



CELEBRATE
The birth of the King

APPLE VALLEY CATHOLIC COLLABORATIVE – TWO PARISHES ONE MISSION

St. Elizabeth of Hungary Parish
89 Arlington Street, Acton, MA 01720
(978) 263-4305/Fax (978) 263-9014
Office Hours: Sunday Noon—4 p.m.
Monday—Thursday: 9:00 a.m.—4:00 p.m.



St. Isidore Parish
429 Great Road, Stow, MA 01775
(978) 897-2710/Fax (978) 461-0577
Office Hours: Sunday 10:00 a.m.—Noon
Monday: 9:00 –3:00 p.m.
Tuesday: 9:00 a.m.—Noon

Visit us at <https://applevalleycatholic.org/>

Merry Christmas;

I begin by extending to all a warm welcome as we gather to celebrate the birth of our Lord and Redeemer Jesus Christ. We gather to celebrate the miracle of Christmas where God chose to become one of us in the person Jesus Christ.

The greatest truth that comes from Christmas is not wrapped in colorful Christmas paper but wrapped in a blanket on the outskirts of Bethlehem in a manger. For as the angel of the Lord appeared to the Shepherds on that night of our Savior's birth proclaiming Luke 2:10-11 *"...I bring you good news of great joy for all people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord"*. These words are proclaimed to us 2,000 year later and still hold the same meaning -our Savior Jesus Christ came for all people; he came for you and me.

In Jesus we are given a home – a place where we experience forgiveness, mercy and love. This is what we celebrate at Christmas and throughout the year.

We are reminded of God's merciful love through His only begotten son Jesus Christ. Through Jesus we come to know who God really is – He is LOVE. As children of God the best gift we can give at Christmas and throughout the year is that of LOVE for each other.

We are loved and are to love-this is the greatest gift of all.

May the Gracious God, who has gifted us with His Son, bless you and your family now and always.

God Bless You,
I am yours in Christ,

Fr. Jeff



No matter your age or how many steps you may have journeyed in your faith, we are here to walk with you and assist you on your journey, a journey that can open up answers to questions that humanity has been asking throughout history: Who are we? Why are we here? Where are we going?

Check out [Learn & Grow](#) on our website to see what we are currently offering to help you on your journey. Please do not hesitate to contact us with any questions.

THE GREATEST GIFT...
Jesus

Seeking?

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.

Our Alpha experience is a great place to start to explore the Christian faith and questions of life. Our next Alpha starts in January.

Going deeper, our RCIA process invites people to go further in their learning about Catholicism and their own spiritual journey, preparing them for Baptism or Confirmation into the Catholic Church. Please contact any staff person to learn more.

"I invite all Christians, everywhere, at this very moment, to a renewed personal encounter with Jesus Christ, or at least an openness to letting him encounter them; I ask all of you to do this unflinchingly each day.

No one should think that this invitation is not meant for him or her, since 'no one is excluded from the joy brought by the Lord.'
Pope Francis - Joy of Gospel #3



Got Questions about Life?... About Faith? Try Alpha!

What is Alpha?

Alpha is an opportunity to explore life and the Christian faith, in a friendly, open and informal environment. A place where you can belong to a group of people exploring these questions.

Alpha is not so much a *course*, but an experience! Gathering once a week over a ten week period, each Alpha brings together people from every walk of life. We begin each Alpha gathering by sharing a meal. We eat together, we listen to a talk and then we gather together in small groups for discussion. Over 29 million people across the globe have experienced Alpha.

"Alpha was the best thing I ever did. It helped answer some huge questions and to find a simple empowering faith in my life."

"To me, Alpha is an expression of the work of the Holy Spirit... It's accessible, it's easy, and it's user-friendly. It's extraordinary. It's leading people into a personal relationship with Jesus and building a community that engages with the world and changes it for the better."

We will be offering Winter Alpha Sessions starting on:

Tues., January 21, 9:45 a.m., St. Isidore
Thurs., January 23, 6:30 p.m., St. Isidore
and
Teen Alpha, January 21, 6:30 p.m.,
St. Elizabeth Parish Hall

In the meantime if you would like to learn more, check out alphausa.org; or contact avccalpha@gmail.com



What's Next After Alpha? Connect Groups



A place where people go to connect and grow!

Join a Connect Group! Connect Groups are where Alpha alumni go to connect and grow! They are an opportunity to continue to grow in the relationships that were formed in the Alpha course with each other and with God. They are places where members are known, loved and cared for by one another. We meet in homes, share a meal, have some fun, listen to a short talk by one of its members, have conversation and pray together.

Our first Alpha Connect Group gathering of the year is **Friday Evening January 24** at Sean O'Sullivan's home, 125 Hayward Rd., Acton from 6:30-8 p.m. We will continue every first and third Friday after that. If you would like to join this group that is starting, contact: avccalpha@gmail.com.



Children's Liturgy of the Word

During Children's Liturgy of the Word Children through grade five are dismissed from the assembly to the church hall, where the readings and Gospel are proclaimed from a Children's Lectionary. They return to the church during the time of the Presentation of the Gifts. Parents are welcome to attend, but must attend with children age four and under. If you have any questions about CLOW, or would like to join our ministry team, please contact Joan Mattila, Coordinator of Young Family Ministries at: joan@applevalleycatholic.org

Formed

Have you taken advantage of the free subscription to FORMED that we purchased for you yet? If not, this holiday season maybe a great time to do so. FORMED provides the very best Catholic content from more than 60 organizations to help parishes, families and individuals explore their faith anywhere. **Supporting thousands of movies, children's programs, ebooks, audio, parish programs and studies direct to your browser, mobile or connected device. Think: Netflix, Kindle, and Audible for Catholics, all in one place!!**

Watch, listen and read, anywhere, anytime.

Go to <https://formed.org/signup>

and put in:

Apple Valley Catholic Community

where it asks you to find your Parish then enter your email address.

You should then be all set to take advantage of these wonderful resources!

Symbolon

The Catholic Faith Explained features video and discussion sessions that brings together some of the most trusted Catholic teachers in the world to guide you through the breadth and richness of the Catholic faith. Please join us on **January 15, from 7 - 8:30 p.m.** at the St. Elizabeth Parish Center. The topic will be: The Sacraments and overview of Baptism and Confirmation. There is no cost to participate, but please sign up ahead of time with Diahne diahneg@applevalleycatholic.org so that we may plan well for the event. Thank you!

Future dates and topics include:

Feb 12: The Eucharist

Mar 11: The Mass

April 15: Holy Spirit and the Life of Grace

May 13: Mary and the Saints

You are invited to participate in one or all – each session stands alone. The *Symbolon* series is also available for viewing anytime through our Formed subscription! (go to formed.org and sign up, selecting Apple Valley Catholic Community under the organization)

Young Adult Ministry—YAM Come Join Us!

Are you a 20 something or 30 something Young Adult? We welcome you! Join us for activities such as: A night with Faith, Food and Friends, Volunteering at Cor Unum Meal Center, Christmas in the City, Scripture Study & Dinner. Check out their Facebook page for the latest details about all events. Please join us! Facebook: Apple Valley Catholic Young Adult Group or email:

youngadults@applevalleycatholic.org



Apple Valley Adult Christian Service Ministry

We are a group of adults who desire to share our gifts and blessings in service to others. All are welcome to volunteer according to their own schedules and interests.

Please join us, all are invited! Contact Mary at amato.mg@gmail.com for more information about our ministry or to add your name to the mailing list. The next monthly meeting is on **January 27**. Parish Center, Room 1, 7:00 p.m. Follow AVCC Adult Christian Service Ministry on Facebook.

“You Matter to God, You Matter to Us!”

May God bless you and our community abundantly in the new year.

As always, please let us know how we can be of help and support for you and your loved ones.



Thank you for joining us in celebrating the birth of our Savior, Jesus Christ!

**Apple Valley Catholic
Mission Trip Information
Summer 2020**



AVCC Youth ministry is excited to be able to offer two Catholic Heart Work Camp Mission Trips next summer! Catholic Heart is an amazing experience for young people to serve those in need, deepen their faith, and make incredible friends.

Catholic Heart Hartford, CT.

Open to youth currently in grades 8 – 12

Sunday, July 5 – Friday, July 10

Cost \$475

Catholic Heart Boston, MA.

Open to kids currently in grades 7 – 12

Sunday, July 12 – Friday, July 17

Cost \$475

Space is limited. Registrations will be accepted with a \$100 deposit on a first-come, first-served basis.

If you have any questions about the mission trips contact:

kaylad@applevalleycatholic.org or

barbara@applevalleycatholic.org

Prayer Line

Prayer makes a difference!

Can you take a few minutes each week to pray for others?

Do you need prayers yourself?

Connect with our email prayer group!

To join the group or to request prayers, please send an email to Cathy

Griffin, nushamrockgirl@gmail.com.

For requests, to protect privacy, we only use first names or no name.

Keep Connected

This fall the Apple Valley Catholic Community was honored to receive a Vibrant Faith grant to pilot a new program for middle school students and parents called Keep Connected in a faith-based setting.

Keep Connected is designed to help early/adolescents “grow together rather than grow apart” during the teen years. Parents and kids worked together to develop skills in exploring new ways to express care, share power, challenge growth, provide support, and expand possibilities. Each session included a meal, a Biblical inspiration, age specific group activities, and shared family discussion. One parent said, **“I never thought about these things before. It has really helped me get ready for what is coming down the road.”** We look forward to offering the program again this spring. Keep Connected is open to students currently in grades 6 – 8. Interested? Contact Barbara at: barbara@applevalleycatholic.org.



Keep Connected kids working together to explore how much guidance and structure are needed in order to successfully complete a task.



We Encourage All Parishioners To Be Involved In Ministry

Jesus said, "The Son of Man came not to be served, but to serve." (Mark 10:45). The Church is the Body of Christ in this world, and each of us are members of it. As members of this Body, we truly are His hands, His feet and His eyes in our world. To be a Christian, then, is to be committed to action, to living out our faith through service to one another. We are the Church; we are the Body of Christ, and we are all here to serve. Every member has something to offer toward the Mission of the Church.

Our Apple Valley Community is full of opportunities to better develop our relationship with Jesus and with others through participation in our parish ministries. We are all responsible to fulfill the mission of the Church and we all have a role. This is why we constantly invite parishioners to get involved in some kind of serving. Please contact any staff member to learn more about serving. Apprenticing and training provided!



Interested In Becoming A Member?

Visit the Welcome Center in the gathering space after Mass for more information or visit us online at: applevalleycatholic.org.

Collaborative Worship Schedule

Saturday

5:00 p.m.—St. Isidore

Sunday

8:45 a.m.—St. Isidore

10:45 a.m.—St. Elizabeth

5:00 p.m.—St. Elizabeth

Daily Eucharist

Mon., 9:00 a.m.—St. Isidore

Tues., 9:00 a.m.—St. Isidore

Wed., 9:00 a.m.—St. Elizabeth

Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament

First Wednesday of each month

5:00—7:00 p.m.—St. Elizabeth

Sacrament of Reconciliation

St. Isidore

Saturdays, 4:00—4:45 p.m.

St. Elizabeth

First Wednesday of each month,

5:30—7:00 p.m.

Contacts

Pastor: Rev. Jeffrey Archer
(frjeff@applevalleycatholic.org), (978) 263-4305 ext. 15

Deacon: Charles A. Cornell
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Director of Faith Formation: Barbara Dane
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Coordinator of Young Family Ministries: Joan Mattila
(joan@applevalleycatholic.org), (978) 263-4305 ext. 17

Interim Coordinator of High School Faith formation:
Sheila Bauer, (sheilab@applevalleycatholic.org), (978) 263-4305, ext. 23

Interim Coordinator of Youth Ministry: Kayla Dee,
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Pastoral Ministries Administrative Assistant: Judy Richardson,
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Catholic Chaplain - Emerson Hospital:
Timothy Duff - (978) 287-3015

St. Elizabeth's St. Vincent DePaul: (978) 263-4305 ext. 14

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