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INTRODUCTION

The relationship of a man and a woman drawn together by love is a deeply human reality. But, since these two people are created by God, are in God's image, and are God's gift to each other, their human love is a reflection of God's own love. It is God's love that enables the man and the woman to reach out to each other in a covenant with one another, with their God and with God's people, the Church. For these reasons Marriage is a sacred reality, a sacrament.

Knowing this, in 1981 the province of Michigan, mandated a required period of formation, for the *"personal, spiritual and liturgical preparation of the couple"* seeking to celebrate the Sacrament of Marriage. This requirement expresses a deep concern for the happiness and fulfillment of individual couples as well as a serious concern for the role which marriage plays in the life of the church and society.

I. **PERIOD OF FORMATION PROCESS**

A. **Initial Contact and Interview**

1. The couple themselves must contact the priest of the parish to indicate their desire to prepare for marriage. This must be done at least six (6) months prior to any anticipated date of marriage. Since this is the initiation of the process, other arrangements, such as the hall/band/caterer, should not be finalized prior to any contact with the priest.
2. The initial interview will touch on the following areas:
 1. Parish membership - At least one person must be a registered/active member of the parish. Adult children over the age of 18 that are living independently and any child over the age of 25 need to be registered separately from your parents.
 2. Faith Life - To what extent are those seeking to marry practicing, living and witnessing to their faith which is the faith also of the community.
 3. The necessary documentation for the marriage .

B. **Preparedness for Marriage** - The priest and/or pastoral minister will guide the couple through an evaluation of their preparedness for marriage by focusing on areas such as communication, spirituality, sexuality, finances and others. The evaluation will be shared with the couple and any concerns arising from it will be discussed. At the conclusion of this the anticipated dates should become firm.

C. **Couple to Couple Program** - All couples are required/expected to participate in the Couple to Couple Marriage Preparation Program at St. John's Parish. Or, they may attend an Engaged Encounter Weekend, where the couple joins other engaged couples in a sharing experience based on the Marriage Encounter model, sponsored by the Diocese. Schedules, fees and further information are available from the priest.

D. **Liturgical Preparation** - The engaged couple will meet with the priest/liturgist to plan the Liturgy. Active participation in the planning and celebration is encouraged. Music Suggestions can be found on page of the packet or on our Website (essexvillestjohn.com). A sample music CD can be obtained from Rose Yagiela to help with your selections. You will need to fill out the **Music Selection Form** and return to the liturgist for final approval no later than 2 months before the wedding.

II. PLANNING THE CELEBRATION OF MARRIAGE

A booklet "Together for Life" will be given to each couple to aid them in choosing options and in planning their marriage ceremony/liturgy.

The church has always insisted that the minister of the Sacrament of Matrimony is not the priest, but the couple themselves. So, it is only fitting that the couple, with the guidance and encouragement of the pastoral team, prepare their marriage liturgy.

The couple should choose their prayers, religious songs, and scriptural readings to express the depth of their relationship and commitment to God and to each other. Because the sacrament of marriage is an act of public worship, people attending the Liturgy should not merely be considered as guests. The Liturgical assembly is called to its role of actual participation, and any planning must take this into account.

The wedding should include those ministers needed to serve in the Liturgical Celebration. This includes: Minister of Music, Lectors, Readers of petitions, Ministers of the Eucharist, other musicians (Soloists, Cantors and Instrumentalists).

When celebrating faith certain actions are most appropriate and need to be stressed; while those actions that do not express the faith of the community need to be avoided.

With this in mind, the following guidelines for St. John the Evangelist Parish, Essexville are presented:

- A. Liturgy - The sacramental celebration of marriage between two baptized Catholics will usually take place within the Eucharistic Liturgy (Mass).
 1. Wedding Party - The wedding party should be willing and able to participate in the prayer of the church as we celebrate this great sacrament. With that in mind, the age of participants, especially ring bearers and flower girls, comes into question. They should be of an age and maturity to be attentive and pray with us, recognizing the ceremony takes an hour. (That is, if they are not going to church on a regular basis, or are unable to remain in the congregation during the service, they are not old enough to be in a wedding.)
- B. Place - Being a community celebration, the marriage must take place within the parish church building. It is also possible for this celebration to take place in the church of the non-Catholic person once permission is given and preparation for marriage completed.

- C. Time - Saturdays at 12:00 p.m., 1 :00 p.m. or 2:00 p.m. Only one marriage will be scheduled on a Saturday. Friday evenings and other weekday times are also available.
- D. Music - Music serves to unify the people gathered and enhance the community's prayer and faith. Music chosen must reflect this. All music must be approved by our Music Minister, Rose Yagiela. The couple should contact Rose within one week of their first meeting with the Presider to secure the date.
- E. Music Ministers) - The couple should choose a parish organist/pianist to play for the marriage celebration due to that person's familiarity with the worship of St. John the Evangelist Parish. The accompanists at St. John's Parish are Rose Yagiela (893-1788), Diane Massignan (686-6201), and MaryBeth Cianek (892-6446). See page __ for other musician suggestions.

If, for a special reason you desire another accompanist, that person must be approved by the Music Liturgist. You will need someone experienced with playing the appropriate Liturgical acclamations in the liturgy. If they are not familiar with the service you could ask our liturgist to come and help them during the service.

The couple may select a parish cantor/song leader, who may also double as a soloist. The parish Music Minister can assist you in choosing a parish cantor/song leader.

Other music ministers (soloist-instrumentalists) may assist. They will establish their own stipends/fees with the couple. The couple is responsible for contacting these people, but they must be approved by the parish Music Director.

All fees for music are to be negotiated with the Music Ministers. Rose Yagiela charges \$100.(2006-07) If there is need for more than one rehearsal, the musicians should be paid an \$25 per "extra" rehearsal.

- F. Other Liturgical Ministers - The participation of family members and friends is encouraged. Please consider one's ability to serve and ALL ministers should be competent in their respective roles.

If you find that there isn't anyone in your family or wedding party who might be able to serve as Lector or Ministers of Communion, we will provide individual(s) from the parish community to fulfill this ministry.

- G. Readings - The couple is invited to choose the Scripture readings to be used in the celebration. Since this is part of the Liturgy of the Word, God's Word, non-scriptural readings may not be used as a substitute.
- H. Decorations - Are to be appropriate for the celebration.
 - 1. Seasonal - Such as the Advent wreath or Paschal candle are not to be removed from their places. *The church during the Christmas and Easter Season already has an abundance of flowers and at this time you probably only need an arrangement for the unity candle if used in the ceremony.*

2. Floral - It is up to the couple to contact the florist and make the necessary arrangements for flowers. We suggest either a very large single arrangement under the altar or 2 arrangements to be placed by the ambo and the altar or back ledges on stands. Please inform your florist that tape is not permitted to be used in church. Bows can be tied on the chairs with ribbons or pipe cleaners. When used, we ask someone be-designated for their removal.

The flowers are a sign of the celebration and should remain in church as a gift to the parish community.

3. Candles - The candles already at the Altar and Pulpit and a Marriage/Unity candle are the only candles permitted. Other candles such as: candelabras, hurricane candles in the aisle, etc., are not permitted.
4. Marriage/Unity Candle - If you choose to have the candle lighting ceremony a part of your wedding celebration, you must provide the candle. You will want to ask the florist to make a simple arrangement or at least some greens to be placed around the candles. We put the unity candle on a table by the side of the altar.
5. Aisle Cloth - Aisle cloths or runners are not permitted.

I. **Use of the Building**

1. Bride's Room - There is a bride's room for the ladies of the bridal party and the bride who want to change at the church connected to the women's bathroom. We ask that you appoint someone who will check the room after the wedding and remove any material you may have brought with you (plastic bags, boxes, hangers, shoes, tags, etc.).
Also, please be sure that the florist takes all boxes, bags, bows, etc. with him/her.
2. Rice - Throwing of rice, confetti, grass seed, birdseed is not permitted either inside or outside the church. It is a hazard and very messy when tracked in church. We do not have custodial services on the weekend and we do have 5:00 p.m. Mass Saturday afternoon.
3. Alcohol - Since we gather to celebrate the sacredness of marriage, the drinking of alcohol on parish grounds, prior to or following the rehearsal or the marriage celebration is not allowed or tolerated.

J. Photographers

1. Photographers - Should be instructed to respect the sacredness of the church building. It is recommended that there be no more than one (1) official photographer either amateur or professional.
Flash pictures are not permitted during the celebration.
Couples are asked to limit picture taking after and/or before the celebration to thirty (30) minutes. (No later than 3:30 p.m. for a 2:00 p.m. wedding.)
See guidelines for Weddings in Vicariate VIII parishes on page 8.
2. Video - Follow the guidelines for Photographers (as above) and check with the parish priest as to camera placement.

SUGGESTED GUIDELINES FOR PHOTOGRAPHERS FOR WEDDINGS AT PARISHES IN THE DIOCESE OF SAGINAW

The general principles that are operative in the formation of the following guidelines are:

- A. Churches are sacred places and, therefore, should be accorded the respect due such places.
- B. Weddings are sacred events and, therefore, no action should interfere with the sacredness of the celebration.
- C. Generally speaking, we approve of and recognize the value of a video or photographic record of a wedding, but we wish to guarantee a proper respect for the meaning and sacredness of the Wedding Liturgy and of sacred places.

Accordingly, we ask that photographers and families respect the following guidelines that have been established for the parishes of the Diocese.

- A. If the couple have any questions regarding these policies, they are to be cleared up before the photographer is contracted. We will be happy to answer any questions or clarify any confusion.
- B. We ask that the family who contracts the photographer inform the photographer to introduce him/herself to the celebrant before the marriage begins.
- C. The photographer is permitted to take pictures, with or without flash, during the processional and recessional but not in such a way as to impede the movement of the participants.
- D.** Once the liturgy has begun, the photographer is welcome to take shots but only in such a way that s/he does not interfere with the attention of the people attending the ceremony. In other words, the photographer is to be totally unobtrusive, i.e., ***not seen or noticed.***
- E. Once the Liturgy is complete, the family may return to the sanctuary for pictures to memorialize the event. It shall be understood by both family and photographer that the sanctuary and church area is a sacred place deserving of the conduct and decorum proper to such a place.
- F. It shall also be understood that the church and sanctuary is not a "studio" but a place of worship and prayer. For this reason neither photographers nor family are permitted to move any sanctuary furniture, chairs, light any candles, turn on or off any lights without the expressed permission of the celebrant.
- G. The formal pictures that are taken in the church should be of a kind or nature that do not embarrass the sacred nature of the sanctuary, e.g., brides being asked to show a "little leg".
- H. Video recordings are permitted. The guidelines stated above apply also to video recorders. The operator of the camera should first check with the celebrant to determine the place where he may set up the equipment and to see whether s/he is permitted to use the church electrical system.
- I.** While the Liturgy is in process, ***the camera operator should be as unobtrusive as possible. The preference is that the camera operator remain stationary in order to prevent any distraction. The photographer is to stay out of the area called the sanctuary. (Around the altar and ambo)***
- J. The final interpretation and decision as to the meaning and purpose of these guidelines is the right and prerogative of the Presider.

- K. Rehearsal- To be scheduled with the presider. It is usually held the evening before but the time is flexible. All persons involved in the wedding must be at the rehearsal, and we appreciate being able to start at the time scheduled. **Your Marriage License, Wedding Candle (if used) and all fees (Organist, Church, etc.) should be given to the priest the night of the rehearsal.**
- L. Program/Participation Aid - A well designed printed program, or order of service, can greatly enhance the assembly's participation in the Liturgy. The program, or order of service, need not be fancy or elaborate. A simple, well-designed program can be an attractive reminder of your wedding.
- The program should include the music that the assembly will be asked to sing as well as an outline of the Liturgy and subtle directions as to when to sit or stand for those who may be unfamiliar with the Catholic wedding liturgy. Rose will provide an insert page to your program that will include the music and the copyrights for your Gathering Hymn, the Psalm Response and the Communion Hymn if you are having a full mass. If you are having the ceremony only it will include the Gathering Hymn and the Psalm Response since there will be no Eucharist.
- The following request must be included in the program;
"We hope you will join in the singing and participate to make our wedding a joyous and spirit filled celebration. We ask that NO pictures be taken during the celebration AND that all cell phones and pagers be disabled. Thank you."
- Before printing the program, make sure that you have the final copy proofed and approved by the Parish Music Director. If you would like a couple sample copies, just ask Rose and she will provide those for you.

III. ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS AND CONCERNS

A. Circumstances Concerning the Couple:

1. Interfaith Marriages - The faith of the non-Catholic Christian is to be respected. Discussion of faith differences and the sharing of faith with children will be part of the formation.
2. Underage Marriages - A proposed marriage involving someone who is by age a minor requires the approval of parents) as well as perhaps an independent evaluation of the person's preparedness.
3. Pregnancy - Cannot be seen as a reason in itself for marriage or for shortening the formation and preparation process. It may be reason for delaying the celebration.
4. Delaying Marriage - People have a right to marry but they may not be truly prepared for marriage. A decision to delay a marriage would be made on an evaluation of the preparedness of the couple that is part of the earliest formation process. The reason(s) for a delay will be thoroughly discussed with the couple.

B. Required Documents

1. Baptismal Certificate - For those not baptized at St. Stephen Parish, Saginaw, MI, a recent copy (issued in the last six months) is required. One needs only to write or call the parish of baptism to request a copy for marriage.
2. MARRIAGE LICENSE - OBTAINED BY THE COUPLE FROM THE COUNTY CLERK'S OFFICE PRIOR TO THE MARRIAGE. IT TAKES THREE DAYS TO OBTAIN A MARRIAGE LICENSE.

PLEASE GIVE THE LICENSE TO THE PRIEST AT THE REHEARSAL.

C. Fees and/or Offerings

1. Celebration - Adult members of the Catholic Church (18 years old) are expected to be registered members of their parish (i.e. receives envelopes) if they are living separately from their parents.

The fee schedule is as follows:

There is no fee for the celebration of a sacrament. The fee is attached to special use of the building.

If a wedding is scheduled at the 5:00 p.m. Saturday mass, there is no fee.

If a wedding is held at a special time on Saturday or a weeknight:

1. \$100.00 for registered members or couple whose parents are registered members here (provided the couple is registered in some other parish).
2. 500.00 if the couple is not from the area and is registered in some other parish.
3. If you'd like to give a donation to the Pastor that is optional but not included in the parish fee.
4. Professional Services - Such as Organist, Soloist(s), Instrumentalists, Videos, Photographers, etc. are arranged by the couple and involve a fee.

D. Parish Registration

Each Sunday Catholic people all over the world come together to raise their hearts in prayer. We believe that it is only when people come together in a spirit of love and begin to care for each other that the Faith really comes alive. When people come together in a spirit of friendship and love, then we see the truth of, Jesus' message. This is what we mean by a Christian Community or a parish family.

When you are in need, the church will reach out to help you. Even more important, it will give you the opportunity to reach out to help others. As long as you open yourselves to these new relationships found in a parish community, you will never be alone.

St. John's is a very lively community with programs and services from Baptism to age three, Catechesis of the Good Shepherd from age 3-Grade 5. We have a junior high/high school program and a growing adult program with Bible study and chances to become involved in ministry and outreach. Socially we have annual social events with our Cluster each year. In the Summer we have our Festival and in February we have our annual dinner dance. In the Fall and Winter we have various "giving trees" where the community can give to our Adopted parish or other communities in need. If you would like to know more about how you become involved just give us a call at the parish office. Our Pastoral staff is professionally trained in pastoral care. Let us know if there is anything we can do for you as you grow together in Christ.

List of Approved Musicians for Weddings

Accompanists

Rose Yagiela St. John's Music/Liturgist	(Voice-Piano-Guitar) rosebud48732@yahoo.com	989-893-1788
Diane Massignan	(Piano-Voice)	686-6201
Mary Beth Cianek	(Guitar-Voice-piano)	892-6446
Paul Kerbyson	(Piano-Organ) Holy Trinity Parish	894-0181
John Vandenboom	(Piano-Voice-Organ) Garber/Cramer Vocal Depart.	894-9740 ext.343
Carol Baranic	(Piano-Organ-Voice)	686-0825
Beth Teliczan	(Piano)	793-7394

Cantor/Vocalists

Jim Campbell	892-1479	
Joan Fehrenbach	892-3388	
Sherry Jones	895-8856	
Kim Prime	892-6955	
Adam Prime	989-450-0908	
Meghan Perry	893-5956	
Sarah (Pedley) Schingeck	992-3809	Essexville Elementary Music
Adam Rongo	989-450-0908	(2008 In Chicago during school year)
Jackie Madziar	895-8259	

Instrumentalists

Lauren Rongo	Flute	892-1419
Adam Rongo	Alto-Soprano Saxophone	989-450-0908
Angie (Mrozinski)-Kalcec	Flute	989-820-0816
Patrick Yagiela	Alto-Bari Saxophone-Flute	893-1788

*The Wedding Celebration
of
Marion Skibinski & Bill Jones
Friday, May 23, 2008
5:00 p.m.
St. John the Evangelist Church*

The Wedding Party

*In honor of this sacred Celebration we ask that you turn off all
cell phones and refrain from any flash photography*

<i>Mother of the Bride</i>	<i>Florence Curtis</i>
<i>Matron of Honor</i>	<i>Deborah Bolgrew</i>
<i>Best Man</i>	<i>William A. Jones Jr.</i>
<i>Bridesmaids</i>	<i>Margaret Bosley Lisa Morgan</i>
<i>Groomsmen</i>	<i>Rick Skibinski Randolph Skibinski Jr.</i>
<i>Ushers</i>	<i>Zachary Bosley Eric Skibinski</i>
<i>Lectors</i>	<i>Margaret Bosley Krystle Skibinski</i>
<i>Presider</i>	<i>Fr. Pat O'Connor</i>
<i>Pianist</i>	<i>Rose Yagiela</i>
<i>Vocalist</i>	<i>Adam Prime</i>

<i>Prelude</i>	<i>Cherish the Treasure Covenant Hymn</i>
<i>Gathering Song Old Testament Psalm New Testament Gospel Acclamation Gospel</i>	<i>Joyful, Joyful I Have Loved You</i>
<i>Rite of Marriage Exchange of Vows Exchange of Rings Unity Candle</i>	<i>By My Side</i>
<i>Intercessions</i>	
<i>Presentation of Gifts Eucharistic Acclamations Communion Hymn</i>	<i>Chelsea Bolgrew & Robert Jones Jr. One Bread, One Body</i>
<i>Blessing & Introduction of the Couple Recessional</i>	<i>Trumpet Tune</i>