

Third Sunday of Advent - December 14, 2025

# Apple Valley Catholic Community Two Parishes - One Mission



This is the one about whom it is written: 'Behold, I am sending my messenger ahead of you; he will prepare your way before you.'

*Matthew 11:10*

3  
*Sunday of Advent*

St. Elizabeth of Hungary Parish  
89 Arlington St. Acton, MA 01720



St. Isidore Parish  
429 Great Rd. Stow, MA 01775

**We Welcome YOU!**

At the Apple Valley Catholic Community, we live out the commandment Jesus gave to His disciples when He said "Love one another. As I have loved you, so you also should love one another." (John 13:34). We live this commandment by acknowledging we are all, in one way or another, our sister's and brother's keepers.

We affirm the dignity and worth of each person regardless of your race, nationality or ethnic group, gender, sexual orientation, immigration status, age, socioeconomic class, married, single, divorced, Mass attendance, or anything else. We affirm that we are all God's children and part of the one family of God and that means We Welcome YOU.

Mass Intentions

Saturday December 13, 5:00PM  
Richard McLean

Sunday December 14, 8:45AM  
Jim Murphy

Sunday December 14, 10:45AM  
MaryAnn Dennison



Vigil Mass - December 24

4:00 p.m. St. Elizabeth  
6:30 p.m. St. Isidore

Christmas Day - December 25

8:45 a.m. St. Isidore  
10:45 a.m. St. Elizabeth

Overflow parking for St. Isidore is available next door at the Center School



Cancellation of Masses on Saturday evening or Sunday will be posted on the home page [avcatholic.org](http://avcatholic.org) at least one hour before Mass is scheduled to begin.

Weekday morning Masses are canceled whenever the local high school cancels class or has a delayed opening. St. Isidore follows NRHS and St. Elizabeth follows ABRHS.

Upcoming Events

December 14 - A Night in Bethlehem at St Isidore

December 17 - Adoration and Confession



at St Elizabeth 3:00-7:00pm

January 1 - The Solemnity of Mary at St Elizabeth 10:45

January 4 - Children's Mass at St Elizabeth

IMPORTANT!  
CHILDREN'S LITURGY  
RELOCATION  
BACK TO THE  
CHURCH HALL!

STARTING ON  
SUNDAY, DECEMBER 14TH!  
CLOW will again take place in the Church Hall where we have Coffee and Donuts. See you downstairs.



**FREE!!**

# A Night in Bethlehem

Spend the evening with your family experiencing the early life of Jesus. The perfect start to your Advent season.

Sunday, December 14

3:00 - 5:00PM

St. Isidore Church and Hall

## THIS EVENT WILL INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING:

- + Carols in the church
- + Create nativity pieces
- + See who was at Jesus' birth - REAL sheep and goats!
- + Try the tastes of Bethlehem
- + Smell Frankincense and Myrrh

**BRING YOUR ENTIRE FAMILY!**



Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

This weekend, the Church invites us into one of the most beautiful moments of the Advent season –Gaudete Sunday, the Sunday of **JOY**. We light the rose candle, a color that surprises us right in the midst of Advent’s deeper purple tones. And maybe this year it surprises us even more, because we may not feel very joyful in the busyness of Advent.

By the third week of Advent, life is full. Schedules tighten. Emotions run deeper. Expectations rise. Many of us are carrying more than we speak out loud. And yet right here, right now, the Church gently proclaims: *“Rejoice in the Lord always.”*

It is important to remember that this Sunday is not about pretending. The Church is not asking us to “be cheerful,” or to push aside everything we’re dealing with. Instead, the Church invites us to a deeper truth: Joy does not begin with us. Joy begins with God.

Joy is not a feeling we force. Joy is the quiet assurance that God is near. Near to the tired, near to the overwhelmed, near to the discouraged, near to the hopeful. Advent joy is the joy of a dawn that has not fully broken, but is already changing the sky.

That is why the rose candle is so meaningful. It is the color of the morning horizon just before sunrise. It tells us that even if our lives feel busy, heavy, or stretched thin, the light of Christ is already approaching. It tells us that God enters our real lives, not our ideal ones. It tells us that joy can find us, even in the exact places where we feel weary.

The Gospel this weekend reminds us of that truth. John the Baptist, strong in faith, bold in his mission finds himself in prison, unsure, waiting, longing for God to act. And Jesus responds not with explanations, but with signs of hope: healing, mercy, compassion, and good news. **Joy is not the absence of struggle. Joy is the presence of Christ in the struggle.**

My friends, as we continue this Advent journey, I pray that you will allow God’s joy to meet you where you truly are. Not where you wish you were. Not where others think you should be. But right where life is real for you today.

May this rose candle remind us that God is already moving, already healing, already drawing close. And may the joy of Christ strengthen your heart in these days leading to Christmas.

With prayer, gratitude, and joy in Christ,  
Fr. Jeff

## Breakfast with Santa



As we enter this holy season of Advent, we are reminded that the Sacrament of Reconciliation is one of the most beautiful gifts Jesus has given us. Confession is not about judgment—it is about *forgiveness*. It is not about shame—it is about *grace*. It is not a place of fear—it is a place of *healing*.

In the Sacrament of Reconciliation, we do not stand before a harsh judge we stand before a *merciful* and *loving Father*. God delights in forgiving His children. He wants to lift our burdens, restore our hearts, and give us a fresh start. Advent is the perfect time to return to this powerful sacrament and allow God's grace to renew your soul.

If it has been a little while, or even a long while, know this: Jesus welcomes you with open arms. Come experience the peace only Christ can give. Take this opportunity to experience the grace of Reconciliation this Advent.

## *Third Sunday of Advent - December 14, 2025*



Dear Brothers and Sister in Christ,

As we approach the beautiful season of Christmas, our hearts turn once again to the mystery of God's love made visible in the birth of Jesus Christ.

I am grateful for the many ways you support our parish community: through your presence at Mass, your prayers, your volunteer service, and your financial gifts. Because of your faithfulness, we are able to celebrate the sacraments, accompany families in difficult moments, form our young people in the faith, offer faith formation for adults through *LIFT*, support those who are struggling, and continue building a parish where all are welcome.

Looking ahead, we are planning more faith-filled events, outreach opportunities, and social gatherings in 2026 to draw our community closer to Christ and to one another. These ministries are the heart of who we are and they rely on the ongoing support of parishioners who believe in the importance of a vibrant Catholic community.

If your financial situation permits, I humbly invite you to consider making a special year-end donation to support our parish mission. Year-end gifts help sustain our operating needs, maintain our sacred spaces, strengthen our youth and adult faith formation programs, and assist us in responding to the pastoral needs of those who turn to the Church for hope. Every gift regardless of the amount makes a real and lasting difference.

Please know that I understand some families may be facing financial difficulty, and there is no expectation beyond what one is able to give. Your prayers, your presence, and your continued engagement in parish life are invaluable blessings to me and our community.

Attached you will find information on several simple and convenient ways to make a year-end gift, again if you are able.

As we prepare to celebrate Christmas, I ask God to bless you and your loved ones with peace, joy, and renewed hope. Thank you for being a vital part of our parish family.

Be assured of my prayers for you, your family, and all those you hold close.

In Christ's Love,  
Fr. Jeff

To express our gratitude, all donors contributing to the 2025 year-end giving campaign will be automatically entered into a raffle to win a \$500 gift card to the Liberty Hotel in Boston.



1. Online Giving – Donate to our Year-End Donation Fund using our Online Giving Program. This can be found on our website at [www.avcatholic.org/donate](http://www.avcatholic.org/donate) or by scanning the QR code. Select either St. Isidore or St. Elizabeth of Hungary Parish. Select our Year-End Donation Fund and make your donation.



2. One-Time Gift – Donate to our Year-End Donation Fund by writing a check made payable to St. Elizabeth of Hungary or St. Isidore and return via the basket at Mass or mail to the Parish offices at 89 Arlington Street, Acton, MA 01720. Please be sure to note on your check that this is for our Year-End Donation Fund.

3. Give from your investment portfolio - Some of your fellow parishioners have chosen to donate appreciated stock or mutual fund units for their offerings. It helps our parish meet its financial obligations and also reduces your capital gains tax. Others are donating a portion of their IRA Required Minimum Distributions (RMD), and for those over 73 years old, you can use a very tax efficient tool called a Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD) that counts toward your RMD. You should consult with a tax or financial advisor regarding your specific situation and other potential tools that are available to you such as charitable remainder trusts, Donor Advised Funds, and other planned giving methods. Be sure to specify which parish your donation is for.

### Scenes from Family Mass at St. Isidore



## Christmas Tree Pick Up Fundraiser

Acton Pick Ups



Stow Pick Ups



Reserve now for your Christmas Tree disposal in January

## Christmas Season Flower Fund

We welcome your contribution towards flowers and items that will decorate our church for the Christmas Season. Please complete and mail the form below to AVCC 89 Arlington St. Acton MA 01720 or put it in an envelope marked 'SEoH or St. I Flower Fund' and place it in the collection basket at Mass. Envelopes are also available at each church.



Or you may also make your donation on line:

St Elizabeth Christmas Flowers



St Isidore Christmas Flowers



If your donation is in memory of a deceased loved one whose name you wish to have published in our bulletin on January 6th , the Feast of the Epiphany, please complete the form below. Contact Mary Ryan at maryr@avcatholic.org 978-263-4305 X135 if you have questions.

.....  
Enclosed is my donation of \$\_\_\_\_\_ towards the 2025 Christmas Season Flower Fund.

I am making this donation in memory of \_\_\_\_\_.

*(please print clearly)*

I would like the above name/s published in the bulletin on the Feast of the Epiphany. Yes\_\_No \_\_.

My name is \_\_\_\_\_.

Please check here if you would like your donation to be made anonymously. \_\_\_

My donation is to (please check one) \_\_\_ St. Elizabeth Church \_\_\_ St. Isidore Church

Third Sunday of Advent - December 14, 2025



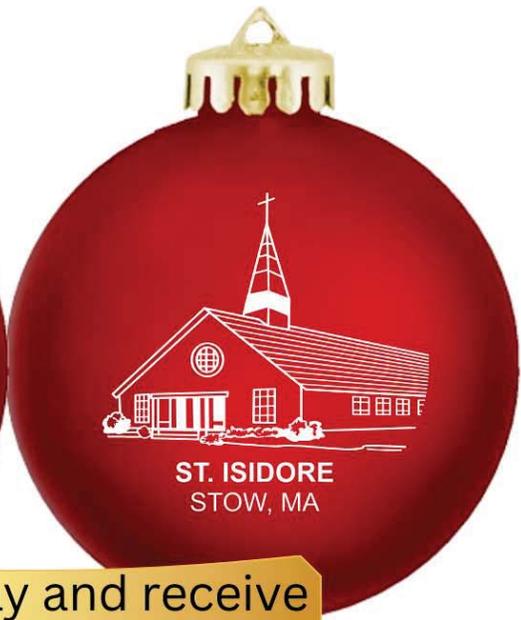
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# ORNAMENTS

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by Christmas!



# Third Sunday of Advent - December 14, 2025

## Weekend Mass Times

**Saturday Mass, 5:00 p.m.— St. Elizabeth**  
**Sunday Mass, 8:45 a.m.— St. Isidore**  
**Sunday Mass, 10:45 a.m.— St. Elizabeth**

## Weekday Mass Times

**Monday Mass 9:00 a.m.— St. Elizabeth**  
**Tuesday Mass 9:00 a.m.— St. Isidore**

**Confessions: Saturday, 4:00-4:45 p.m., St. Elizabeth**  
**1st Wednesday of the Month: St. Isidore 4:00-6:00 p.m.**

## Apple Valley Catholic Parish Team

Pastor: Rev. Jeffrey Archer  
frjeff@avcatholic.org, (978) 263-4305 ext. 115

Weekend Presider & Prof. of Philosophy and Theology at Pope St. John  
XXIII National Seminary: Msgr. Fay

Deacon: Charles A. Cornell  
charliec@avcatholic.org, (978) 562-7447

Comptroller, Joe Nelson,  
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Financial Consultant: Annmarie Mazzucotelli  
annmariem@avcatholic.org

Director of Evangelization - Baptism, LIFT, Communications:  
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ext. 113

Director of Music - Arline Carboneau,  
arlinec@avcatholic.org, (978) 263-4305 ext. 112

Director of Religious Education - Youth Ministry:  
Sheila Bauer, sheilab@avcatholic.org,  
(978) 263-4305 ext. 123

Coordinator of Faith Formation Grades 5-7:  
Adam Tocci  
adamt@avcatholic.org, (978) 263-4305 ext. 116

Coordinator of Faith Formation K-4: Kelley Christie  
kelleyc@avcatholic.org, (978) 26-4305 ext. 117

Finance & Operations Administrative Assistant:  
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judyr@avcatholic.org, 978 263-4305 ext. 119

Office Coordinator/Communications:  
Kaitie Duhamel  
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Liturgical Coordinator: Mary Ryan  
maryr@avcatholic.org, (978) 263-4305 ext. 135

Collaborative Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults  
("RCIA") Trina Toups trinat@avcatholic.org, (978) 263-4305 ext. 122

Alpha Coordinator: Bernice Higdon  
alpha@avcatholic.org, (978) 263-4305 ext. 124

Custodian: Daniel Farah  
danielf@avcatholic.org

St. Elizabeth's St. Vincent DePaul  
Conference of Acton/Boxborough: (978) 263-4305 ext.114

St. Isidore's St. Vincent De Paul  
Conference of Stow: (978) 263-4305 ext.121

## Thank You

"(Jesus said) This is the one about whom it is written: Behold, I am sending my messenger ahead of you; he will prepare your way before you." ~ Matthew 11: 10

Jesus Christ seeks to be in relationship with each and everyone one of us. To encounter Jesus is to experience his love in a meaningful and life transforming way. Your support of our parishes is a reflection of your faith that Jesus Christ is Lord, and your desire that our generation and following generations come to know this. Our faith in action is life changing for ourselves and for those who encounter us. Thank You for your continued engagement and support!

### CONTRIBUTIONS FOR PARISH SUPPORT ST. ELIZABETH

For the weeks ending 11/23 and 11/30 2025

Cash & Check offertory	\$ 8,216
Electronic offertory (EFT & Online):	\$ 12,242
Total Parish Support	\$ 20,458
St. Vincent de Paul collection:	\$ 637

### CONTRIBUTIONS FOR PARISH SUPPORT ST. ISIDORE

For the weeks ending 11/23 and 11/30 2025

Cash & Check offertory	\$ 5,800
Electronic offertory (EFT & Online):	\$ 5,211
Total Parish Support	\$ 11,011
St. Vincent de Paul collection:	\$ 64

Please note that only online donations to Saint Vincent de Paul are recorded. Cash left in the door boxes and checks made out directly to Saint Vincent de Paul are not included in our records.

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