



OUR LADY OF MERCY PARISH

Boca Grande, Florida

Father Jerome A. Carosella, Pastor

Mailing Address:

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Mass Schedule:

Daily (except Saturday)	8:00 A.M.
Saturday Vigil	5:00 P.M.
Sunday	9:00 & 10:30 A.M.
Confessions: Saturday	4:15 to 4:45

Online Giving <https://dioceseofvenice.org/ways-to-give/parish-donations-online/>

TWELFTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

JUNE 25, 2023

APPRECIATION

(Fr. Carosella)

It just occurred to me that this is the last Sunday bulletin you will be receiving before my retirement. "A simple thank you seems far too little to carry the weight of my appreciation to you for all of the blessings that have come to this parish through your dedication and support in so many different ways. It has been a joy for me to be your pastor during these three and a half decades.

The gathering at the parish Life Center last Sunday evening gave me the opportunity to share some time and memories with many parishioners and friends who had come to celebrate my 35 years as pastor of Our Lady of Mercy. I appreciate all the time and efforts of those who arranged it and participated in it in so many ways. I was deeply touched by the many expressions of love and gratitude from you whom I consider part of our family as a parish. It was truly overwhelming and humbling, far beyond my just desserts. It also happened to be Father 's Day which made it all the more appropriate as I prepare to end my tenure here as your pastor at the end of the month. That tenure represents over half of my soon to be 60 years as a priest.

As I step aside I do so mindful of all of those who have meant so much to me through the years as we have gathered here each Sunday to celebrate that faith that is so precious to us all and to be fed at the table of God's word and of the Eucharist. This is the bond that joins us together in Christ.

As I was thinking back on my time here, I couldn't help but remember a fiftieth wedding celebration some years back. After the anniversary Mass when the couple renewed their marriage vows there was the dinner for family and friends. During the dinner, of course, many stood up to express their congratulations to the couple on "fifty happy years together." Then it was the couples' turn to thank all of those who had come. When it was the wife turn, she stood up to speak and thanked everyone for their congratulations for "fifty years of a happy marriage."

She said, "the years, yes, the days, not always." I like that, it was so genuine. I can say the same thing - 35 years of a happy pastorate, yes, but some days, some times, happier than others as we struggled through, more recently, the pandemic and the closing of the church, and hurricane Ian and the building of our wonderful Parish Life Center which presented its own challenges, but together we weathered them all and are the better for it and we grew even more closely together as a faith community.

The words of the Lord in today's Gospel, "Do not be afraid" are addressed not only to those disciples and apostles but to all of us not because there are no fearful things in our lives, but because our faith grounds us in something above and beyond them. It is all about trust in the God who loves us as it was for Jesus himself as he faced the trials in his own life and suffering. "For the sake of the joy that lay before him he endured the cross, headless of its shame, and has taken his seat at the right of the throne of God." It was the joy of his resurrection and also the joy of our redemption. As he sat at the last Supper table the opening words of the Gospel puts it so well, "Having loved his own, he loved them to the end." I make mine the words of St. Paul in his letter to the Philippians, the community he loved so well: "I thank God every time I remember you. In all my prayers for all of you I always pray with joy because of your partnership in the Gospel from the first day until now, being confident of this. That he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus."

PETER'S PENCE

(Letter from Bishop Dewane)

Greetings in the Lord Jesus Christ! As the Solemnity of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ has recently taken place, please know of my prayers. May you be filled with an ever-increasing zeal for our Lord in the Holy Eucharist.

Each year on the Sunday nearest to the Solemnity of Saints Peter and Paul, we are all invited to pray for the Pope and to offer our contributions to support the Peter's Pence Collection. Through your offerings, you assist Pope Francis in carrying out his charitable work to victims of war, migrants and refugees, and the poor affected by illness and natural disasters.

The Diocese of Venice is scheduled to hold the Peter's Pence Collection on the weekend of **July 1 & 2, 2023**. Your offerings express the sense of belonging to the Church and love and trust for the Holy Father. Please join our brothers and sisters from around the globe and give generously to the Peter's Pence Collection, helping Pope Francis carry out his charitable ministry to the Universal Church. Thank you and may God bless you for your contribution.

I take this opportunity to extend to you my continued consideration as well as my prayers for you and your family. Have a Blessed Summer.

PRAYER FOR SAFETY IN HURRICANE SEASON

O God, Master of this passing world, hear the humble voices of your children.

The Sea of Galilee obeyed Your order and returned to its former quietude.

You are still the Master of land and sea.

We live in the shadow of a danger over which we have no control:

the Gulf, like a provoked and angry giant, can awake from its seeming lethargy, overstep its conventional boundaries, invade our land, and spread chaos and disaster.

During this hurricane season we turn to You, O loving Father.

Spare us from past tragedies whose memories are still so vivid and whose wounds seem to refuse to heal with passing of time.

O Virgin, Star of the Sea, our beloved Mother, we ask you to plead with your Son on our behalf, so that spared from the calamities common to this area and animated with a true spirit of gratitude, we will walk in the footsteps of your Divine Son to reach the heavenly Jerusalem, where a stormless eternity awaits us.

Amen.