



DIOCESE OF VENICE IN FLORIDA
OFFICE OF THE CHANCELLOR

March 16, 2020

Anthony R. Rodriguez, AICP
Principal Planner
Zoning Division
1500 Monroe Street
Fort Myers, FL 33901

RE: Our Lady of Mercy Parish Hall

Dear Mr. Rodriguez,

We have submitted various permit applications to Lee County seeking to permit an accessory Parish Hall at 221 West Railroad Avenue. The permit requests seek allow for the expansion of the Our Lady of Mercy facility located at 240/250 Park Ave in Boca Grande. As a result of the campus expansion, the proposed Parish Hall's anticipated required parking must be satisfied per Lee County Land Development Code 34-2020's table for non-residential uses. This section requires that principle and accessory uses be calculated independently for parking. We believe this requirement would result in an unnecessary burden on the congregation and does not reflect the current operation of the Church.

The current church facility hosts mass twice a day on Saturdays (4 and 5 PM) and three times a day on Sunday (8, 9 and 10:30 AM) from January through April. Additionally, daily mass is held at 8 AM from Monday through Friday. After April, the mass schedule is reduced to once a day on Saturdays, twice a day on Sundays while maintaining the daily mass schedule of 8 AM Mondays through Fridays. The proposed Parish Hall will act as a meeting space for activities outside of regular mass where the congregation may meet.

Given the inclusionary nature of the Our Lady of Mercy Parish, activities held within the proposed Parish Hall would need to be scheduled at times that do not conflict with the mass schedule so that members of the congregation wishing to attend may do so. Due to use of the two facilities, the main church and the proposed Parish Hall, taking place at alternate times, we are proposing to reconfigure the parking lot adjacent to the proposed

Parish Hall to increase the total overall spaces on the campus. The Parish Hall is the highest parking generator of the two uses and the required spaces are accommodated by the revised site plan. The incorporation of the new parcel and development of the Parish Hall enables additional parking spaces to be established and in fact aids to reduce an existing non-conformity.

The Diocese of Venice respectfully requests Lee County acknowledge the existing operational conditions of the Our Lady of Mercy Church and proposed Parish Hall and permit the parking as proposed to be adequate for the various permit applications submitted.

Sincerely yours,



Dr. Volodymyr Smeryk
Chancellor



VS:ls