



DIOCESE OF VENICE IN FLORIDA
OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

October 1, 2025

Dear Parishioners of Ascension Parish,

Greetings in Our Lord, Jesus Christ! As we begin this month of the Holy Rosary, I write with news of your Parish, Ascension. As you know, the second of the five Glorious Mysteries, The Ascension, celebrates Jesus's return to the Father, bringing hope to all God's Faithful. I pray that this letter will carry with it the promise of hope for the Faithful of Fort Myers Beach.

It has been three years since Hurricane Ian devastated Fort Myers Beach, and other areas throughout the Diocese. I know so many of you lost so much, and many are still recovering. Please know that all those impacted by Hurricane Ian, but in a special way those in and from Fort Myers Beach, have been and continue to be in my prayers.

As all of you well know, Ascension Parish was destroyed by this unprecedented storm. After Ian passed, the Diocesan Building Department began working to clear the property, assess the damage, and plan for Ascension's future. After much discussion, and in consideration of new FEMA requirements, it became clear that a complete rebuild would be necessary. It was also clear that this project was going to take some time; I myself noted that it would likely take four to five years, as the Diocese worked on recovery throughout Southwest Florida. Despite rumors to the contrary, however, not rebuilding your Parish was never an option, given the devoted Faith community there.

Now, it is with great joy that I share with you that plans to rebuild Ascension Parish have advanced and are officially underway!

An invitation is cordially extended to join me at an information session about the **new Ascension Parish** to be held at St. Leo the Great Parish, 28290 Beaumont Road, Bonita Springs, on **Friday, October 10, 2025, at 2:00 p.m.**

Plans for Ascension's new Church and surroundings will be presented, including exciting renderings in 3-D, and there will be an opportunity to ask questions. The event will also be livestreamed for those unable to attend in person and will be available at this link: <https://vimeo.com/event/5420967>, and on the Diocese's Facebook page.

Allow me to take this opportunity to extend to you the assurances of my continued consideration, as well as my prayers. Please also pray for me, and for all those involved in rebuilding Ascension Parish.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

+ Frank J. Dewane
Bishop of the Diocese of
Venice in Florida

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