



OUR LADY OF MERCY PARISH

Boca Grande, Florida

Father Anthony Hewitt, 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	By Appointment
Web address:	ourladyofmercy.church
OnlineGiving:	https://ourladyofmercy.church

THIRTY-SECOND SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

NOVEMBER 12, 2023

NOTE FROM OUR PASTOR

Dear People of God,

Holy Hour is every Tuesday at 10:00 am. We will start with Exposition of the Blessed Eucharist, then silent adoration, and ending with Benediction at 11:00 am. This is a beautiful opportunity to spend time before our Lord and to offer prayers for our needs. It is my hope that we pray for vocations to the priesthood and the religious life during this time with Jesus, as well as the renewal of Church in the Eucharist the world over. May this time before Jesus bring us grace and healing. Prayers of Adoration may be found on the table in back of church.

Father Anthony

CELEBRATE FATHER CAROSELLA

All are invited to a celebration of Father Carosella's 60th ordination anniversary, 85th Birthday, and to honor 35 years of service as pastor of Our Lady of Mercy church. An Italian dinner is planned in the **Parish Life Center on FRIDAY, November 17th from 5:00 until 7:00pm.** There is a \$40 charge that includes drinks. Please RSVP to Ken Parker by November 12th, kbparker45@gmail.com or 813-760-8968. Volunteers needed for setup, cleanup, signing, or hostess during the event. Ken Parker will collect volunteer names at time of sign-up.

ALL SOULS INTENTION ENVELOPES

During the month of November, the church remembers those loved ones who have gone before us in death marked with the sign of faith. The All-Souls envelopes are available in your envelope packets and on the table at the entrance to the church. List the names of family and friends you would like to have remembered by the priest at all the Masses in November. The envelopes can be put in the collection basket or dropped off at the parish office. May the angels lead our loved ones into paradise.

CATHOLIC CAMPAIGN FOR HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

(Letter from Bishop Dewane)

The Catholic Campaign for Human Development (CCHD), the national, antipoverty campaign of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), has been an immeasurable blessing for those in need over the years. CCHD supports organizations that combat poverty and improve the lives of people across the United States. These organizations address challenges that affect communities in both rural and urban areas by aiding and advocating for employment opportunities, education, and affordable housing.

Nearly thirty-four million Americans live below the poverty line. By supporting CCHD, you can help break the cycle of poverty through funding community programs that encourage independence. Further, you help local communities in the Diocese of Venice, and across the country, innovate and work together to solve their own unique challenges, especially those impacted by natural disasters. The Diocese of Venice will take up the collection for the Catholic Campaign for Human Development **the weekend of November 18 and 19, 2023.**

In addition to making an impact nationally, those living in poverty in rural areas of our own Diocese are empowered through the twenty-five percent share of the collection that stays here. Your support of this collection truly makes a difference for those in need. Thank you for your generosity! I take this opportunity to extend to each of you the assurances of my continued consideration as well as my prayers. Sincerely yours in Christ, Frank J. Dewane, Bishop, Diocese of Venice in Florida.

NOVEMBER 15: SAINT ALBERT THE GREAT, BISHOP AND DOCTOR

c. 1200–1280

Patron Saint of scientists, medical technicians, natural sciences, philosophers, schoolchildren, and theology students

Canonized by Pope Pius XI on December 16, 1931

Declared a Doctor of the Church (Universal Doctor) during his canonization.

I have felt moved to write a few last thoughts describing, as far as one may in this waiting-time of our exile and pilgrimage, the entire separation of the soul from all earthly things and its close, unfettered union with God.

I have been more urged to this, because Christian perfection has no other end but charity, which unites us to God. This union of charity is essential for salvation since it consists in the practice of the precepts and in conformity to the Divine will. Hence it separates us from whatever would war against the essence and habit of charity, such as mortal sin. ~Saint Albert, "On Union With God"

One of the greatest minds in the history of the Church was born in the Holy Roman Empire around the turn of the thirteenth century in the town of Lauingen, modern-day Germany. Different sources date his birth in various years between 1193 and 1206. He was known as Albert of Lauingen when born, but even before his death he was often referred to as Albert the Great (*Albertus Magnus*).

Albert was born into a noble family, with some accounts identifying his father as a count. Because of his noble status, he enjoyed the blessing of an excellent education, either at home from private tutors or in a neighboring school. At some point after completing his elementary studies, he was sent to the University of Padua to study the liberal arts and was also introduced to the philosophy of Aristotle that would become foundational for his later writings. Around 1223, Albert joined the Dominican order, possibly as a result of an apparition in which the Blessed Virgin Mary instructed him to do so. He continued his studies in important schools in Padua, Paris, and Cologne to complete his education in philosophy and theology.

Around the time that Brother Albert finished his studies, he was ordained to the sacred priesthood and was assigned to various teaching posts throughout Europe, most notably in Cologne for several years. Around 1245, Father Albert earned the distinction of "Master of Theology" from the prestigious Saint-Jacques at the University of Paris, where he also was given the Chair of Theology.

It is difficult to know what was taking place within the mind and soul of Father Albert during these first twenty-two years as a Dominican, but it is clear from the abundant good fruit borne from his life that he was intimately united to God. Later biographers describe him as having a voracious appetite for sacred knowledge, with the heavens opening up upon him, filling his mind with divine light. Unique to his thought was the incorporation of Aristotle's philosophical principles in logic and metaphysics with theology.

Before Father Albert, no one had thoroughly incorporated the two strains of thought. This was partly due to the fact that all of Aristotle's works had only recently been translated into Latin from ancient Greek. Father Albert was not only a philosopher and theologian, he was a walking encyclopedia who seemed to have mastered all subjects. The compilation of his writings fills thirty-nine encyclopedic volumes and covers a multitude of topics, including logic, metaphysics, rhetoric, theology, botany, geography, astronomy, astrology, mineralogy, alchemy, zoology, physiology, phrenology, justice, law, politics, economics, friendship, and love.

One might ask what most of these have to do with theology. Father Albert would reply that they all have to do with theology because they all come from God and are all in perfect harmony with each other. Today some suggest that science and faith contradict each other. Father Albert would be the first to challenge that belief and would thoroughly defend his position. The simple answer is that if God is the source of all the natural sciences, logic, revelation, law, and order, and all that is true, then God cannot contradict Himself. He cannot create the natural sciences with one truth and then reveal in theology another truth. What is true is that which is in the mind of God, no matter the subject, and that which is in the mind of God is perfectly harmonious. All creation reveals and glorifies God in its own perfect way!

Though Father Albert was one of the most prolific and profound writers in the Church, God also used him to help form a man who became the Church's greatest theologian: Saint Thomas Aquinas, the Angelic Doctor. Father Thomas Aquinas was about twenty-five years younger than Father Albert but died five years before him. It was in Paris that the twenty-year-old Father Thomas became Father Albert's student. Their teacher-student bond grew into a profound mutual respect and friendship. In many ways, Father Albert laid the foundation for Father Thomas by helping him embrace and "Christianize" Aristotelian logic and metaphysics. Father Albert was the first of the Church's theologians to write upon every aspect of Aristotle, and Father Thomas soaked it all up, later building upon it to produce what is arguably the most important theological work ever written: the *Summa Theologiae* ("Summary of Theology" or "Compendium of Theology").

Together, these men were among the greatest theologians to show that faith and reason are not exclusive of each other; rather, they are intimately interwoven and inseparable. When pure human reason is used to analyze the content of divine revelation (faith), the mind is able to extrapolate deeper truths and bring them to their logical conclusion, even to the highest degrees of abstraction. The bond and respect between Fathers Albert and Thomas were so deep that when Father Albert was transferred to Cologne in 1248, Father Thomas followed him.

In 1254, Father Albert was made the provincial superior of the Dominican Order, adding administrative duties to his academic pursuits. In 1260, Pope Alexander IV appointed him as the Bishop of Regensburg, where he remained for the next three years. During that time, though Bishop Albert was among the greatest minds in the Church, his humility won the hearts of his people, and he was able to bring healing to divisions that plagued that diocese. After Bishop Albert resigned his position, the pope employed him for diplomatic missions while Bishop Albert continued his academic pursuits.

Because Bishop Albert and Father Thomas Aquinas were groundbreakers in the use of Aristotelian logic and metaphysics, there were some who criticized them. In 1277, two years after Father Thomas died, the Bishop of Paris issued an edict condemning 219 theological propositions that were deduced from Aristotelian logic by various theologians, stating that God's Almighty Power was so transcendent that the propositions violated God's Omnipotence. Twenty of those 219 were from Father Thomas. Some stories state that despite his age (about seventy-seven), Bishop Albert traveled to Paris to personally defend his saintly student. In the end, both teacher and student became saints and Doctors of the Church, thus pointing to the true omnipotence of God.

Saint Albert the Great was a man with a mind on fire with the Holy Spirit. Mere human intellectual capacity could never achieve what he achieved.

Some saints are filled with the fortitude necessary to die as martyrs, some are mystics whose lives reveal the holiness of God, some are founders who build up the Church through new charisms and religious communities, and some, like Saints Albert and Thomas, receive the gift of intellect, infused with the highest degree of the virtues of wisdom, knowledge, understanding, and prudence, by which they are able to leave the Church a solid theological foundation upon which it can continue to be built.

As we honor the “Great” Saint Albert, Doctor of the Church, who was designated as Universal Doctor because he mastered every subject, ponder the simple fact that, despite his having one of the greatest minds in the history of thought, his proficiency is but a drop of water in the ocean compared to the mind of God.

This humble truth is something Saint Albert would have readily professed, yet it never stopped him from striving to become that one drop, given that it was one small way of comprehending and articulating what God has revealed to us. And that which comes from God, no matter how small in comparison to the Reality, has infinite value. Seek to imitate Saint Albert by renewing your commitment to the study of your faith so that your mind will experience but a drop of the grace given to this greatest of men.

OUR ANNUAL SHOE BOX

As is our custom each year, we have placed a shoe box on the table in the rear of the church for donations for Christmas gifts to the children of the migrant families of St. Paul’s Parish of Arcadia. Please make checks out to: Catholic Charities of DeSoto County. Do not make check out to Our Lady of Mercy. Thank you for your generous support.

FOOD PANTRY

As the holiday seasons are quickly approaching, please remember the food pantry at St. Francis of Assisi Parish in Grove City. They are always in need of non-perishable (and unopened) food items. Please place donated items in the plastic bin under the table inside the church. To give you some helpful hints, they are in need of canned vegetables, pasta sauce, pasta, (very much in need of pasta) and mac and cheese. Thank you for your support.

PRAYER FOR PEACE

Lord of all, in this time of strife and suffering, we come before you with heavy hearts, seeking your divine intervention. We lift up to you the victims of the Holy Land conflict, asking for your mercy and healing touch.

Prince of Peace, grant solace to those who are in pain, strength to those who are weary and hope to those who are in despair. Let your guiding light shine upon all, that they may find a path to reconciliation and understanding.

Mary, Mother of Mercy, wrap your mantle of love around those who are suffering, and intercede for them before your Son. May your gentle compassion be a source of comfort and consolation. We implore you, O God, to inspire leaders and all involved to seek avenues of peace and dialogue. Soften hearts that are hardened by hatred and division and instill in them a desire for unity and harmony.

St. Francis of Assisi, patron of peace, pray for us. Help us to be instruments of your peace in this troubled world. In the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior, we pray. Amen.