

QUESTIONS OF THE WEEK

Theme: God's kingdom is close - it is Jesus.

Breaking Open the Word

Suggested text for faith sharing: Today's 1st Reading from Isaiah.

Step One: Listen to the Word

As you hear this familiar story, what words or phrases in it strike you? What in this reading touches your heart?

Step Two: Look into Your Life

Question for Children: Why is Christmas such a time of happiness for people?

Question for Youth: God speaks to you every day: Isaiah tells us our ears and eyes will be opened in Christ to hear God's voice. What do you hear God saying to you?

Question for Adults: What is there in this promise from the Prophet Isaiah that gives you hope? How have you seen this promise fulfilled in Christ?

Pastoral Leadership Team

Fr. Walter Woods
Diahne Goodwin
Deacon Charlie Cornell
Janice Howes

Collaborative Pastoral Council

Fr. Walter Woods
Fr. Paul Sughrue
Deacon Charlie Cornell
Diahne Goodwin
Steve Ryan
Paul McMahan
JoAnn Witek
Hayley Reynolds
Dan Armstrong
Janet Moroney
Kevin Henry
Carolyn Johnson—Prayer Coordinator
David Winders—Vice Chair
Kim Tocci—Secretary

St. Elizabeth Committee Contacts:

Finance Council—John Morris
Building & Grounds—Bill Hart
Liturgy Committee—Mary Ryan
Consolation Ministry—Deb Lundquist
St. Vincent DePaul Society—Barbara Winders

St. Isidore Committee Contacts:

Finance Council—Bill Oberlies
Buildings & Grounds—Robin Ulichney
Liturgical Arts Committee—Alicia Bunnell,
Cathy Rose Hill
Social Committee—Al DeBenedetto
St. Vincent DePaul Society—Rick Connelly

Collaborative CAP Team Leader

(Child Abuse Protection)
Jack Deasy

*St. Isidore Parish, Stow
St. Elizabeth of Hungary Parish, Acton & Boxborough*

Celebrating God's love in Jesus Christ. Going forth to share it with all.



Third Sunday of Advent

December 11, 2016

*Rejoice in the Lord always; again I say, rejoice.
Indeed, the Lord is near.*



*A warm welcome to our visitors.
We are glad to have you among us!*

*If you are new to the parish, please let us know so that we can
welcome you personally!*

The parish is the presence of the Church in a given territory, an environment for hearing God's word, for growth in the Christian life, for dialogue, proclamation, charitable outreach, worship and celebration. In all its activities the parish encourages and trains its members to be evangelizers. It is a community of communities, a sanctuary where the thirsty come to drink in the midst of their journey, and a center of constant missionary outreach (Pope Francis, *Joy of the Gospel*, 28).



St. Elizabeth:

Christmas Eve—December 24:
4:00 p.m., 6:30 p.m., and 10:00 p.m.

Christmas Day—December 25: 10:30 a.m.

**There will be no 5:00 p.m. Masses on
Sundays December 25 or January 1.**

St. Isidore:

Christmas Eve—December 24:
5:00 p.m., 8:00 p.m.

Christmas Day—Dec. 25:
9:00 a.m.

**As you would expect, many of our Masses
are heavily attended. If you wish to have a
seat, please arrive early.**



**SHARE THE LOVE OF CHRIST TO OUR
VISITORS THIS CHRIST-
MAS!**



It is a joy to see the church filled with extended families, friends, and neighbors, all gathered together to celebrate the birth of our savior! Please join us in making an extra effort to welcome our visitors with a smile, a warm greeting and even a seat during our Christmas Masses. A great sign of welcome is to move to the center of the pew so that others may easily find a place to sit. Your kind gesture or words of welcome may be just what someone needs to feel at home here and feel encouraged to come again.

DAILY ONLINE ADVENT REFLECTIONS

Embrace the Advent season as a sacred space from the ease of your e-mail inbox. *Sacred Advent* is a daily e-mail prayer break during a busy season. Each day invites you to a step-by-step progression of praying with a Scripture reading and related points of reflection. The messages also include suggestions for further exploration of Advent themes through additional online articles and prayers.

Based on the writings of *Sacred Space*—the trusted online prayer site by the Irish Jesuits—*Sacred Advent* will make this Advent a season filled with sacred moments. Sign up to receive the daily messages from the First Sunday of Advent through the Christmas season. <http://www.loyolapress.com/our-catholic-faith/liturgical-year/advent/sacred-advent>



**LEARN HOW TO STUDY AND PRAY
WITH THE BIBLE**

Collaboratively, we will hold an “Introduction to the Bible” study starting January 31. You will gain comfort in finding your way around the Bible, develop a better understanding of its themes and writing styles, and gain insights about Catholic use and interpretation of the Bible. The study covers seven Tuesday evenings from 7:30 to 9:00. Please let me know if you are interested before January 19th so there will time enough to order materials. Contact Steve Ryan with questions or to sign up sjryan@applevalleycatholic.org.

SAVE THE DATE!

**Apple Valley Catholic Community
Annual Youth Ministry Auction**

Saturday, March 25, 2017,
6:00 p.m.—10:00 p.m.

OUR COLLABORATIVE STAFF:

Pastor: Rev. Walter J. Woods, STD
wjw@applevalleycatholic.org, (978) 263-4305 ext. 15

Parochial Vicar: Rev. Paul Sughrue
frpaul@applevalleycatholic.org, (781) 718-9433

Deacon: Charles A. Cornell
cac@applevalleycatholic.org, (978) 562-7447

**Personal Assistant to the Pastor/
St. Isidore Business Manager:**
Robin Ulichney
robin@applevalleycatholic.org, (978) 897-2710

Pastoral Associate/Collab. Dir. Pastoral Ministries:
Diahne Goodwin (diahneg@applevalleycatholic.org),
(978) 263-4305 ext.13, (adult formation, pastoral care,
RCIA, pastoral ministries)

Pastoral Associate: Steve Ryan
sjryan@applevalleycatholic.org, (978) 263-4305
ext. 21 (Bible Study, Funeral Planning)

Administrative Assistant: Janice Howes
janice@applevalleycatholic.org, (978) 263-4305 ext. 10

Business Manager: John Morris
john@applevalleycatholic.org, (978) 263-4305 ext. 11

Collaborative Director of Music: Andrea Goodrich
andrag@applevalleycatholic.org, (978) 263-4305 ext. 12

Coordinator of Youth Ministries: Jim Flanagan
jim@applevalleycatholic.org, (978) 263-4305 ext. 23
(High school ministry, Confirmation)

Director of Faith Formation: Barbara Dane
barbara@applevalleycatholic.org, (978) 263-4305 ext. 16
(Faith Formation for Grades 5-8 and GIFT)

Coordinator Of Young Family Ministries:
Carmen Giombetti
carmen@applevalleycatholic.org, (978) 263-4305 ext. 17
(Baptism - Grades K-4, First Eucharist)

Liturgical Coordinator: Mary Ryan
mgr@applevalleycatholic.org, (978) 263-4305 ext. 35

ST. ELIZABETH HEARING LOOP

Hearing Loop Receivers are available for those who wish to listen through the Hearing Loop. Please see Mary Ryan before Mass if you would like to try one.

VIRTUS TRAINING

All volunteers who work with children, the elderly, or the homebound are required to take a one time course in Child Protection. Our next Virtus training will be held on Saturday, Jan. 21 from 10:00 a.m.– 12:00 p.m. in Room 3 of the Parish Center of St. Elizabeth. To register, please contact our Child Abuse Prevention team leader, Jack Deasy, at jw.deasy@gmail.com.

OUR PARISHES:

St. Elizabeth of Hungary
89 Arlington St.
Acton, MA 01720
Phone (978) 263-4305
Fax: (978) 263-9014
www.seoh.org

St. Isidore
429 Great Rd.
Stow, MA 01775
Phone (978) 897-2710
Fax: (978) 461-0577
www.stisidorestow.org

LITURGICAL SCHEDULE

St. Elizabeth Parish:
Vigil Mass: Saturday 4:00 p.m.
Sunday: 10:30 a.m. & 5:00 p.m.

St. Isidore Parish:
Vigil Mass: Saturday 5:00 p.m.
Sunday 9:00 a.m.

Daily Eucharist this week:

St. Isidore—9:00 a.m., Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday

St. Elizabeth—9:00 a.m., Monday, Wednesday, Friday

Christmas Mass Schedule:

St. Elizabeth Parish:
Christmas Eve: 4:00, 6:30, 10:00 p.m.
Christmas Day: 10:30 a.m.

*There will be no 5:00 p.m. Masses on
Sundays December 25 or January 1.*

St. Isidore Parish:
Christmas Eve: 5:00, 8:00 p.m.
Christmas Day: 9:00 a.m.

For current information check the parish website or call the parish telephone number.

Sacrament of Reconciliation:
3:00-3:30 p.m.—St. Elizabeth
4:00-4:30 p.m.—St. Isidore

READINGS THIS SUNDAY— Dec. 11 (Cycle A)
Is 35:1-6a,10; Jas 5:7-10; Mt 11:2-11

READINGS NEXT SUNDAY— Dec. 18 (Cycle A)
Is 7:10-14; Rom 1:1-7; Mt 1:18-24

MARIAN HIGH SCHOOL
273 Union Ave, Framingham, MA 01702



Application Deadline for fall 2017 is January 13!
Submit your application today!
www.marianhigh.org

Please contact the Admissions Office to register for the HSPT:
508-875-7646 x203; admissions@marianhigh.org

FORMING DISCIPLES IN MISSION

A workshop in Parish-Based Evangelization coming to our collaborative!

If you have not yet attended this workshop, please consider participating in the upcoming two-evening workshop: **Tuesday, January 31-Wednesday, February 1 from 5:30-9:00 p.m.** at St. Elizabeth Parish Center. **Dinner will be included.**

Register for this or other locations at:
<http://disciplesinmission.com/formingdisciples>.

CONTRIBUTIONS FOR PARISH SUPPORT ST. ELIZABETH

Total Offertory Last Sunday: 12/04/16:	\$	4,185
Mail backs for Week Ending 12/03/16:	\$	1,928
EFT for Week Ending 12/03/16:	\$	715
Total Parish Support for Week Ending 12/03/16:	\$	6,828
Total Parish Support since 7/1/2016:	\$	293,598
Target Parish Support since 7/1/2016:	\$	307,463
Over (Under) Target since 7/1/2016:	\$	(13,865)

When you write or review your Will or Trust, please consider leaving a charitable bequest to St. Elizabeth of Hungary Parish.

Thank you very much!

MASS INTENTIONS THIS WEEK:

St. Isidore:

Saturday, December 10, 5:00 p.m.
Shantha Yesupatham, Memorial Mass

Sunday, December 11, 9:00 a.m.
Mildred Oster, Memorial Mass

Tuesday, December 13, 9:00 a.m.
Robert DeMilia, Memorial Mass

St. Elizabeth:

Monday, December 12, 9:00 a.m.
Frank and May Ryan, Memorial Mass

Wednesday, December 14, 9:00 a.m.
Stella and John C. Kilpatrick, Memorial Mass

DONATIONS NEEDED AT HOUSEHOLD GOODS

Household Goods, 530 Main Street, Acton, currently needs donations, especially queen size bedding- sheets, pillow cases, mattress covers, bedspreads and comforters. Donations are gratefully accepted on Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday mornings from 9:00 a.m. to noon. Financial contributions to support the newly expanded facility are also most welcome. For more information, please visit their website: www.householdgoods.org.

CONTRIBUTIONS FOR PARISH SUPPORT ST. ISIDORE

Total Offertory Last Sunday 12/04/16:	\$	3,307
Total EFT for Week Ending 12/04/16:	\$	2,035
Total Parish Support for Week Ending 12/04/16:	\$	5,342
Total Parish Support since 7/1/16:	\$	103,670
Target Parish Support since 7/1/16:	\$	105,800
Over (Under) Target since 7/1/16:	\$	(2,130)
St. Vincent DePaul Collection:	\$	346
Special Donation to St. Vincent DePaul:	\$	2,500

When you write or review your Will or Trust, please consider leaving a charitable bequest to St. Isidore Parish.

Thank you for your generosity.

APPLE VALLEY COLLABORATIVE MIDDLE SCHOOL EVENTS

Laser Tag Grades 5-6

Thursday, December 15, 1:00 p.m. (early release)

Laser Tag Grades 7-8

Tuesday, December 20, 11:15 a.m. (early release)

Cost is \$45. Includes Laser Tag, lunch and transportation. Permission slip required. We must have at least two adult chaperones to go on the trips.

Supper, Service and Swap Grades 5-8

Saturday, December 17, after the 4:00 p.m. Mass
St. Elizabeth Parish Center Hall

Cost is \$10. Includes Dinner and service project materials. Bring a small, wrapped Yankee Swap gift.

APPLE VALLEY CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL YOUTH MINISTRY Serving Acton, Boxboro, Stow and Beyond

Serving Breakfast at Cor Unum

Sunday, December 11, 5:00—9:15 a.m.

Teen Leadership Committee Meeting

Monday December 12, 6:30—8:30 p.m.

CHRISTMAS IN THE CITY

Set-up Day

Saturday, December 17, 8:00 a.m.—2:30 p.m.

Party Day

Sunday, December 18, 8:30 a.m.—5:30 p.m.

At the core of Christmas in the City are the children. Each year Christmas in the City helps thousands of children and their families celebrate a memorable holiday season at the Annual Christmas Party in which over 3500 children living in shelters enjoy a day that includes a sit down meal, toys, a winter wonderland, educational and clothing gifts and, of course, a visit from Santa! Christmas in the City is 100% a volunteer run non-profit organization. This event is open to all high school young people and adults!

COLLABORATIVE MUSIC CALENDAR

Wednesday, December 14:

4:00 - 4:45 p.m. - St Isidore Children's Choir Rehearsal, St. Isidore Church.

7:00 – 8:00 p.m. – St. Isidore 5:00 p.m. Christmas Vigil Rehearsal, St. Isidore Church.

7:30 – 9:00 p.m. – St. Elizabeth Music Ministry Rehearsal, St. Elizabeth's Parish Center Hall.

Thursday, December 15:

5:45 –6:30 p.m. - St. Elizabeth Children's Choir Rehearsal, St. Elizabeth Parish Center Hall.

7:00-8:30 p.m.-Apple Valley Pizza Prayer and Practice, St. Elizabeth Parish Center, Room 4.

JANUARY BOOK DISCUSSION

“The Good Life: Where Morality and Spirituality Converge”
By Richard M. Gula S.S.

Come join us as we explore this introduction to the Christian moral life. Gula invites us to consider the kind of persons we ought to be and the kind of life we ought to live by virtue of our commitment to God in Christ and through the Spirit. There will be two collaborative discussions:

- Monday mornings, 9:45 – 11:15 a.m. beginning January 9th at St. Elizabeth Parish Center.
- Thursday mornings, 9:45 – 11:15 a.m. beginning January 12th at St. Isidore Rectory.

All are welcome! Please contact Diahne Goodwin with questions: diahneg@applevalleycatholic.org. Books are available for \$10.50 if ordered with Diahne by December 13. (After that, participants are responsible for acquiring their own copies.)

**ST. ELIZABETH CHRISTMAS SEASON
FLOWER FUND**

We welcome your contribution towards flowers that will decorate our church for the Christmas Season. Please complete the form below and mail it to the parish office at 89 Arlington St. Acton, MA 01720 Attn: John Morris or put it in an envelope marked 'Flower Fund' and place it in the collection basket. If you are making your donation in memory of a deceased loved one and wish to have his/her name published in our bulletin on the Feast of the Epiphany, please check off the appropriate box on the form below. Contact Mary Ryan at mgr@applevalleycatholic.org or 978-263-4305 X35 if you have any questions.

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

I am making this donation in memory:

(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. _____



Please join us in the Church Hall every Sunday following the 10:30 a.m. Mass (except GIFT weekends) for coffee and refreshments, time to catch up with friends & meet new friends!

ST. ELIZABETH SUNDAY CAFÉ

It's the place to be after Liturgy!

THIS WEEK AT ST. ELIZABETH:

- Sunday, December 11**
Gospel Scripture Reflection
9:15—10:15 a.m., Parish Center, Room 4
- Monday, December 12**
Book Discussion Group
9:45—11:30 a.m., Parish Center Hall
- Tuesday, December 13**
Writing in Faith Lucretia
10:00 a.m.—12:00 p.m., Pope Francis Room
- Saturday, December 17**
Middle School Supper and Swap
6:00—8:00 p.m., Parish Center Hall

**ST. ELIZABETH
PREPARING FOR CHRISTMAS**

Listed below are opportunities for you to help at one of our four Christmas Masses and to prepare our church for the Christmas Season. Times are subject to change according to the availability of those who sign up to help.

Christmas Environment Preparation:

- Between now and December 18, outdoor lights need to be strung on shrubs at the front of the church.
- During the week of December 18, help is needed to wire wreaths and attach bows. This will be scheduled at a time convenient for those who sign up.
- On Friday late afternoon and/or evening, December 23, we plan to remove the Advent environment; hang wreaths and swags; put fabric banners in place; iron altar and ambo cloths, and neaten up the church.

Ministry needs for Christmas Masses:

- 27 persons are needed at the 4:00 p.m. and 22 persons are needed at EACH of the other Masses to serve as greeters, gift bearers, and to pass baskets.

If you would like to help in any way, please sign up at the back of the church after Mass or contact Mary Ryan at 978.263.4305 x35 or mgr@applevalleycatholic.org.

**ST. ELIZABETH AND ST. ISIDORE
GIVING TREES**

Thank you for your generous support! Gifts are due this weekend! Please place your gifts under the trees, according to the tag instructions, with the tag attached by **December 11** after morning Mass.



**WILLING TO HELP TURN UP THE LIGHTS
AT ST. ELIZABETH?**

Willing to help turn up the lights, up above your head, in the church for Christmas? St. Elizabeth's Buildings and Grounds Committee is seeking one to three volunteers' help for a two or three hour task. Before Christmas and Easter we replace burnt out bulbs in the Church lamps. No experience necessary. Your parishioners will benefit from and be thankful for your service. FYI - The crew generally has a pretty good time. Please contact John Morris at jim@seoh.org or call at 978-263-4305 x11. Thank you.

LIVING THE GOSPEL

Gaudete!

The third Sunday of Advent was traditionally known as Gaudete Sunday. The word gaudete (pronounced gow-day-tay) is from Latin and means Rejoice! The name was given to this Sunday because the entrance antiphon for the day is: Rejoice in the Lord always; again I say, rejoice! The Lord is near. When Advent was observed as a more penitential season, this third Sunday was a break from the somber mood and was more celebratory. The rose-colored candle in the Advent wreath and rose-coloured vestments convey a mood of joy and celebration.

ST. ISIDORE PRAYER SHAWL MINISTRY

St. Isidore Prayer Shawl Ministry meets on Monday night, December 12, at 7:00 p.m. in the Rectory.

**ST. ISIDORE
CLEANING FOR CHRISTMAS**

Volunteers are needed to help clean the church and pews in preparation for Christmas on the mornings of December 14 and 15 after Mass. We would appreciate help on either or both days if possible. Please sign-up on the sheet in the vestibule. Thank you!

**ST. ISIDORE
CHRISTMAS FLOWER MEMORIALS**

Flower Memorial envelopes are on the tables at all entrances for all who would like to make a memorial donation.



ST. ISIDORE SUNDAY CAFÉ

We need more bakers for both the December 18 and the January 8 hospitality after the 9:00 a.m. Masses. The sign-up sheet is in the vestibule.

BLOOD DRIVE AT ST. ELIZABETH

The Red Cross will run a blood drive this Thursday, December 15, from 12-8 p.m. in the Parish Center Hall. To participate, please call 1-800-RED CROSS or visit their website at red-crossblood.org. Walk-ins are welcome also. The Red Cross and people in need thank you for your donation.