

QUESTIONS OF THE WEEK

Theme: Preparing a pathway in our lives.

Breaking Open the Word

Suggested text for faith sharing: Today's first reading, from Isaiah.

Step One: Listen to the Word

As you hear this reading, what words or phrases strike you? What in this reading touches your heart? What image from Isaiah lingers in your memory?

Step Two: Look into Your Life

Question for Children: How do you experience God taking care of you, even in times of trouble?

Question for Youth: John went out to announce the good news of the Messiah's coming. How can you be good news to your friends and family this week?

Question for Adults: When you hear Isaiah comfort the people by promising that God is like a shepherd who gathers the lambs into his arms, what is your response?



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),
(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
(andreag@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 Ministry: Joan Mattila
(joan@applevalleycatholic.org), (978) 263-4305 ext. 17

Pastoral Ministries Administrative Assistant: Judy Richardson
(judy@applevalleycatholic.org), 978 263-4305 ext. 19

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

Catholic Chaplain - Emerson Hospital
Timothy Duff - 978-287-3015

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.



*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.



*The Second Sunday of Advent
December 10, 2017*

"Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight his paths."



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).

READINGS THIS SUNDAY— December 10
(Cycle B)

Is 40:1-5, 9-11; 2 Pt 3:8-14; Mk 1:1-8

READINGS NEXT SUNDAY— December 17
(Cycle B)

Is 61:1-2a, 10-11; 1 Thes 5:16-24; Jn 1:6-8, 19-28

WEEKDAY MASS SCHEDULE CHANGE

Due to a family funeral, Fr. Walter will be out of town most of next week. The revised Mass schedule is as follows:

St. Elizabeth—9:00 a.m.
Monday and Friday

St. Isidore—9:00 a.m.
Wednesday and Thursday



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.

St. Isidore:
Christmas Eve—December 24
5:00 p.m. and 8:00 p.m.

Christmas Day—December 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 WITH OUR VISITORS THIS CHRISTMAS!

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!

**CAROLS & COOKIES
Sunday, December 17, 2:00 p.m.**

This wonderful parish collaborative event will start in the Church at St. Isidore at 2:00PM where we will begin with a sing-along of Christmas carols and then gather downstairs in the hall for hot chocolate and Christmas cookies. There will be a separate, “nut-free” cookie table. We welcome donations of a dozen Christmas cookies to be dropped off in the hall prior to the caroling. Please contact Joan Mattila if you have any questions or would like help out with this fun event.



CHRISTMAS COLLECTION

At all of our Christmas Masses, our only collection will be to support the retirement, medical and financial needs of priests of the Archdiocese of Boston. On behalf of all of our priests, thank you in advance for your generosity. For more information, please visit www.clergyfunds.org.

**CANCELLATION OF MASS
DUE TO INCLEMENT WEATHER**



If you don't have internet access, closings can be found on TV on Channel 4 - WBZ. The names of closed institutions scroll continuously across the screen. Cancellation of Masses on Saturday evening or Sunday will be posted on the home page of the parish web site <http://www.seoh.org/> or <http://www.stisidorestow.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.

WORLDWIDE MARRIAGE ENCOUNTER

“The spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me, because the LORD has anointed me.” Let your spirits be augmented by attending a Worldwide Marriage Encounter Weekend. The next Weekends are Jan 19-21 in South Kingstown, RI and Mar 9-11 in Duxbury. For more information, call Stephen & Michelle O'Leary at 800-710-9963 or visit them at <https://www.mema.org/>.

**CONTRIBUTIONS FOR PARISH SUPPORT
ST. ELIZABETH**

Total Offertory Sunday 12/3/17:	\$ 10,285
Mailbacks for Week Ending 12/2/17:	\$ 2,307
Total EFT for Week Ending 12/2/17:	\$ 676
Total Parish Support for Week Ending 12/2/17:	\$ 13,268
Total Parish Support since 7/1/17:	\$ 305,059
Target Parish Support since 7/1/17:	\$ 309,855
Over (Under) Target since 7/1/17:	\$ (4,796)

Thank you very much!

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.
Wednesday & Thursday

St. Elizabeth—9:00 a.m.
Monday & Friday

Sacrament of Reconciliation:
St. Elizabeth:
Saturdays, 3:00—3:30 p.m.

St. Isidore:
Saturdays, 4:00—4:30 p.m.

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

**CONTRIBUTIONS FOR PARISH SUPPORT
ST. ISIDORE**

Total Offertory Last Sunday: 12/3/17:	\$ 3,910
EFT for Week Ending 12/3/17:	\$ 2,064
Total Parish Support for Week Ending 12/3/17:	\$ 5,974
Total Parish Support since 7/1/17:	\$103,724
Target Parish Support since 7/1/17:	\$105,800
Over (Under) Target since 7/1/17:	\$ (2,076)
St. Vincent DePaul collection	\$ 47
Grand Annual	\$ 10,970

Thank you!

THIS WEEK AT ST. ISIDORE

Monday, December 11

Collaborative Children's Choir
5:30—6:15 p.m., Church Hall

Prayer Shawl Ministry
7:00 p.m., upstairs in the Rectory

ST. ISIDORE CHRISTMAS FLOWER MEMORIALS

Christmas Flower Offering envelopes have been placed at all parish entrances for parishioners who wish to make donations in memory of loved ones.

CHRISTMAS GIFT RETURN



All Christmas gifts and gift cards for St. Mary's of Lynn and for Warm Hearts of Stow should be returned to St. Isidore this weekend.

CHILDREN LITURGY OF THE WORD

CLOW is liturgy that is especially designed for children. From the children's Lectionary, the kids hear the 1st reading of the day, sing the psalm, and listen to the Gospel. They then have a reflection led by one of the CLOW team members that helps them break open the Gospel terms that they can more easily understand. CLOW is offered during the 9:00 a.m. Mass at St. Isidore and during the 10:30 a.m. Mass at St. Elizabeth. All kids in grades K-6 are encouraged to attend. The upcoming dates are: December 10 and 17. Parents are welcome.

MASS INTENTIONS THIS WEEK:

St. Elizabeth:

Monday, December 11, 9:00 a.m.
Myron Liskiewicz, 4th Anniversary Mass

Prayers for the Deceased: Robert Dupuis

St. Isidore:

Saturday, December 9, 5:00 p.m.
Helen Hall Family

Sunday, December 10, 9:00 a.m.
Arthur Crain, Memorial Mass

Wednesday, December 13, 9:00 a.m.
Elizabeth Bowler, Memorial Mass

Thursday, December 14, 9:00 a.m.
Jeremy Gullette, Memorial Mass

THANK YOU!

Maynard Council 2121 Knights of Columbus wishes to say "THANK YOU" to the parishioners of St. Isidore and St. Elizabeth for your kind and generous contributions to our K of C State Charity Fund Drive (commonly known as the Tootsie Roll Drive). The proceeds of our charity drive are used to purchase equipment and devices needed by children and adults with mental and/or physical disabilities in our own area and elsewhere within Massachusetts. Your kind generosity will help to lighten the load of those in need. If you know of any such individual in need, please contact any member of our council. You can also find the application for the benefit online at:

<http://www.massachusettsstatekofc.org>. Just click on Forms in the red bar on the left side of the page and then click on Charity Fund Application Form in the white area of the resulting page.

FIRST RECONCILIATION—FIRST EUCHARIST PREP. NEWS

GIFT Weekend was a Success!

THANK YOU to all of the children and parents who joined us for our GIFT K-4 breakout this past weekend! It was so wonderful to see so many families gather together to learn and share about ways to experience peace, joy and love of JESUS during the Season of Advent. Special thanks to all of the parents, big and little session helpers, but especially to Marcia Malone, Alicia Giannotti, and Virginia Tawa who assisted me with the planning, preparation, and the breakouts. Special thanks also to Mary and Steve Ryan, our guest speakers who shared their experience of prison ministry with the children.

THANK YOU for your Generous Concord Holiday Bag Collection Donations and Service!

THANK YOU to all who donated and sorted items for our Concord prison holiday gift bag and cards service project! Special thanks to Kevin Ryan and his daughter Evelyn who transported the collected items to the drop-off location on Monday. The regional team of volunteers expressed their gratitude to our parish collaborative for our generosity.

Last Mini Lesson is on December 17.

We invite our children to continue to work together with their parents on their "Go Seek Find" lessons at home. We will gather as a community and meet for our final December mini lesson (chapters 7&8) on next Sunday, December 17 at St. Isidore at 8:30 a.m.

Carols and Cookies on December 17.

Please join us at 2:00 p.m. at St. Isidore Church for our Carols and Cookies event. Donations of a dozen cookies can be dropped off in the hall in the morning at our mini lesson or just prior to the event.

CLOW for children in grades K-6.

Children and their parent(s) are invited to join us for Children's Liturgy Of the Word (CLOW) which is offered at both parishes on most Sundays! Please check the bulletin for the complete CLOW schedule.

MIDDLE SCHOOL ADVENT SERVICE, SOCIAL AND SWAP

- Who:** Kids in grades 5- 8
When: Sunday, Dec. 10 after the 10:30 Mass
Where: St. Elizabeth Parish Center Hall
What:
- **Service:** We will prepare food bags for the homeless in Worcester!
 - **Social:** Pizza lunch, seasonal treats and some "reindeer" games!
 - **Swap:** Please bring a wrapped gift worth no more than \$10 that kids this age would like. Gift cards, seasonal items, food and "gag" gifts are popular items.

Adults are needed and welcomed!
Please RSVP by Friday noon, December 8.

COLLABORATIVE MUSIC NEWS

St. Isidore and St. Elizabeth Children's Choirs (grades 2 – 6) will rehearse Monday December 11, from 5:30 – 6:15 p.m. in the Church Hall at St. Isidore. Rehearsals in December will be at St. Isidore.

St. Elizabeth Music Ministers will rehearse this week on Wednesday, December 13 from 7:30—9:00 p.m. in St. Elizabeth's Parish Center Hall.

Apple Valley Teen Ensemble will rehearse on Wednesday, December 13 from 5:30 – 6:45 p.m. in St. Elizabeth's Parish Center Hall.

GOSPEL FOCUS

Preparing the Way

The gospel passage quotes the prophet Isaiah (although text combines Malachi 3:1; Isaiah 40:3; and Exodus 23:20) and casts John the Baptist in the role of fulfilling the prophecy of the voice that cries in the wilderness, 'Prepare a way for the Lord'. The description of John in camel-skin and eating locusts and wild honey is designed to align him with Elijah, the great prophet of Jewish history. In a very short and sharp passage the gospel ties the coming of Jesus to the expectation of a messiah that has run through Jewish history and been foretold by the great prophets.

**APPLE VALLEY CATHOLIC
YOUTH MINISTRY**
Serving Acton, Boxboro, Stow and Beyond
UPCOMING YOUTH MINISTRY EVENTS

Advent Prayer

Wednesdays until December 20
St. Elizabeth's Youth Ministry Office
7:00—7:30 p.m.

Make these prayer opportunities your sacred yes for Advent

Joining Congregation of Beth Elohim— Ice Skating
Saturday, December 9
3:30—7:30 p.m.

This event is being coordinated by Ashley Francisco and friends from BBYO. We are going to meet at the Nashoba Valley Ice Rink at 3:30 p.m. We will skate for an hour. After skating, we will head over to St. Elizabeth for games-prayer-pizza. We need drivers to take us from the rink to St. Elizabeth.

Christmas in the City

Set-up Day Saturday, December 16,
8:00 a.m.-2:30 p.m.
Party Day Sunday, December 17
8:30 a.m.-5:00 p.m.

Meet at St. Elizabeth of Hungary Parish Parking Lot. Please fill out a permission slip and bring it to the Youth Ministry office by December 14. We invite all participants to bring an unwrapped toy or gift card to donate. Drivers may be needed.

Youth Ministry Christmas Party

Wednesday, December 27, 6:30—9:30 p.m.
St. Elizabeth of Hungary Youth Ministry Office
Bring your favorite dish or dessert to share. We will be doing a Yankee Swap. Please bring a gift of approximately \$10. Re-gifting is always welcome!

Teen Alpha— Winter Session

Tuesdays, January 9—March 20, 6:30—8:30 p.m.
This is an awesome program and is open to all high school young people.

**ALL OF OUR PROGRAMS ARE OPEN TO ALL
HIGH SCHOOL YOUNG PEOPLE!**

**APPLE VALLEY CATHOLIC
YOUNG ADULT GROUP**

A Night with Faith, Food, and Friends

Tuesday, December 12, 7:00 p.m.

Join us for dinner and faith conversation. This is always a fun night to talk about our faith and meet new people. Come join us for dinner, beverages, reflection and discussion. Pay your own way. We'll be eating at Yangtze River Restaurant at 584 King Street, Littleton, MA. For more information contact Jim Flanagan at jim@applevalleycatholic.org or Alicia Giannotti at Alicia.giannotti@verizon.net.

Christmas in the City

Sunday, December 17, 9:30 a.m.— 4:30 p.m.

Volunteer at a giant Christmas party for children who live in homeless shelters with their families! Help provide a meal, take children on rides, and see the joy that this event brings them and their family. Contact us for more information.

Join our Apple Valley Catholic Young Adult Group:
<http://www.facebook.com/groups/558137624339112/>

**ST. ELIZABETH
OUTDOOR NATIVITY SCENE**

Each week during Advent and leading up to Christmas Eve you will see that the placement of figures and the lighting in the stable does not take place all at once, but occurs in stages. This is done to highlight the season as a time of waiting and expectation until we celebrate the birth of Jesus on Christmas Eve.

Please take time each week to stop and notice the changes that take place in the stable during our journey through Advent to Christmas and to appreciate the beauty of the visible structure and, more important, the gift God has given us through the birth of his Son, Jesus.



THIS WEEK AT ST. ELIZABETH

Sunday, December 10

Gospel Scripture Reflection
9:15—10:15 a.m., Parish Center, Room 4

Teen Alpha

6:30—9:00 p.m., Parish Center Hall

Monday, December 11

Collaborative Finance Council
7:00—9:00 p.m., Parish Center, Room 1

Wednesday, December 13

Apple Valley Teen Ensemble
5:30—6:45 p.m., Parish Center Hall

St. Elizabeth Music Ministers

7:30—9:00 p.m., Parish Center Hall

Thursday, December 14

Writing in Faith
9:30—11:30 a.m., Parish Center, Room 3

ST. ELIZABETH GIVING TREE



Every year our parish generously supports many charities through their donation to the Giving Tree. This year we will be donating gifts to the following organizations: The Acton Housing Authority, St. Vincent DePaul Society, Los Amigos in Lawrence, Lazarus House in Lawrence, St. Patrick's Parish in Lowell, St. Mary's Parish in Lynn and Bellesini Academy in Lawrence. The Giving Tree with the tags has been placed in the entry way.

Please take as many tags as you are able to fulfill, purchase the suggested gift, and place your gift under the tree with the tag attached **this weekend, December 10**. Please note, some tags will indicate the gift to be wrapped, others will indicate to leave the gift unwrapped. Thank you in advance for helping out these charities!

ST. ELIZABETH PRAYER LINE

Are you looking for a way to give back? Do you have 10-15 minutes a week to pray? We have an email prayer line that generates a few emails per week that are requests for prayer. It is amazingly comforting to know that a group of people are praying for you. Please email Cathy Griffin at cathleengriffin@comcast.net.

We would love for you to join us! And, if you need a prayer, you can use the same email. We only use first names, or no name, to protect your privacy.

**ST. ELIZABETH CHRISTMAS SEASON
FLOWER FUND**

We welcome your contribution towards flowers that will decorate our church for the Christmas Season. Please complete and mail the form below to St. Elizabeth Parish 89 Arlington St. Acton MA 01720 or put it in an envelope marked 'Flower Fund' and place it in the collection basket. If your donation is in memory of a deceased loved one and you 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 2017 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. ____