



## Parish Office Hours

Monday through Friday  
8:30 AM to 4:30 PM

**Fr. Ronnie Sison**  
**Pastor**

## Schedule of Masses

**Saturday**  
**Confession**  
3:30 PM English  
6:30 PM Spanish

**Vigil Mass**  
4 PM English  
7 PM Spanish

**Sunday**  
8 AM and 10:30 AM

**Holy Days**  
Vigil Mass 6:30 PM  
8 & 10:30 AM

**Daily Mass**  
Tuesday-Friday  
8 AM

**First Friday**  
Mass and Holy Hour  
8 AM

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# Our Lady of Grace



**595 East Main Street • Avon Park, Florida 33825**

**Parish Office (863) 453-4757**

**5th Sunday in Ordinary Time**

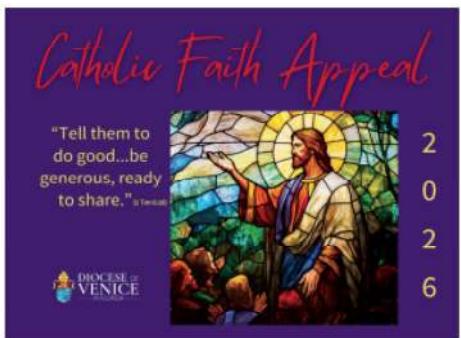
**February 8, 2026**



## 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time

“You are the light of the world... Let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and give glory to your Father in heaven” (Matthew 5: 13 - 16).

**OLG Parish 2026 CFA Commitment Sunday**



## OLG 2026 CFA Goal \$132,000.00: Commitment Sunday.

There is a story told by Fr Gallagher, who was invited by (St) Mother Teresa of Calcutta, to give a nuns retreat in Calcutta.

To shake off the jet lag, he decided to go for a short walk-through a crowded street. As he did so, he tripped over a young boy, maybe eight to ten years old, who was barely skin and bones. The boy looked nervously at him and took off. This unnerved Fr Gallagher; so, he decided to return to his residence.

When he arrived, his confreres were having a simple evening meal. Because of jet-lag and the incident with the young boy, he did not feel like eating. Instead, he packed a few sandwiches into a bag and decided to go look for the boy, an exercise akin to looking for a needle in a haystack of people. He found the boy. He offered him the bag with the sandwiches. The boy snapped the bag and vacuumed down the sandwiches and took off without saying a word. This just added to Father Gallagher's heightening agitation. He decided to return to his residence, to go to the chapel in an effort to regain his equilibrium. Instead of calming down, he became even more agitated; he erupted in anger at God. *"I have been a priest for twenty-five years," he began, "and I have always preached about you as a loving God who cares unconditionally for his people."* He continued, *"in walking through the streets of Calcutta, I see nothing but abject poverty, especially among the most vulnerable, young innocent children. What have you done for them?"*

Having ventilated his anger, Fr Gallagher calmed down. In a stream of consciousness, he heard a voice say, *"Michael, I have done something about these vulnerable children...I created you."*

You should have received a **personal letter from Bishop Dewane recently**, informing you of a variety of acute needs in the Diocese of Venice and, inviting you to respond in the **2026 Annual CFA**, accompanied by a **commitment pledge card**. Pledge cards are on tables as you exit Church.

**Today is 2026 CFA Commitment Sunday.** In imitation of Jesus, who reached out to heal the wounds of many *"in Capernaum ...and the surrounding villages,"* **Bishop Dewane** is reaching out in his appeal for support from the **62 parishes, including OLOG, & 18 missions**, which make up the 10-county-Diocese-of-Venice, on behalf of wounded people with a variety of acute needs, who live in the DOV, **needs such as: human trafficking...resettlement and housing for migrants...modest income housing for the elderly...support for poor missions and parishes...support for a variety of ministries in Catholic Charities... support for catholic education... support for seminarians... support for broken marriages and fragmented families...We need to recognize and respond to these needs. How does Jesus respond to these needs today... "I created you...."**

### Gift opportunities using the 10-month pledge payment plan

Gift amount	initial payment	monthly payment
\$5,000	\$500	\$500
\$2,500	\$250	\$250
\$1,000	\$100	\$100
\$500	\$50	\$50

**Permanent residents of OLG:** you are invited to make a **10-month pledge commitment**;

**Seasonal residents:** you are invited to make a **1-6 pledge commitment**.

**All parishioners:** are invited **to pledge something – "God loves a generous giver."**



## Augustine Tolton (1854-1897)

First recognized black U.S. priest  
February: Black History Month

**Chicago** – Augustine Tolton was a slave who grew up to become the first acknowledged black Catholic priest in the U.S.

*"When he was alive, his life would probably not have been considered that newsworthy. He lived at a time when to be a person of color automatically meant that you were not a person of significance,"* says Washington D. C.'s. Archbishop Wilton Gregory, who served from 2001-2004 as the first black president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops. *"So, the very fact that he was able to accomplish what he accomplished under severe limitations was to his credit."* Even Gregory, a native Chicagoan, did not know Tolton's story until he was well into adulthood. *"We need to find vehicles to make him better known today,"* he says. To that end, a book about Tolton's life — ***From Slave to Priest*** — has been published by San Francisco-based **Ignatius Press**. The biography was written by **Sister Caroline Hemesath**.

Tolton's story is one of struggle and perseverance. The second of three children, he was born in 1854 to Catholic parents who were slaves in Missouri, just a few years before the start of the Civil War. His father, Peter Tolton, was one of many slaves who escaped to join the Union army and fight for black freedom — and who died battling for that cause, according to Hemesath's book. Augustine, along with his mother, Martha Jane, and his two siblings, escaped across the Mississippi River to Illinois. After arriving in Quincy, Illinois, Martha, Augustus, and Charley began working at the Herris Tobacco Company where they made cigars. After Charley's death at a young age, Augustine met Fr. Peter McGirr, an Irish immigrant priest from Fintona, County Tyrone, who gave him the opportunity to attend St. Peter's parochial school during the winter months, when the factory was closed. The priest's decision was controversial in the parish. Although abolitionists were active in the town, many of McGirr's parishioners objected to a black student at their children's school. McGirr held fast and allowed Tolton to study there. Later, Tolton continued studies directly with some priests.

### Study in Rome

Despite McGirr's support, Tolton, who wanted to study for the priesthood, was rejected by every American seminary to which he applied. Tolton was finally allowed to study in Rome, leading to his **ordination in 1886**, when he was 31. After Ordination, expecting to serve in an African mission, instead, he was directed to return to the United States to serve the black community. An 1893 article in the *Lewiston Daily Sun*, written while he worked to establish St. Monica's for African American Catholics in Chicago, said, "Father Tolton ... is a fluent and graceful talker and has a singing voice of exceptional sweetness, which shows to good advantage in the chants of the high mass. It is no unusual thing for many white people to be seen among his congregation." Tolton began to be plagued by "spells of illness" in 1893. At the age of 43, on July 8, 1897, he collapsed and died the following day at Mercy Hospital. Cardinal George of Chicago introduced his cause for canonization in March 2010. He was declared "Venerable" By Pope Francis in 2017.



# Valentine's Day Dinner & Dance

OLG Annual St. Valentine's Dinner-Dance



**When?** Saturday, February 14<sup>th</sup>, 2026

**Time:** Doors open 5 p.m.: Serve Dinner, 6 p.m.

Followed by Dinner-dance.

**Cost:** \$50 per person.

**Information:** Judy Nugent, (863) 385-8883

**Band:** California-Toe-Jam-Band



Dance-to-your-hearts-content



## Vocation Awareness Weekend: March 7 - 9

Discover what the seminarian life is all about during the weekend of March 7-9 at St. John Vianney College Seminary, 2900 SW 87th Ave, Miami. Participants will travel together for a weekend of fellowship, prayer and fun. Speak with seminarian students and teachers about their journey. Transportation is provided. For questions: **Fr Alexander Price, Vocations Director**, or, Lina Johnson, 941-486-4720, or, [johnson@dioceseofvenice.org](mailto:johnson@dioceseofvenice.org).

## Pints with a Priest

- Catholic singles in their 30s, 40s and 50s are invited on **Saturday, January 31** to **"The Vocation to Love: God's Plan for the Single Seeking Marriage,"** featuring Fr. Mark Harris, St. John the Evangelist Parish, Naples. The event will be from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at Bone Hook Brewery, 1514 Immokalee Rd, Unit 106 in Naples. No need to register.



**Ladies Guild Strawberry Festival**  
**Sunday, February 22, 11:30 A.M. – 1:30 P.M.**  
**Grogan Center.**

**5º Domingo del Tiempo Ordinario**  
Sal de la Tierra y Luz del Mundo



Jesús usa dos ejemplos diferentes de un buen discípulo: sal de la tierra y luz del mundo. Un poco de cualquiera de las dos hace una gran diferencia. Así también, un poco de Fe puede hacer una gran diferencia. La forma en que vivimos nuestra Fe puede hablar fuertemente.

Cuando alguien tiene tanta Fe que se refleja en sus acciones, como dice Isaías: “*Entonces surgirá tu luz como la aurora*”. Cuando confiamos en el amor de Cristo, que murió en la cruz y resucitó por el poder del Espíritu, y reconocemos que Dios habita en quienes nos rodean, surge en nosotros el deseo de cuidarnos unos a otros.

Una dieta baja en sal puede ser buena para nosotros; pero una Fe baja en sal, la empeora. Podríamos seguir siendo muy buenas personas, pero no seríamos muy buenos discípulos. —Tom Schmidt



**Cena y baile de San Valentín**

¿Cuándo? Sábado, 14 de febrero de 2026

Hora: Puertas abren a las 5 p. m. Cena a las 6 p. m.

Seguido de cena-baile.

Costo: \$50 por persona.

Información: Judy Nugent, (863) 446-1841

Banda: California-Toe-Jam-Band

**PROGRAMA DE EDUCACIÓN RELIGIOSA**

Edificio MacDonald

Grados PreK – 5

Domingos 9:00 a 10:15am

Grados 6 – 12

Miércoles 6:00 a 8:00pm

Preguntas/Información

Mayra Donan 863-453-7537

**ADULTOS**

Edificio Juan Bosco

Domingos 9:00 a 10:15am

Preguntas/Información

Florentino Perada 863-840-4533

**Juan XXIII**

Jueves 7:00pm

Salón Juan Bosco

Para Información

Omar 863-205-0694 Elvin 863-853-0065



**GRUPO DE ORACIÓN**

**“Santísima Trinidad”**

Iglesia

6:30pm Rosario / 7:00pm Grupo

Hortencia 863-448-6869 / Adela 863-528-8267

**MASS INTENTIONS****SATURDAY FEBRUARY 7**

4:00 p.m. Bert Grant by Randy Rhodes.  
7:00 p.m. Sosa Family & Felipe Cruz.

**SUNDAY**

8:00 a.m. + Kevin Erb by Wife & Family.  
10:30 a.m. + Faride Sarmiento by Family.

**MONDAY****TUESDAY****WEDNESDAY****THURSDAY****FRIDAY****SATURDAY****FEBRUARY 8**

+ Kevin Erb by Wife & Family.  
+ Faride Sarmiento by Family.

**FEBRUARY 9**

No Mass.

**FEBRUARY 10**

Birthday Wishes - Teresa Lynn Devlin by Paul & Justine Devlin.

**FEBRUARY 11**

8:00 a.m. Birthday – May Rose Housh by Paul & Justine Devlin.

**FEBRUARY 12**

8:00 a.m. Chuck Monnahan by Evelyn Seely.

**FEBRUARY 13**

8:00 a.m. Barbara Amiott by Amiott Family.

**FEBRUARY 14**

8:00 a.m. + For the unborn – by Our Lady of Grace.  
4:00 p.m. + Kevin Erb by Family.  
7:00 p.m. + Odilon Suniga by Adela Rodriguez.

**THE SILVER ROSE**

The Silver Rose, a tradition begun in 1960, honoring Our Lady of Guadalupe and promoted by the Knights of Columbus, Knights on Bikes, Biker Knights in both Canada and United States with final destination in December of this year at the Basilica in Mexico will be present here at Our Lady of Grace on February 17, 2026, at 6:00 p.m. The Silver Rose Program serves as a symbol of the Order's unity, devotion to Our Lady of Guadalupe, and a commitment to the sanctity of Life. Please join Council #14717 in celebrating the Silver Rose Prayer Service.

**FOR THE SICK OF THE PARISH**

Joan Morgan	Candida Reyes	Kathy Furtado
Rosa Arosemena	Andres Clavijo	Jade Jackson
Martha Clavijo	Harold Raccine	Carol Krause
Donna Skelly	Roger Brelinski	Jean Rapp
Rosemary Melinson	Cameron Prosperi	Joan Bender
Deb Perry	Martha Spung	Louise Schorsch
Donald Schorsch	Ed Carrigan	Joey Prescott
Michael Rand	Bea Pedara	Marty Worley
Sharon Ingalls	Gary Ingalls	Dennis Hood
Susan Beaudoin	Amy Slane	Jeff Babbit
Rose Brault	Waylen James	Raffael Aversa
Jerry Grinkiewicz	Kim Nuccio	Sherry
Jeannie Stopa	Jim Stopa	Marie Burley
Rick Burley	Ron Maslyk	Kathy Reisert
Clay Gooch	Janice Vreeland	Joan Trace
Jan Raccine	Harold Raccine	Paul Repa
Joan Reetz	Brenda Buergi	Joe Deyo

And for those who care for the sick, for the deceased member's and benefactors of the parish, and for our loved ones.

**AVON PARK**

The free Income Tax Service at Our Lady of Grace Catholic Church , 595 E. Main Street, Avon Park will be preparing Federal and State tax returns on Tuesdays and Thursdays from February 3rd (Excluding February 5th) through April 15th. Tax appointments will be prepared by appointment only. Tax appointments can be made in person at the Grogan Center any Tuesday or Thursday beginning January 20th and 22nd only between 9:00 a.m. and noon, and through the tax season starting February 3rd to April 15th. For questions call Site Coordinator Linda Pomeroy, 863-452-7641. Please **DO NOT CALL** Our Lady of Grace Catholic Church, as they cannot assist you.



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## Staff & Ministries

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### Administrative Assistant

Evelyn Barcina  
Evelyn.Barcinas@ologap.org

### Bookkeeper

Linda Beman  
linda.beman@ologap.org

Maintenance  
Maria Ramirez  
Mike DeRosa

### Religious Education

Director  
Mayra Donan  
(863) 453-7537

### Music Director

Gene Ryan  
mee@generyan.com

### Knights of Columbus

Eric Quiel  
Grand Knight  
863-414-5002

### Women's Guild

Debora Augusta  
President  
(863)991-1020

### OCIA Director

Travis & Dawn Crosson  
(863)453-4757

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## Parish Council

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### President

Betty Anne Lee  
863-873-7176



## Church Service Center Collection: thank you.

Thank you for bringing non-perishable food to Church at last weekend masses to help feed approximately 400 families, representing 1,000 poor neighbors in Avon Park. A **2<sup>nd</sup> collection** was taken to assist those who come to the CSC, seeking financial assistance with water, electric and rent bills. Thank you; may God bless and reward you for your generosity.

**Tax Aide Program: Offer Free Tax Service:** Tax Aide, a free nationwide tax preparation service, will perform its free tax service at **OLG Church**, beginning the **1<sup>st</sup> Tuesday in February, February 3rd, 2026**. The free tax service will be **offered each Tuesday and Thursday, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Grogan Center**. Please do not call the Church office with questions. If you have tax related questions, **come to the Grogan Center & speak directly to one of the IRS certified Tax-Aide counselors, or, call Linda Pomeroy 607 434 8208.**

**Anniversary Masses** - All couples celebrating **25, 30, 35, 40, 45, 50**, or more than 50 years of marriage are invited by Bishop Frank J. Dewane to **an Anniversary Mass** in their honor at **11:00 a.m. on Saturday, February 14 at St. Leo the Great Parish**, 28290 Beaumont Road, Bonita Springs and, at **St Thomas More Catholic Church**, 2506 Gulf Gate Dr., Sarasota, Saturday, **March 14th, at 11 A.M. Photos at both Churches 9:30 - 10:30 A.M. Contact your parish office – 453-4757 – to register for event you choose to attend.**

## Tallahassee Trip-

Join the Diocese of Venice in Tallahassee in **February 10 - 12, 2026** for Catholic Days at the Capitol! All are welcome. Each year during the Florida legislative session, Catholics from across the state gather in Tallahassee to bring the light of faith to the public square and promote Catholic values through civic engagement. United with the Florida Bishops, participants advocate for the protection of human life and dignity as lawmakers shape Florida's laws for the common good. By making the trip to our state capitol and lifting our voices, Catholic Days pilgrims help make a meaningful and lasting difference in the lives of all Floridians.

**Register by January 7!**

**Click here to register.** Contact **Tavia Ames, 941-374-1068** with questions, or for more information.

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