

Our Lady of



Grace

Catholic Parish



595 East Main Street • Avon Park, Florida 33825

Parish Office (863) 453-4757

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

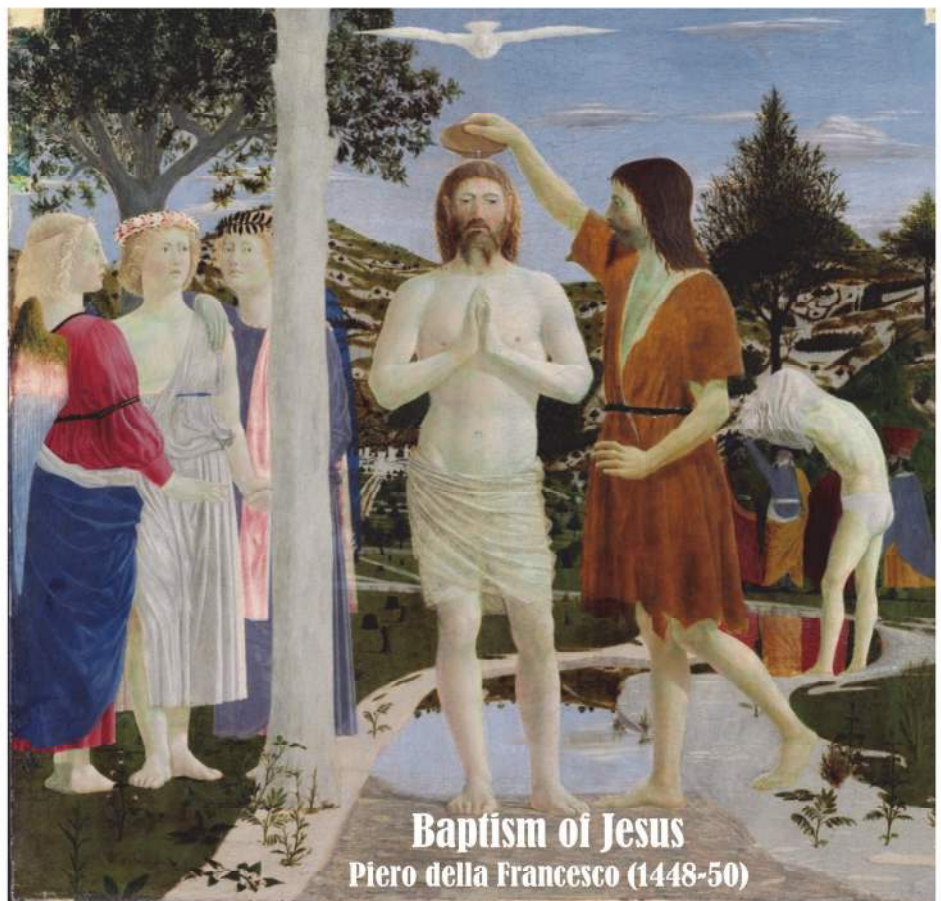
First Friday

Mass and Holy Hour
8 AM

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Baptism of the Lord

January 11, 2026



Baptism of Jesus
Piero della Francesca (1448-50)

Piero della Francesca paints Jesus with an ugly face. Why? In doing so, he chose to follow a biblical quote, *“He had no beauty that we should desire him”* (Is 53:2). The ‘ugly face’ represents the flawed human nature he assumed to show his solidarity with the sinful human condition into which he was born. Jesus receives baptism in the midst of Luke’s assorted, sinful people (3:12/13). This was **Jesus’ mission**: to identify with our sinful condition; to transform it **from sinner to “God’s Beloved.”** This is represented in the painting with the young person, dressing after Baptism, with the same color white skin as Jesus.



PIERO DELLA FRANCESCA

National Gallery, London

They say a picture's worth 1000 words – let's see!

tradition. **The 'ugly face' represents the flawed human nature he assumed to show his solidarity with the sinful human condition into which he was born.** Jesus insists on receiving baptism in the midst of this assorted, sinful people. It is God's will that he do so in this manner.

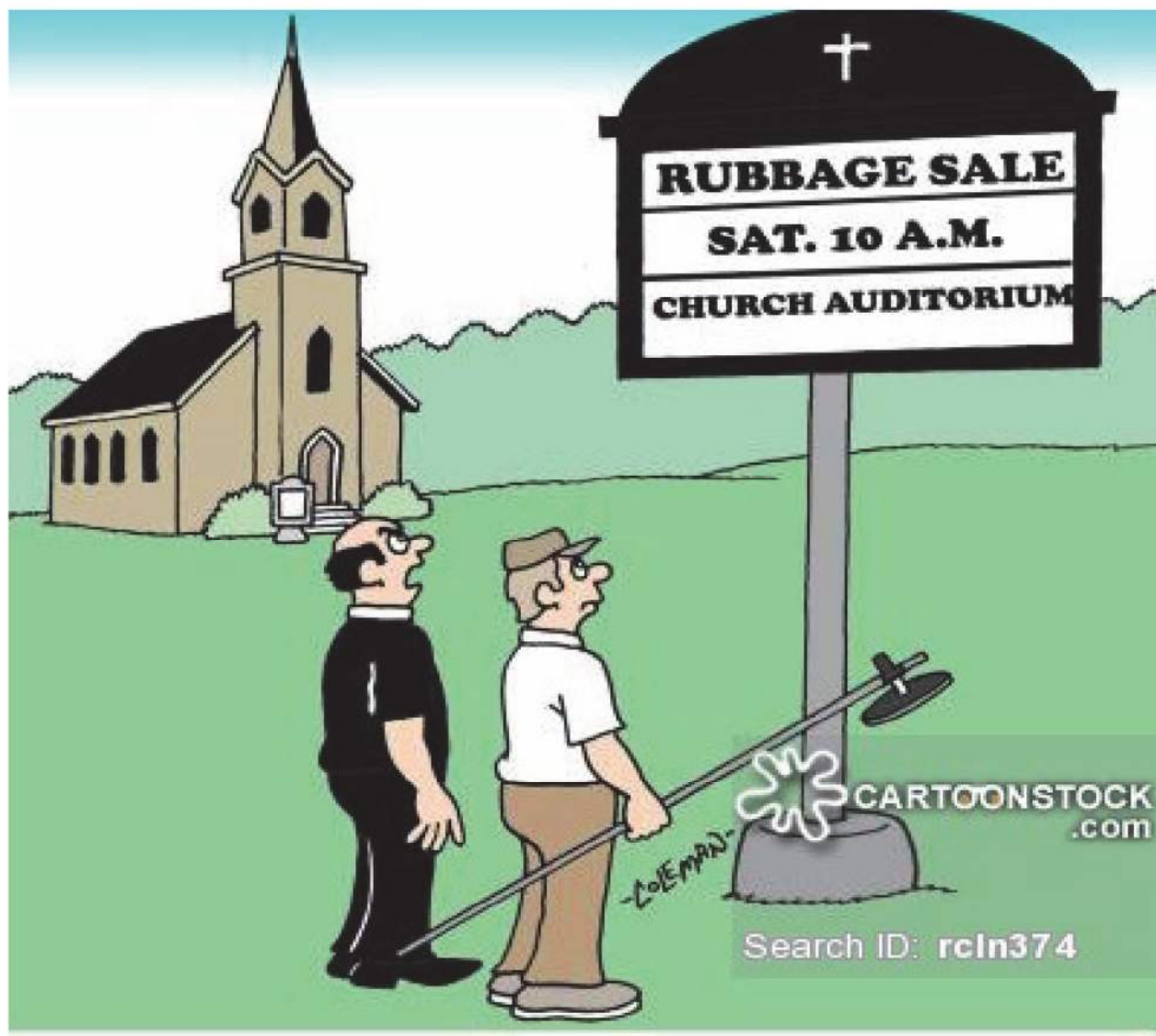
What moves Jesus to take this step? Why does he leave Nazareth, his family, his occupation? His first step is to go to John in the midst of the penitents. His first official act is something like his **"life agenda"**. Right from the beginning Jesus takes up the place that expresses the mission of his life: in the midst of us poor sinners, as if he was one of us. Even his name expresses his mission: Jesus in Hebrew means **"God saves"**. The angel had explained to Joseph in a dream that this was the reason for calling the child that Mary was expecting Jesus: **"For he will save his people from their sins."** We see a man dressing after his baptism in Della Francesca's painting. His skin is the same color as Jesus: he now shares his life.

So, this connects Jesus' birth with his baptism, which begins his mission: he came to free us from our sins. That is why he, the Son of God, became man: that is why he comes to the River Jordan, in order to place himself in the midst of us sinners and to take our burden of guilt and sin upon himself. And God shows his approval: **"This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased"** This is the simple message of Christmas: **"For God so loved the world that He sent his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him might not perish but might have eternal life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through him"** (John 3: 16-17).

The Baptism of Jesus begins His Mission & Ministry

Why does the Christmas season end for the Church with the Baptism of Jesus, which he did not request from John until he was 30 years old? What did this have to do with the birth of Jesus?

Today most children of Christian parents are already baptized soon after birth. It was different at the time when John the Baptist made his call to repentance. Many heard his call & went down with him to the River Jordan in order to confess their sins. Luke the Evangelist gives a vivid account of all who came there to receive the baptism of repentance: **soldiers, prostitutes, tax collectors, and people of ill repute and of all occupational strata.** If you look closely at the cover picture by **Piero Della Francesca**, you will see the Pharisees & Sadducees in the background, dressed, coming for John's baptism of repentance. Then suddenly Jesus shows up in their midst. John shrinks back. **What was he doing in such company?** If you look closely at **the face of Jesus it is painted as an ugly face.** Why? Piero Della Francesca chose a biblical quote **"He had no beauty that we should desire him"** (Is 53:2) and, rendered Christ with an unprecedented ugliness in the 14th century Italian



" THAT'S SUPPOSED TO SAY ' RUMMAGE SALE ' ..."

2026 Ladies Guild Annual Rummage Sale

**Friday/Saturday, January 30th and 31st
8:00 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.**

Where? Grogan Center

We are in need of many donated items – preferably quality items – No junk please.

**We need many volunteers to help: you are needed & welcome
Wednesday thru Saturday – great opportunity to meet and work
With fellow parishioners.**

**Drop off items, Wednesday, Thursday,
January 21st and 22nd.**

9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Information: Debbie Augusta, (863) 991-1020



March for Life, Washington D.C., January 22-23,

The March for Life is the largest annual human rights demonstration in the world. **Every January, tens of thousands of pro-lifers converge in Washington, D.C. and march on Capitol Hill.** The goal? To advocate for laws that protect the sanctity of life, and to influence the culture so that it may become a culture of life. Even with the overturning of *Roe v. Wade*, our work to build a culture of life and put an end to abortion is not done; our work continues at both state and federal levels. In fact, **the effort to protect life has gotten even more complex, with the advance and prevalence of the abortion pills, and their easy, anonymous distribution.** Join this inspiring, peaceful, vibrant rally of women, men, and people young and old from across the country, and fight for life! If you are planning to participate in the March for Life or are interested in additional information, **contact Tavia Ame at ames@dioceseofvenice or call 941-374-1068.**

IDENTIFYING FAITHFUL YOUNG MEN



Do you know a young man who exhibits qualities of faith, leadership, and a heart for service? Help encourage him in his vocational discernment by sharing his name and contact information. Please include at least one form of contact so we can reach out to him.

He will receive a letter of encouragement from the bishop, resources from the Vocations Office, and invitations to discernment events. Thank you for your help as we seek to connect with and support the faithful young men in the Diocese of Venice.

Contact Fr Alexander Price, Vocations Dir., Diocese of Venice., (941) 486-4703 and, Diocese of Venice, 1000 Pinebrook Rd., Venice, FL, 344285.

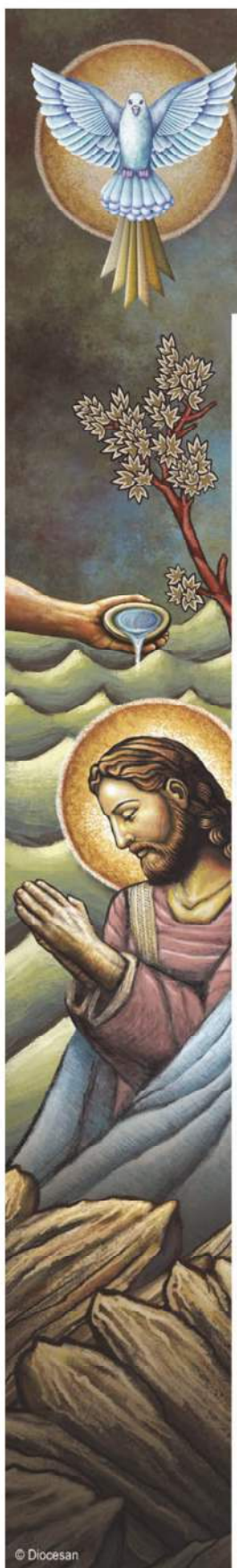
"If you are what you should be, then you will set the world on fire." **St Catherine of Siena.**

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.*

Octave of Prayer for Christian Unity January 18 – 25, 2026

In his farewell address at the Last Supper (John 15 – 17), Jesus prayed: *"... for those who will believe in me ... that they may all be one, as you, Father, are in me and I in you..."* Why? *"...that the world may believe that you sent me"* (Jn17:2).

The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' (USCCB) ... invites all to celebrate the annual **Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, January 18-25.** This week provides an opportunity to join together and pray as Jesus did *"that they may all be one."* (John 17:21)



Bautismo *del Señor*

Los versículos que dicen que no romperá la caña resquebrajada ni apagará la mecha que aún humea (Isaías 42,3) describen la misericordia de Jesús hacia los pecadores. La caña y la mecha fueron desechadas porque eran inútiles. Pero Dios, por amor a nosotros, nunca ve a los pecadores como inútiles. Dios siempre está dispuesto a perdonarnos y darnos otra oportunidad, por eso envió a Jesús para perdonar a los pecadores, no para rechazarlos. Juan al principio se niega a bautizar a Jesús, porque su bautismo era una señal de arrepentimiento por el pecado. Sabía que Jesús no era pecador, así que no tenía necesidad de arrepentirse. Pero Jesús se identificó con los pecadores y los acogió de nuevo en el amor de Dios. Podemos pedirle a Dios que nos ayude a ver nuestra pecaminosidad y presentársela a Él. Una **alianza** era un acuerdo entre socios desiguales, en el que el más fuerte se comprometía a proteger o defender al más débil, mientras que este se comprometía a pagar impuestos u obedecer las leyes exigidas por el más fuerte. Dios ofrece una nueva alianza a través de Jesús. Hoy aún tenemos que vivir esa alianza, amando a Dios y al prójimo. Al vivir la nueva alianza, descubriremos que Dios también tiene sus complacencias en nosotros. __Tom Schmidt

PROGRAMA DE EDUCACIÓN RELIGIOSA

Edificio McDonald
Grados Pre-K-6 Domingos
9:00 a 10:15am
Grados K-12 Miércoles
6:00 a 8:00pm
Preguntas/Información
Mayra Donan 863-453-7537

ADULTOS

Edificio Juan Bosco
Domingos 9:00 a 10:15am
Para ser miembros plenos de la Iglesia en la fe católica, fomentar la conversión y ayuda a recibir los sacramentos de iniciación Bautismo, Confirmación, Eucaristía.

Preguntas/Información
Florentino 863-840-4533

GRUPO DE ORACIÓN "Santísima Trinidad"



Jueves 7:00pm

Iglesia

Rosario en comunidad a las 6:00pm

Para Información

863-448-6869/863-528-8267

Juan XXIII
Jueves 7:00pm
Salón Parroquial Grogan
Para Información
863-205-0694/863-853-0065



MASS INTENTIONS**SATURDAY JANUARY 10**

- 8:00 a.m. Rick Senkow by The Bergamark.
- 4:00 p.m. Bert Grant by Randy Rhodes.
+ Robert Morin by Kathy Morin.
- 7:00 p.m. Spanish Mass.

SUNDAY JANUARY 11

- 8:00 a.m. + For the Family by the Family.
- 10:30 a.m. + Helen Reddin by Victoria.
+ Family of Harper by Pam Walton.

MONDAY JANUARY 12

- 8:00 a.m. No Mass.

TUESDAY JANUARY 13

- 8:00 a.m. Timothy J. Thurin by Judy Heiden.

WEDNESDAY JANUARY 14

- 8:00 a.m. + The Unborn by Our Lady of Grace.

THURSDAY JANUARY 15

- 8:00 a.m. + John & Mildred Kilpatrick by Evelyn Seely.
+ Jose Ordaz by Maria Ordaz.

FRIDAY JANUARY 16

- 8:00 a.m. Bert Grant by Randy Rhodes.

SATURDAY JANUARY 17

- 4:00 p.m. + A.J. Grant by Mom & Dad.
+ William & Virginia Cook by Evelyn Seely.
- 7:00 p.m. + Faride Sarmiento by Family.

STEWARDSHIP FAIR—TODAY!

How to share your talent with your Parish Community. There will be a Stewardship Fair on Sunday, January 11, 2026, (**today**) from 11:30 to 1:30 p.m. in the Grogan Center. Everyone is invited to come. More details to come.

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 Babbitt
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	

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

VALENTINE DINNER/DANCE

Looking for that special gift? Get a ticket for the Valentine Dance. February 14, 2026, Dinner and Dance with the famous California Toe Jam Band. Tickets are \$50.00 each and available at the office or from Judy Nugent (863) 446-1841.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Our Lady of Grace Vita/TCE tax preparation site who have served in Highlands County for many years are looking for volunteers to assist in preparing and filing Federal and State tax returns from February to mid-April, 2026. Volunteers participate in several ways, such as greeting tax payers, data organization, administrative duties, as well as the preparation of individual tax returns. Volunteers directly involved with the tax return receive free tax preparation training with materials provided by the IRS.

For more information on how you can join the VITA/TCE team, at Our Lady of Grace Avon Park Site call Linda Pomeroy, site coordinator at 863-452-7641.



Staff & Ministries

Administrative Assistant

Evelyn Barcinas
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

Parish Council

President

Betty Anne Lee
863-873-7176



El Greco – The Baptism of Jesus



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