



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:

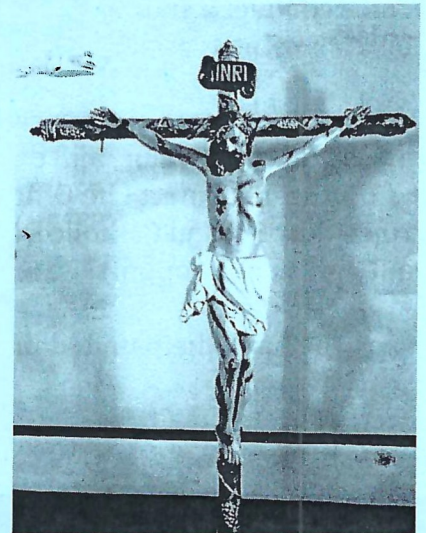
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TWENTY-SIXTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

SEPTEMBER 28, 2025

Gospel of Luke Reflection

Jesus said to the Pharisees: "There was a rich man who dressed in purple garments and fine linen and dined sumptuously each day. And lying at his door was a poor man named Lazarus, covered with sores, who would gladly have eaten his fill of the scraps that fell from the rich man's table. Dogs even used to come and lick his sores. When the poor man died, he was carried away by angels to the bosom of Abraham." Luke 16:19-22



No rational person would want to go to hell. The rich man in this parable certainly did not desire hell, but his actions led him there. Most people, however, do want to be rich in this world. In fact, many people would think it irrational *not* to desire wealth. It is very rare to find a person who chooses to live in simplicity to deeper spiritual fulfillment and as preparation for the riches of Heaven. But one clear message from our Gospel story today is that the life that Lazarus lived on earth was far better than that of the rich man. So which life do you prefer here and now? While it is true that the rich man's riches were not the exclusive cause of his eternal damnation, it is also true that his riches imposed upon him a temptation toward selfishness and indifference to the needs of others, which ended in his eternal demise.

Imagine that we won many millions of dollars. What would we do with it? As a good Christian, we might immediately profess that we would use that money for good, to help the poor and make a difference in the lives of others. What would the ideal response be to winning many millions of dollars? Would it suffice to give away ten percent and then use the rest for ourselves? One thing that this parable teaches is that material wealth not only adds nothing of value to our eternal reward, it also adds much temptation to our lives. True, if we received a lot of money and then used that money exclusively for good in accord with God's will, that would be a holy act of charity on our part and good for our eternal soul. But doing so would be very difficult. It would be very difficult to resist the temptations that come from material wealth.

Is it good to be rich? It is certainly good to be able to take care of our basic needs in life and those of our family. Having money helps us do that. But once our basic needs have been met, the money left over is far more of a temptation than it is a blessing. We must believe that. And if we are among those who want to become rich so that we can help others, consider this scenario. If that is our motivation, and if we did win a large amount of money, would it be possible for us to continue living the way we are living now?

Imagine staying in the same home, driving the same car, having the same lifestyle, and using all the money we obtained 100% for the glory of God and the good of others. That would be hard to do. But if we could do it, not only would it be good for others, but it would also be exceptionally good for our own soul. Choose to imitate Lazarus rather than the rich man. If we have many material possessions, work hard at being detached from them. Live simply, be generous, and never neglect those in need. If we have very little, do not covet more. Eliminate envy, don't despair, trust in the providence of God, and rejoice that, like Lazarus, we are able to build up eternal riches within our soul that will remain with us forever. Amen.

Second Collection October 4-5

September 26, 2025

My Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

The theme for Respect Life this year is "Life: Our Sign of Hope," chosen by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops' and reflects the ongoing Jubilee Year of Hope. It is a time to more deeply consider why every human life is valuable and reflect on how to build a culture that protects life from conception to natural death.

Each year on Respect Life Sunday, the first weekend in October, Parishes across the Diocese of Venice conduct a special second collection to support this life-affirming work. These funds facilitate the Church's witness as a faith community to life in southwest Florida.

Please continue to pray for a greater respect and appreciation for all human life, especially those whose goodness, value, and dignity are undermined. Your generosity in supporting this collection assists the Diocesan Respect Life Office to maintain programs, including the USCCB's Walking with Moms in Need, Project Rachel, and Catholic Days at the Capitol. The Respect Life Office also works with students and youth groups to support life and build Catholic leaders in our community through clubs and events.

Let us remain united in prayer and action. May God bless you for your dedication and generosity!

Sincerely yours in Christ,
+ Frank J. Dewane
Bishop of the Diocese of Venice in Florida



2025 Diocese of Venice (DOV) Rosary Congress- October 4-10, 2025.

The Rosary Congress will be held here at the parish on **Thursday, October 9**. We will begin with **8:00 am Mass and then Exposition of the Blessed Eucharist at 8:30 with Adoration until 12 noon**. It is important that there are parishioners at each hour to stay with our Lord. The praying of the rosary is encouraged or just praying silently to our Blessed Mother to intercede on our behalf. All are welcome to attend.

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.

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