

Most Reverend Frank J. Dewane
Bishop Emeritus of the Diocese of Venice in Florida
March 9, 1950 - October 7, 2026

Most Rev. Frank J. Dewane, ordained to the priesthood July 16, 1988, in the Diocese of Green Bay, served as a priest for 38 years; 20 of those years, he served as faithful shepherd to more than 260,000 Catholics in Southwest Florida as bishop of the Diocese of Venice.

Born March 9, 1950, in Green Bay, Wisconsin, to Ben and Eleanor Dewane, Bishop Dewane held a degree from the University of Wisconsin in Madison, and completed studies at American University in Washington, D.C., University of Notre Dame in South Bend, Ind., and Pontifical Gregorian University and Pontifical University of St. Thomas Aquinas in Rome, Italy. Before entering the seminary, he worked for the National Broadcasting Company (NBC) in Moscow, Russia, and then for a subsidiary of PepsiCo in New York, New York.

As a priest, he held a number of posts at the Vatican, including an assignment representing the Holy See at the United Nations in New York City. On April 25, 2006, Pope Benedict XVI named him Coadjutor Bishop of the Diocese of Venice in Florida. On July 25, 2006, Bishop Dewane was ordained and consecrated as a bishop, succeeding Bishop John J. Nevins on Jan. 19, 2007, as the second Bishop of the Diocese of Venice in Florida.

The Diocese of Venice, while mourning the loss of their beloved Bishop Emeritus, gives thanks to God for the gift of his life and for the many ways in which he served the Church, and the remarkable legacy of faithful service he leaves behind. His years as a priest and bishop were marked by a sincere love for Christ, His Church, and the people entrusted to his pastoral care, especially those most in need. The Diocese asks all the members of the faithful to join them in praying for the repose of Bishop Dewane's soul, that the Lord may welcome His faithful servant into eternal life, and for the consolation of his family.

Bishop Dewane is survived by his brother John (Jack), and two sisters, Margaret (Peggy), and Mary, as well as numerous nieces and nephews.

Bishop Dewane will lie in state beginning at 4:00 p.m., Tuesday, Oct. 13, at Epiphany Cathedral Parish Hall, 350 Tampa Ave. W., Venice. (The Viewing will take place in the Parish Hall as Epiphany Cathedral is currently under renovation.) A Mass of Christian Burial will be held at 2:00 p.m., Wednesday, Oct. 14, at St. John XXIII Catholic Church, 13060 Palomino Lane, Fort Myers. All are welcome to attend.

Interment will be at Epiphany Cathedral in Venice immediately following the Funeral Mass. Bishop Dewane will be laid to rest in the Epiphany Cathedral Bishops' Crypt. At a later date, a Mass of Remembrance will be celebrated at Bishop Dewane's home parish, St. James Church, Cooperstown, Wisconsin.

In lieu of flowers, please contribute to the Bishop Dewane Endowment Fund for the Poor with the Catholic Community Foundation of Southwest Florida:

<https://ccfdiocesefvenice.org/fund/bishop-dewane-endowment-fund-for-the-poor/>