe Environment prior to beginning employment or volunteering. 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. Please visit the Diocese of Venice website for further information.

Thank you all for your time, talent, and treasure!