

Fourth Sunday of Advent - December 21, 2025

Apple Valley Catholic Community Two Parishes - One Mission



FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son,
and they shall name him Emmanuel, which means "God is with us."

Matthew 1:23

© Pilot Bulletins

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.

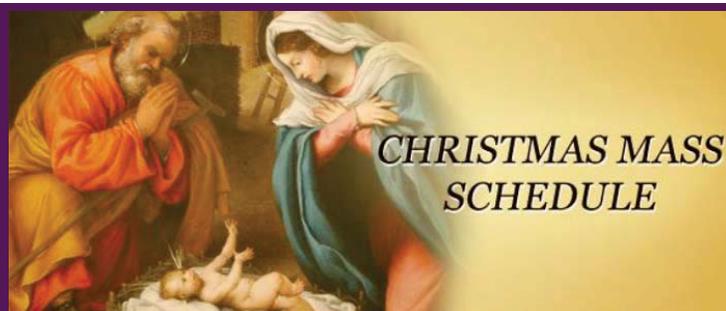
We affirm the dignity and worth of each person regardless of your race, nationality or ethnic group, gender, sexual orientation, immigration status, age, socioeconomic class, married, single, divorced, Mass attendance, or anything else. We affirm that we are all God's children and part of the one family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

Mass Intentions

Saturday December 19, 5:00PM
Alberta Gibbon & Tony Sobolesky

Sunday December 14, 8:45AM
Julio and Mercedes Morales

Sunday December 14, 10:45AM
Peter Light



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



Would you like to help as a greeter, usher or gift bearer at a St Elizabeth Christmas Mass?

Please signup at the back of the church after Mass or contact Mary Ryan
mryan@avcatholic.org or 978-263-4305 x135

Upcoming Events

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

January 4 - Children's Mass
at St Elizabeth

January 4 - Church Tour for First Communion
participants
at St Elizabeth

January 18 - Family Games and Hot Cocoa
at St. Elizabeth



Thank you to the Apple Valley Community for all the generous gifts donated for the Giving Tree this year. This ministry was able to contribute much needed gifts to 8 different agencies throughout our community. Thank you to all the volunteers who coordinated the sorting and delivering of all the gifts.



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A Night in Bethlehem



Middle School Christmas Party



Fourth Sunday of Advent - December 21, 2025

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

This Fourth Sunday of Advent brings us right to the edge of Christmas. In today's Gospel, the Church gives us a quiet but powerful moment, the story of Joseph, a man who planned an ordinary life but found himself face-to-face with the extraordinary.



Joseph discovers Mary is with child. Confused, hurt, and uncertain, he begins to step back quietly, trying to do the right thing. But God interrupts his plan. An angel speaks into Joseph's fear and says: "*Do not be afraid... for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit.*" And then, we hear one simple name: **Emmanuel** – God is with us.

That is the message we need to hear on this fourth Sunday of Advent. God comes into real life, not ideal life.

Jesus is not born into perfection. He is born into misunderstanding, questions, and a family trying to hold everything together as best they can. God did not wait for everything to be neat before entering the world. He does not wait for everything to be neat before entering our lives.

Wherever you feel stretched, tired, or overwhelmed this week, remember: God steps into real life that is your real life.

God speaks into our fears. In the Gospel, Joseph hears the same message: "*Do not be afraid.*" Before Joseph could say yes to God, he needed to hear that God understood his fear. The same is true for us.

This final week before Christmas can stir anxiety about family, finances, griefs we carry, or memories that surface. The Lord meets us right there and whispers the same reassurance: "*Do not be afraid. I am with you.*" God asks us to trust even when we do not understand. You see Joseph never gets all the details. He simply receives enough light for the next step. And that is often how faith works.

This Gospel invites us to ask: *Where is God asking me to trust? Where is He asking me to let go of fear and allow Him in? What step, just one step, is He calling me to take in faith?*

Christmas is God choosing to be close. The name Emmanuel is not just a title; it is a promise. A promise to the lonely. A promise to the anxious. A promise to the hopeful and the hurting. A promise to each of us.

As we enter these final days before Christmas, may we slow down enough to notice the nearness of God, not in the noise, but in the quiet; not only in the celebrations, but also in the hidden, ordinary moments of love.

May Joseph's trust inspire our own. May Mary's yes shape our hearts. And may the promise of **Emmanuel**—*God with us* carry you into the joy of Christmas.

With prayer for you and your families as we approach the manger,
Fr. Jeff

Youth Ministry has been busy this Advent with retreats, volunteering at Lazarus House and participating in Mass.





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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

Fourth Sunday of Advent - December 21, 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 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.

Emmaus LIFT Group outing to see Matt Maher and Sarah Kroger's Cathedrals Tour which included bumping into fellow attendee Archbishop Henning



Fourth Sunday of Advent - December 21, 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
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Director of Evangelization - Baptism, LIFT, Communications:
Tom Spataro toms@avcatholic.org, (978) 263-4305
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:
Judy Richardson
judyr@avcatholic.org, 978 263-4305 ext. 119

Office Coordinator/Communications:
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kaitied@avcatholic.org, 978-263-4305 ext. 110

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 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 week ending 12/7/2025

Cash & Check offertory	\$ 5,417
Electronic offertory (EFT & Online):	\$ 8,075
Total Parish Support	\$ 13,492

St. Vincent de Paul collection:	\$ 801
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CONTRIBUTIONS FOR PARISH SUPPORT ST. ISIDORE

For the week ending 12/7/2025

Cash & Check offertory	\$ 2,285
Electronic offertory (EFT & Online):	\$ 2,507
Total Parish Support	\$ 4,792

St. Vincent de Paul collection:	\$ 94
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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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