

Solemnity Of The Nativity Of The Lord—2025



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.

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



St. Isidore Parish
429 Great Road, Stow, MA

Solemnity Of The Nativity Of The Lord—2025

Thank you!
TO OUR VOLUNTEERS

As we approach the end of 2025 and reflect on all the blessings we have received, I want to take a moment to express my heartfelt gratitude to each and every one of you who has volunteered your time, talent, and energy to our faith-filled Apple Valley Catholic Community.

Our community is truly a living witness to the love of Christ, and this is made possible because of the dedication and hard work of our volunteers. Whether you serve as a lector, altar server, Eucharistic minister, catechist, choir member or any of the many ministries that help our community function, your efforts do not go unnoticed. From organizing events and helping with programs to providing support for the 100's of children/teens in our faith formation program, you are an essential part of our parish family.

Your dedicated efforts week after week makes our community a place where faith comes alive, and where others experience God's love in many ways. Your service is a powerful example of what it means to follow Jesus. It is your spirit of volunteering that brings our mission of **faith**, **hope**, and **love** to life in such a meaningful way.

As we continue to grow as the Apple Valley Catholic Community, I ask God to bless each of you for your unwavering service. May He continue to strengthen and inspire you, and may you always feel the love and appreciation of this community for all that you do.

Thank you for your dedication, your time, and your faith. I am so grateful to serve alongside you in this amazing faith-filled community.

In Christ,
+Fr. Jeff



Interested in getting the AVCC Bulletin emailed to you each week?



New to the Parish and would like to register?



Follow Us on Social Media

We spend more time on the internet now than ever before. Follow us on Facebook and Instagram so that you can engage with AVCC as part of your daily scroll.

 on Facebook @avcatholic1

 on Instagram @avcatholic

Tag us in your family Christmas photos!

 APPLE VALLEY CATHOLIC COMMUNITY

Loving God, during this holy season of Christmas we ask for your blessing on our all families.
Let Mary's openness to your wondrous ways be an inspiration to place all trust in you.
Let Joseph's courage provide hope during times of anxiety and uncertainty.

Let Jesus' life ignite all families with a spirit of light and love. May the grace that encircled the Holy Family widen to embrace all families. Amen.

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Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

A blessed and joy-filled Christmas to you and to all those you love.

Each year, as the Church gathers around the manger, we celebrate the deepest truth of our faith: God sent His Son into the world because He loves us—completely, personally, and without hesitation. Jesus is God’s answer to a world longing for hope. He is the Father’s response to every human heart searching for peace, healing, and meaning. The birth of Jesus is God’s way of saying, *“You are not alone. I am with you.”*



We need that message more than ever today. Our world is hurting. Families carry burdens that no one else sees. Communities struggle with fear, division, and uncertainty. There is distrust, loneliness, and a weariness that runs deep.

Yet it was precisely into a world like this that God chose to be born. Not into a perfect world, but into a broken one. Not into comfort, but into a stable. Not with power and armies, but with tenderness, vulnerability, and light.

Jesus enters our world to bring what we cannot give ourselves:

- *Love that heals what is wounded*
- *Compassion that restores what is broken*
- *Courage that strengthens what is fragile*
- *Light that shines in every darkness—and is never overcome*

This is the gift of Christmas. This is why the angels sang. This is why we gather, no matter what this past year has held. Because the One born in Bethlehem is still Emmanuel, still “God-with-us.”

My prayer for you this Christmas is simple and sincere:

May you experience the closeness of Christ in the humble moments of your life.

May His peace enter your homes.

May His light guide you into the new year with hope.

And may our parish community continue to be a place where the love, compassion, and presence of Christ are made visible through each of us.

Thank you for your faith, your generosity, and your commitment to our parish family. It is a joy and a blessing to walk this journey with you.

On behalf of our entire staff, we wish you and your families a merry, peaceful, and grace-filled Christmas and a Happy New Year - 2026

May the Christ Child bless you abundantly.

In Christ’s love,

Fr. Jeff

Highlights of our K-12 LIFT/Faith Formation Programming. God Bless the children and families in our community!

K-4 and Young Family Ministry

FAITH FORMATION CLASSES:

Kindergarten/1st Grade

The K/1 class has had a wonderful time getting to know each other, singing and dancing, praising God, and learning more about our beautiful faith through stories and art projects. Highlights: Service project of decorating the Acton Food Pantry Box for collecting food donations, honoring All Souls Day. We are so fortunate to have Kate Jackson-Myer, Rebecca Eddy and Erica Soto leading classes this year. The class following the Gospel Weeklies curriculum.



2nd Grade (First Reconciliation/First Communion)

Our First Reconciliation Class has worked together through reading and acting out the gospel stories, playing games, and making lanterns to shine God's Light. The class received the Sacrament of Reconciliation on November 21st. The kids were genuinely reflective and sincere on this special day. It's always special to watch them connect as a class, hugging and high fiving each other on making this beautiful sacrament together. The First Communion classes will kick off in January with a church tour on January 4th and concluding on May 2nd with the Sacrament of First Communion. Megan Kilpatrick is volunteering to help teach this class. She brings her relaxed nature along with her humor and ability to deeply connect with the kids to integrate their faith into everything they do.

3/4 Grade

The 3/4 grade classes is meeting in our newly updated classroom in the old rectory. This gives the kids more space to meet in an environment that feels cozy and relaxed, allowing for more open conversation and connection. They have been engaging in our faith through stories related to our weekly gospel and connecting that back to the Catechism of the Catholic Church. They have acted out the stories, reflected, and discussed as a group. We are blessed to have volunteers Brian Falcucci and Jessica Martyn teaching this class this year.

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FAMILY EVENTS:

Family Rosary: We created an enormous Rosary from chalk in the parking lot, and as a group, prayed the rosary as we walked from bead to bead. The kids brought the Mysteries to life by acting them out, which engaged every single participant.

Trunk or Treat: In partnership with the Acton Police Department, we hosted Trunk or Treat in the St Elizabeth's parking lot. For 2 hours, we had hundreds of kids and adults meander from car to car, meeting a variety of dressed up characters, including Zane the police dog.

Advent Wreath Workshop: Kids and adults all gathered to explore their creative side while kicking off Advent by creating an Advent wreath for their family table. As always, a bountiful supply of fresh greens was available to make absolutely gorgeous wreaths. The potluck lunch added to the festivities allowing time for everyone to connect and enjoy each other while conversing and singing Advent/Christmas music.



MASS OPPORTUNITIES FOR CHILDREN:

Children's Mass: We have enjoyed the monthly children's mass, which is the first Sunday of each month. Fr. Jeff gathers the kids in front of the altar and delivers a homily that is engaging and relatable to the kids. Prayers of the Faithful are read by kids in grade 3+. If you are interested in being a reader, please reach out to Kelley Christie at kelleyc@avcatholic.org to be a part of this opportunity. Our next Children's Mass is January 4th at St. Elizabeth.

Children's Liturgy of the Word: Each Sunday at both Sunday masses, children are dismissed to participate in Children's Liturgy of the Word where we discuss the readings and focus on the theme of the Gospel, bringing it to life with real stories, experiments, and in-depths discussions. This opportunity allows for kids to go home each week with tangible action items to bring their faith into their everyday lives.



Middle School Youth Ministry

The **fifth and sixth grade** kids have been busy immersing themselves in service projects this past year.

They held a personal products care drive for Lazarus House filling over 125 bags with basic needs for the clients in Lawrence. They have sponsored and loaned out over \$400 to entrepreneurs in third world countries. They have donated their time and talents multiple times to the Giving Factory inside of Cradles to Crayons in Newton MA.

The kids have also attended a couple of day long retreats where they were able to connect with their class on a personal level, play fun games, study different types of Prayer, and really bond with one another as they learned more about their relationship with Jesus.



The **seventh and eighth grade** kids are participating in the Confirmation Formation program. We are excited to have our eight grade kids finish their two-year program and be Confirmed this spring.

They have also been busy with community service. They have visited Cradles to Crayons multiple times. They are sending up food and helping to feed the clients at Lazarus House in Lawrence. Many of them helped as peer leaders during this summer's Vacation Bible School.

This year the eight graders had the opportunity to participate in an over night retreat in Groton MA. This was a unique way to bond with their classmates, contemplate and explore their relationship with Jesus, reflect on their upcoming Sacrament, and have some fun doing community building activities.

For additional information for these ages, contact Adam at Adamt@avcatholic.org

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High School Youth Ministry



Last year, we began implementing the new younger Confirmation age for our teens and this is the year when we will see 3 grades being confirmed. We will celebrate the confirmation of about 120 teens on two dates in April and May! We strive to bring our teens closer to Christ through meaningful discussions with adults who model the love God has for them. Confirmation candidates continue to prepare and serve lunch for Lazarus House - a decades long tradition for our communities!

We hosted our first ever "Taste and See" children and youth ministry fundraiser in April - it was a tremendous success. This was a new event for us that truly showcased the diversity of God's people and the talents of our generous community! We had 25 home cooks who shared food from 18 different countries and cultures with us. We hope you will join us this year on March 7th!

During the summer, we returned to New Jersey with Catholic Heart Work Camp. We will also be going with Catholic Heart to NJ in July! In addition to faith formation, mission trips, Youth Ministry had fun with the Mystery All-Nighter, GameNight, serving at Household Goods, volunteering at the Lazarus House food pantry, bringing "Christmas in July" to the families of Capermaum place, celebrating our graduates with Baccalaureate, cooking a thanksgiving dinner for Lazarus House and hosting Breakfast with Santa.

A Young Adult (college and beyond) LIFT group also formed and met during the summer months. This Spring, we will be expanding our LIFT model to include high school teens (Teen LIFT!) and anticipate that 3 pilot groups will form during Lent.

To find updated information on what is currently offered, check out: Facebook Groups: Apple Valley Catholic Youth Ministry, Instagram: @AVCCYM or reach out to Sheila at sheilab@avcatholic.org.



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Music Ministry at AVCC



The Apple Valley Catholic Community is blessed with an active music program. Do you like to sing, or do you play an instrument? If you would like to join a wonderful group of people singing praise to God, please join us. All are welcome to join one of our music groups!

The Adult Choir provides music for weekend Masses, the annual Remembrance Service, Holy Week, and other occasions. Rehearsals will resume on Wednesday, January 7 from 7–8:30pm in the St. Elizabeth Parish Center Hall.



The Youth Choir (grades 2–12) provides music once a month at the Sunday Children’s Mass from October through May.

The teens in grades 7-12 rehearse on Mondays from 6-7pm in the St. Elizabeth Parish Center Hall, and will resume on Monday, January 5.

The children in grades 2 – 6 rehearse on Wednesdays from 4:30-5:15 in the St. Elizabeth Parish Center Hall, and will resume on Wednesday, January 14.

Cantors and Instrumentalists are always welcome. Cantors lead the sung prayer and proclaim the Responsorial Psalm at all Masses. Do you play an instrument and wish to share your talents at Mass? Rehearsal schedules are flexible. For more information, contact Music Director Arline Carboneau at arlinec@avcatholic.org

OCIA

Order of Christian Initiation of Adults (OCIA)
Perhaps you, or someone close to you, who is not baptized or not baptized into the Catholic Church may be searching for a spiritual home. Maybe you or they have wondered what it means to be Catholic. We are here to support you, provide a safe place to explore your questions and assist you on your journey of discovery and faith.



Please contact trinatl@avcatholic.org to learn more.

LIFT - Living in Faith Together

Our LIFT Small Groups for Adults continue to grow in both number and depth. As I've written before, numbers alone don't capture what makes LIFT meaningful, but since we're still just three years in, it's worth pausing to recognize how far we've come. In Fall 2022, we launched with three pilot groups. This Fall, we had twelve LIFT groups serving participants across our parish collaborative in so many meaningful ways!

This Fall, Joyce Pinney re-launched our old Prayer Shawl group as a LIFT group, blending conversation and crafting in service of those in need. Kathy Taylor led a beautiful October group praying through the mysteries of the Rosary. Bernice Higdon hosted our second LIFT Book Review, guiding a group through Finding Peace Here and Now by Eric Clayton. And LIFT veterans Barbara Dane and Kelly Faville walked and talked faith with their Emmaus group at the Acton Arboretum. Several ongoing groups continued strong, including those for women, men, caregivers of people with disabilities, adults 60+, parents of young children and more.

Thank you to all our participants for showing up with openness and heart. And to our volunteer LIFT leaders: your generosity, creativity, and care make this ministry what it is. Many of you not only lead groups but also host seasonal social events, prepare materials, or offer one-on-one accompaniment outside your scheduled sessions. Your witness is a gift to our community.

Looking ahead, I'm eager to get working on our Lent LIFT groups and hope you will consider joining (or starting!) a LIFT group yourself. If you've ever wondered if LIFT is for you, the answer is yes.

Visit avcatholic.org/LIFT or email me at toms@avcatholic.org to learn more. And may God continue to bless our LIFT community as we follow Christ together, one season at a time.

CATHOLIC TEACHING:

Promoting and Protecting Human Life



THE SOCIAL JUSTICE MINISTRY WELCOMES

MONSIGNOR BRYAN HEHIR

FOR A PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION ON QUESTIONS RELATED TO PROMOTING AND PROTECTING HUMAN LIFE.

January, 22 @ 7pm
St. Elizabeth of Hungary
Parish Center Hall

All are welcome and encouraged to come and engage in these important life issues with one of America's foremost scholars.

MSGR. HEHIR CURRENTLY SERVES AS THE SECRETARY OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES FOR THE ARCHDIOCESE OF BOSTON. UNTIL 2021, HE WAS A PROFESSOR OF RELIGION AND PUBLIC LIFE AT HARVARD'S JFK SCHOOL OF GOVERNMENT FOR 20 YEARS. HE LEAD THE UNITED STATES CONFERENCE OF CATHOLIC BISHOPS' INTERNATIONAL BRANCH OF THE OFFICE OF JUSTICE AND PEACE AND WAS ALSO THE HEAD OF CATHOLIC CHARITIES USA.

MSGR. HEHIR WILL DISCUSS THE EXPANSIVENESS OF THE CHURCH'S TEACHING THAT SPANS SEVERAL ISSUES THAT ALL RESPECT LIFE. DURING HIS PRESENTATION, YOU WILL HEAR HIM OFFER HIS THOUGHTS ON:

- "JUST" WAR TEACHING
- ECONOMIC JUSTICE
- ABORTION AND ASSISTED SUICIDE
- IMMIGRATION

RSVPs are appreciated at socialjustice@avcatholic.org

Solemnity Of The Nativity Of The Lord—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.

Below 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

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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.



TASTE & SEE

*"Taste and see the goodness of the Lord"
Psalm 34:8*



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6:30-9:30pm**

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89 Arlington St., Acton**

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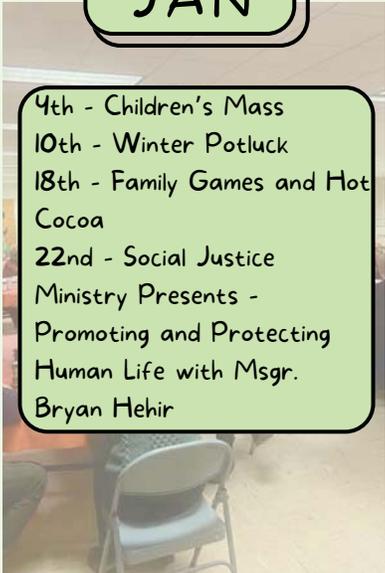


Solemnity Of The Nativity Of The Lord—2025

Looking Ahead at AVCC

We're always looking for ways to bring our community together beyond our Eucharistic Celebration at Mass. Here are some of the things we're working on for the coming year.

JAN



4th - Children's Mass
10th - Winter Potluck
18th - Family Games and Hot Cocoa
22nd - Social Justice Ministry Presents - Promoting and Protecting Human Life with Msgr. Bryan Hehir

FEB



1st - Children's Mass
7th - Trivia Night to benefit Household Goods

MAR



1st - Children's Mass
7th - Taste and See
16th - Lenten Retreat
20th/21st - 16 Hours of Adoration
6th, 13th & 27th - Stations of the Cross

APR



2nd - Holy Thursday Supper
3rd - Family Stations
4th - Morning Prayer
Easter Egg Hunt
11th - Mario Kart Tournament
12th - Children's Mass
18th - Confirmation
25th - Living Through Loss Retreat

MAY



2nd - First Communion
9th - Confirmation
16th - Potluck at St. Isidore
17th - St. Isidore Feast Day Celebration
31st - Volunteer Appreciation Day

JUN



3rd - Baccalaureate

OCT



3rd - Second Annual Food Truck and Craft Beer Fest



***All dates are subject to change, with additions or subtractions as needed. Specific details such as time and location of the events will be published on the website and in the bulletin as we move through the year.

Apple Valley Catholic Community 2025



Solemnity Of The Nativity Of The Lord—2025



Weekend Mass Times

Saturday Mass, 5:00 p.m.— St. Elizabeth

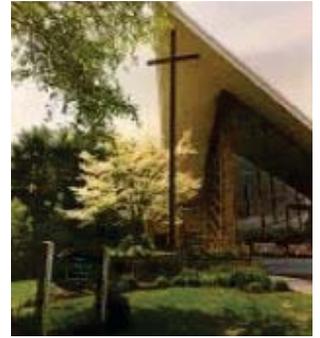
Sunday Mass, 8:45 a.m.— St. Isidore

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.

Collaborative 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,
anmariem@avcatholic.org

Finance & Operations Administrative Assistant:

Judy Richardson

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Director of Music: Arline Carboneau

arlinec@avcatholic.org, (978) 263-4305 ext. 112

**Director of LIFT, Communications &
Baptism Coordinator:**

Tom Spataro toms@avcatholic.org,
(978) 263-4305 ext. 113

Director of Religious Education & Youth Ministry:

Sheila Bauer, sheilab@avcatholic.org,
(978) 263-4305 ext. 123

Coordinator of Faith Formation K-4: Kelley Christie

kelleyc@avcatholic.org, (978) 26-4305 ext. 117

Coordinator of Faith Formation Grades 5-7: Adam Tocci

adamt@avcatholic.org, (978) 263-4305 ext. 116

Office Coordinator/Communications:

Kaitie Duhamel, kaitied@avcatholic.org, (978) 263-4305
ext. 110

Liturgical Coordinator: Mary Ryan

maryr@avcatholic.org, (978) 263-4305 ext. 135

Collaborative Order of Christian Initiation of Adults

(“OCIA”): 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

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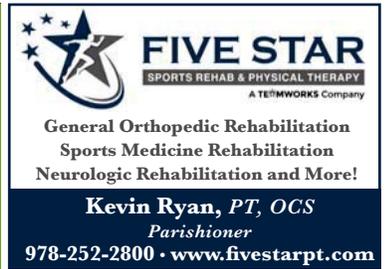
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