

St. John the Evangelist

Davison, Michigan



So, You're Getting Married

**A Guide from
Engagement to
Wedding Day**

So You're Getting Married . . .

Congratulations! We share your happiness and we pray that God will bless you abundantly throughout your engagement and throughout your married life.

The following are some "GUIDELINES" which will assist you both in the preparation of your wedding day and for your life-long marriage in Christ. Remember, a wedding lasts just for a day, a marriage is for a lifetime!

We here at St. John the Evangelist Parish of Davison are eager to make your wedding day a memorable one for you, your families, and guests, as well as for the Christian Community who believes in the sanctity of marriage.

This booklet is a guideline to some vital areas in planning your wedding and beginning your journey **TOGETHER FOR LIFE!**



St. John the Evangelist
404 N. Dayton Street
Davison, Michigan 48423-1397
(810) 653-2377

Contents

Apache Blessing.....	24
Bride's Room.....	18
Ceremonies - Types/Times	9
Check List	
9 months before wedding.....	1
6 months before wedding.....	1
3 months before wedding.....	1
2 months before wedding.....	1
1 month before wedding	2
Rehearsal.....	2
Wedding day	2
Classes and Preparation	4
Conclusion	20
Expectations.....	3
Fees	17
Flowers/Decorations	15
Forms	8
Groom's Room	19
Guideline Changes.....	19
Interfaith Marriages	6
Map of Area	22
Music.....	10
Notes	26
Photographs.....	17
Prayer	25
Reception Line	18
Rehearsal.....	9
Rental Options	16
Second Marriages.....	6
Telephone Index.....	21
Ten Commandments of Human Relations	23
Wedding Attire.....	19

Check List

9 MONTHS BEFORE WEDDING:

_____ Wedding date set with priest/deacon

6 MONTHS BEFORE WEDDING:

- Register and attend:
- _____ a. Christian Communication and Relationship Enhancement Classes (WE CARE)
 - _____ b. F.O.C.C.U.S. Survey
 - _____ c. Attend Parish Perspectives in Faith Seminar
 - _____ d. Attend Introduction to Natural Family Planning
 - _____ e. Go over results of F.O.C.C.U.S. (pre-marriage inventory) with deacon or sponsor couple
 - _____ f. Church Marriage forms with priest/deacon

3 MONTHS BEFORE WEDDING:

_____ Contact Julie Richards, Music Director/Liturgist, to plan the wedding service and music.

2 MONTHS BEFORE WEDDING:

- _____ Provide Baptismal Certificates [issued within the last six (6th) months]
- _____ Reserve any rentable decorations from the church

1 MONTH BEFORE WEDDING:

- _____ Call priest/deacon to plan ceremony
- _____ Apply for Marriage License from County Court House
- _____ Set time and date for rehearsal (call priest/deacon)

REHEARSAL:

- _____ Have all ushers, parents, wedding party present (Musicians need not be present.)
- _____ Bring Marriage License
- _____ Bring required fees for priest/deacon/church/altar servers
- _____ Be sure to introduce wedding party to priest/deacon

WEDDING DAY:

- _____ Be sure to eat before the wedding!
- _____ Say a prayer!
- _____ Don't worry!
- _____ Be yourself!

Please note: the proper title for listing the Church is . . .
St. John Church *or*
St. John the Evangelist Catholic Church
not St. John's Church

Qualifications

In order to be married at St. John Parish, the following qualifications are made:

1. At least one of the persons to be married is Catholic and belongs to St. John the Evangelist Parish Family.

A person may belong in any or all of these ways:

- ◇ The person(s) is a registered member and participates in the liturgies/activities at St. John Parish.
 - ◇ The person(s) lives in the greater Davison district and participates in weekend liturgies at St. John.
 - ◇ The person(s) is enrolled in R.C.I.A.
 - ◇ The couple intends to move into St. John Parish area at some time prior to marriage and plans to become registered members.
2. If neither of the parties qualify as a parishioner of St. John, permission must be given in writing from the local Catholic Pastor/Pastoral Coordinator of the place where they are registered or reside.
 3. Each Catholic is asked to supply a NEW copy of his/her baptismal certificate issued within the past six (6) months from the parish of Baptism. (Persons baptized at St. John are already on record and baptismal dates will be on hand.)

Classes and Preparation

CHRISTIAN COMMUNICATION AND RELATIONSHIP ENHANCEMENT CLASSES (WE CARE)

Since January 1, 2000, couples wishing to marry in the Diocese of Lansing are required to attend two/three communication classes. The communications sessions totaling six hours are offered in a variety of times and locations for your convenience.

Your attendance at each session is required. Please remain in the six-hour combinations you select for the duration of the program. Both partners must be in attendance at each session to learn and practice the technique as a couple.

During the sessions, participants will spend time together listening to presentations, as well as have time away from the group to practice skills or discuss various issues. Please note, the “We Care” classes are limited to 8 couples pre session.

Certificates of Participation/Completion will be given to each couple and a letter of attendance will be sent to your officiating priest or deacon.

Please send your registration form with \$75.00 fee to: “We Care,” Catholic Social Services of Flint/Owosso, 901 Chippewa Street, Flint, Michigan 48503. Make Check payable to “*Catholic Social Services of Flint/Owosso.*”

FACILITATING OPEN COUPLE COMMUNICATION UNDER- STANDING AND STUDY (F.O.C.C.U.S.)

F.O.C.C.U.S. is a self-diagnostic instrument designed to help couples learn more about themselves and their relationship. It is a tool to help couples work through issues before marriage. F.O.C.C.U.S. was developed to reflect the values and ideals of marriage as sacred. The survey

will be offered here at St. John every 3 months. Once the F.O.C.C.U.S. inventory is completed, one or several meetings will be arranged with a F.O.C.C.U.S. sponsor couple to go over the results and responses. It may also be scheduled by appointment. The F.O.C.C.U.S. is also called Pre-marital Inventory. (PMI)

PERSPECTIVES IN FAITH

Each couple is expected to attend a one time seminar, “Parish Perspectives in Faith”. The seminar will be conducted by a panel of parish persons and will be held at St. John Church.

- Basic beliefs of the Catholic Faith.
- Making moral decisions and what the Catholic Church teaches.
- What makes a Christian marriage?
- Blessing ceremony of Engagement

NATURAL FAMILY PLANNING

Each couple is expected to attend a Natural Family Planning (NFP) Introduction. NFP provides a medically safe, healthy, and very low cost method for planning your family. It is proven to be 99% effective in postponing pregnancy and it is 100% natural and safe from health risks or harmful side effects. It is also very effective for couples having a hard time achieving pregnancy. All major religious bodies including the Catholic Church accept the use of NFP by married couples. Four additional NFP classes are available.

LITURGICAL PREPARATION

Each couple is required to meet with our Music Director/Liturgist to plan the music and ceremony. Once completed, the couple is then to request a meeting with the priest or deacon who will officiate at the wedding ceremony.

Interfaith Marriages

It is not required that a person become Catholic to marry a Catholic Christian. We encourage the presence of religious practice in marriage according to each person's belief and conscience. In the case of an interfaith marriage, we encourage the couple to become familiar with each other's beliefs and customs.

There are informative classes in the Catholic Christian Faith Tradition throughout the year. These are known as R.C.I.A. (Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults). Sessions are designed for persons who may want to join the Catholic Church or learn more about Catholics, or persons that want to be updated in their Catholic Faith. They also prepare a person for Baptism, Confirmation and First Eucharist as well as for official membership in the Catholic Christian Community by Profession of Faith. For more information, call Elaine Ouellette at 658-4776 ext 272 or speak to one of the priests or deacons.

A dispensation is required for an interfaith marriage that takes place in the Catholic Church or marriage celebrated in another church, synagogue, mosque, and temple.

The minister, rabbi, or imam (sheikh) may be invited to share in the ceremony along with the priest/deacon. Similarly, a priest or deacon may assist in the ceremony in another church, synagogue, mosque, if his presence is allowed by the hosting faith community.

Second Marriages

Sometimes a couple seeks a sacramental celebration of marriage in the Church though one or both partners had been married previously either in or outside the church.

Unfortunately, a simple answer cannot be given. Each couple's situation is unique and requires special attention. However, there are several "indicators" which might help you prepare for this part of the interview.

1. If the previously married partner is Catholic, and he/she had been married in a Church-approved ceremony, Catholic or non-Catholic, an annulment must be obtained through the Ecclesiastical Marriage Tribunal. This type of annulment required for this situation usually takes time to acquire. In the Diocese of Lansing, it takes a minimum of twelve months if all the parties concerned cooperate without much delay.
2. If the previously married partner is a Catholic who had been married in a non-Catholic or civil ceremony without the Church's permission, i.e. without the necessary dispensation, a Decree of Nullity based on Lack of Canonical Form will be required. The process to obtain this clearance is rather routine in our diocese and does not usually require as much time as the previous type.
3. If the partners in a previous marriage have been unbaptized persons before marriage and if one partner is baptized (before the second marriage) and the other departs, i.e. terminated the conjugal life by divorce, then their first marriage is dissolved by invoking the Pauline Privilege. If the above two conditions are met, this too is rather routine.
4. If one or both parties have had a previous marriage, the Diocese of Lansing requires that the engaged couple take a Remarriage Seminar offered by the Diocese. Applications are available from the parish of office or by calling the Catholic Charities Office, (810) 232-9950.

If it is determined that an annulment is needed, do not be surprised if the Priest/Deacon does not set a date for the wedding. *He is not permitted to do so until the annulment is processed.* Your Priest/Deacon will help you make the necessary contacts to begin the process should it be necessary. Since each diocese has its own guidelines for granting annulments, it is important that you discover your diocese's policy as soon as you can.

Sister Jane E. Schutz, OP, will help process the annulment. Sister Jane may be reached at the parish office or by calling (810) 664-7360.

Forms

The following forms are required for all parties getting married:

1. A Pre-marriage registration form for the bride and groom.
2. Forms to be filled out by the Priest or Deacon (Forms MA, MB).
3. Form M1 - Permission from the Bishop for interfaith marriages - this is known as a Dispensation M1.
4. Baptismal Certificate (of each Catholic) - recently issued within 6 months from the place where baptism was celebrated.

Michigan law requires you to obtain a Marriage License which can be applied for no sooner than 30 days prior to the wedding but not later than 3 days prior to the wedding. The license should be given to the Priest or Deacon at the time of the rehearsal. It will be signed after the wedding ceremony by the witnesses of your wedding. A copy of the license will be given to you immediately after the wedding ceremony. Once signed, this document will be forwarded to the County License Bureau. Once the license has been recorded by the county registrar, official copies may be ordered from the County Clerk.

Times for Ceremonies

Weddings may be celebrated on any day except during the season of Lent. (Ash Wednesday through Easter)

These are some of the recommended times:

Friday: Anytime 5:00 PM - 7:00 PM

Saturday: 10:00 AM, 12 Noon,
2:00 PM or 6:15 PM

(Please note, because of Saturday afternoon services, no weddings may be held between 3:00 PM and 6:00 PM Saturday.)

Sunday: 2:00 PM or 3:00 PM

Several weddings may be scheduled on a given day and the maximum time scheduled between weddings is two (2) hours. (See Saturday schedule.) Either the church or the chapel may be requested. The chapel seats approximately 75 persons.

Rehearsal

Rehearsals are usually scheduled the night before the wedding. Rehearsals are subject to the availability of the Church for services. Rehearsals last approximately 45 minutes. We request that **ALL** the wedding party, (parents, ushers, attendants, and readers) be present and arrive on time. Musicians are not to use this time for practicing.

The marriage license and the full names of the witnesses (first, middle, last) and addresses (street, city, and state) are to be given to the Priest/Deacon the evening of your rehearsal.

All requested fees should be paid one week prior.

Music

Music is an important element in your wedding day.

You have chosen to make your marriage vows at St. John Church within the timeless beauty of the sacred liturgy. It follows that the music chosen for this ceremony should reflect the sacredness of the event. The guidelines for choosing music are simple: it must be either of a church tradition or of a classical nature. Keep in mind: "Sacred music sacred space." The Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy says, "*the texts of the sung music should be drawn chiefly from Holy Scripture and liturgical sources*". Put simply: Popular (secular) music may not be used. There are **no** exceptions. Following Diocesan directives, "Here Comes the Bride" or "Lohengrin's Wedding March" **may not be used**.

All soloists/cantors should have an understanding of what repertoire and style of music is appropriate to the Roman Catholic wedding rite. This person should also have a solid musical background with a voice that is consistent with the music to be sung. We have a comprehensive list of people here at the parish who are qualified cantor/soloists. This list spans all voice ranges.

The Responsorial Psalm and Gospel Acclamation are to be sung so the congregation can participate more fully in the Liturgy of the Word. If you are planning a Nuptial Mass, the acclamations (Mass parts) will also be sung. We recommend that the response verse be printed in the wedding program.

On the wedding day, pre-service music lasting from 15-20 minutes will be provided by the organist while the guests are being seated. It is the responsibility of the ushers to seat the guests in this time frame.

We discourage the use of music played on a cassette or CD. Our God is real. God's praises deserve to be proclaimed by "live" musicians. The

flow and timing of the wedding liturgy is also extremely important and the use of pre-recorded music can severely disrupt this flow.

***Please note: Due to copyright licensing rules, the article about the use of recorded music during a ceremony has been removed from this web site version. For specific details about the use of recorded music, contact Julie Richards at 658-1135**

The latest liturgical directives on music for weddings suggests that a Gathering Hymn be sung after the processional music or in place of it. The directives also recommend that a Closing Hymn be sung before the final processional march.

It is also hoped that someday this sacrament be celebrated at the Sunday liturgy for all the community to witness.

Julie Richards serves as the parish organist, pianist, vocalist and may be contracted to serve as one of the musicians for your wedding. She can suggest other instruments to be played such as harp, handbells, flute trumpet or strings. If other musicians are used, they should contact Julie ahead of time to arrange for practice in the church. The night of the rehearsal is not the time for the musician to practice. Julie does not attend rehearsals. All musicians must be ready for the wedding service one half hour prior to the pre-service music. Microphones and music stands are provided by the church.

If you have family members or friends that would like to provide music for the wedding but are unfamiliar to St. John, they must audition for the liturgist and should be familiar with Catholic liturgy.

The music for all Wedding Masses and ceremonies must be approved by St. John Music Director.

Payment for services rendered is arranged personally with all musicians. As a courtesy we suggest the church and musicians be paid at the time of interview.

Toward this end, it is necessary that you arrange an interview with Julie Richards, musician and liturgist, **at least three (3) months in advance of the wedding.** The purpose of this consultation will be to record all the necessary information for planning the ceremony with the priest/deacon.

1. Size and composition of the wedding party.
2. Readings and rites chosen for the wedding ceremony.
3. Listing of people chosen to read and bring up gifts.
4. Music for the ceremony.
5. Creative options within the liturgy such as:
 - a. Ceremony of inclusion for children from a previous marriage
 - b. Use of Unity Candle - lighting by mothers
 - c. Presentation of flowers to mothers and/or Holy Family Shrine
 - d. Blessing of Family Bible
 - e. Basket of food for the poor
 - f. Use of a worship aid (the church does not provide this)
 - g. Use of wedding party for greeters
 - h. Non-traditional seating arrangements
 - i. Eucharistic Ministers
 - j. Dismissal of guests

The following is a **suggested** list of wedding hymns that could be used for a wedding ceremony:

GATHER COMPREHENSIVE (This is the new hymnal used in our parish. Any hymn is appropriate if it is one that you love. The following is only a partial listing.)

All Creatures of Our God and King
 All People That on Earth Do Dwell
 Amazing Grace
 Blessing the Marriage
 Blest Are They
 Blest Are Those Who Love You
 Covenant Hymn
 Eye Has Not Seen
 For the Beauty of the Earth
 For You Are My God
 Gift of Finest Wheat

Glory and Praise to Our God
God in the Planning
How Great Thou Art
I Have Loved You
In Love We Choose To Live
Joyful, Joyful, We Adore You
Love is the Sunlight
May God Bless You
Morning Has Broken
Nuptial Blessing
On Eagle's Wings
Pan de Vida
Praise to the Lord
Sing a New Song
Sing to the Mountains
Songs of Thankfulness and Praise
Taste and See (many versions)
This Day God Gives Me
Ubi Caritas
We Praise You
We Will Serve the Lord
When Love is Found
Where Charity and Love Prevail
Wherever You Go (many versions)

MISCELLANEOUS:

And On This Day
Ave Maria by Schubert or Bach
Ave Verum Corpus - Mozart
For the Fruits of This Creation
Panis Angelicus
The Gift of Love
The Unity Candle Song
The Wedding Song

Further suggestions may be explored with the music director Julie Richards at the time of interview. Phone: 810 658-1135

Flowers and Decorations

Contact Barbara McCrandall, Church Flower/Decoration Coordinator, (810) 653-5810 at least two (2) weeks prior to wedding date.

WEDDING DECORATION GUIDELINES

Church Proper and Sanctuary

1. Nothing may be taped, wired or stuck to pews. Bow clips, tied ribbon or elastic are recommended.
2. Due to liability, rice, bird seed, grass seed, cut up paper, etc. are **NOT ALLOWED** anywhere on church property.
3. No floral arrangements are to be set upon the altar table top. Appropriate flower stands are available for arrangements to be used in the Sanctuary.
4. **IMMEDIATELY** after the ceremony, all decorations, empty corsage and flower boxes, garment bags, etc. must be removed from the premises.

We welcome floral arrangements to remain for the weekend liturgies.

You should plan to make arrangements for flowers with the florist of your choice. Two altar bouquets are adequate and they should be positioned so that they do not distract or interfere with anyone's vision. Should you opt to provide flowers, your floral arrangements are welcome to remain for the weekend liturgies

Special liturgical decorations placed at the altar will stay in place for the duration of the liturgical season.

Candelabra are available for rent from the parish Altar Society. ONLY St. John candelabra will be allowed to be used in the Church or Chapel. These may also have flowers/ferns attached to them. Because of a fire hazard, NO NETTING or DRY ARRANGEMENTS may be attached to the candelabra.

Because of new fire regulations, NO OTHER CANDLES may be placed in the aisles. Only authorized church candles in the sanctuary may be used.

Options Provided by the Altar Society

A representative of the Altar Society will be at the Church to assist your decorator and set-up the options for you.

UNITY CANDLE HOLDER - \$10.00 Rental - No other candle holders are allowed.

UNITY CANDLE - You may purchase your own or purchase from the Parish Office. Prices vary.

Altar side candles and holders are provided. Ribbons, or flowers may be tied to these holders. Please be cautious by not placing these where the burning candles might ignite the decorations and cause a fire hazard. Nothing may be stuck, wired or taped to these holders.

CANDLE CANDELABRA - \$30.00 Rental Candles are provided. (NOTE: Only candles and candelabra provided by the Church are allowed.)

WHITE QUILTED COVERS FOR TWO KNEELERS -
\$10.00 Rental

BOW CLIPS FOR PEWS - \$5.00 Rental
Only bow clips are provided, you provide the ribbons.

You may reserve any of the items at the listed price or you may obtain a package price of \$50.00.

If you choose to use any of the above options, please pay two (2) weeks in advance. This can be handled through the parish office during regular office hours Monday thru Friday from 8:00 AM - 4:30 PM. Or, a check may be dropped into the collection basket or mailed to the parish office with a list of desired items. Checks are made payable to: ST. JOHN ALTAR SOCIETY. For additional information, please contact Barbara McCrandall at 810-653-5810.

If more than one wedding is scheduled for your date, perhaps the other couple(s) would consider sharing the cost of the altar flowers. If you wish to leave your flowers at the altar after your wedding, it is a nice gesture for the whole community to enjoy.

Because of the sloped floor, we do not allow any aisle runners to be used. Once people walk on the runner, it is very difficult for it to remain safely in place without causing a distraction and a safety hazard for the wedding party and guests.

Church Fees

Wedding Fees - suggested fees are as follows:

Church \$100.00 registered members*

\$200.00 non-registered members*

You may wish to make an offering to the presiding priest or deacon.

*Make checks payable to: St. John Church

Wedding fees are to be paid at the time of interview with Julie Richards.

Photographs

You are welcome to have a photographer take pictures or make a video tape during your wedding as long as no distractions are caused during the ceremony.

An attitude of reverence should be maintained during the taking of photographs. Pictures may not be taken of members of the bridal party sitting on the steps of the sanctuary. The sanctuary furnishings may not be moved for any reason during the photo-taking session. The photographer and the video-taper are to see the celebrant prior to the start of the wedding for explicit directions regarding position.

Please be aware and mindful that the Sacrament of Penance is held in church every Saturday from 3 PM to 4 PM.

Reception Line

A reception line may be held in the church gathering space. The newly married couple should be aware of the time factor in that another service will usually follow in the church, limiting time for pictures. A growing trend is for the bride and groom to return into the church after the recessional and greet each pew individually. The wedding party uses this time to gather for pictures.

Bride's Room

A bride's room is available for the bridal party. Since janitorial service is not provided for weddings, we ask that the family of the bride designate someone to clean up the church and the bride's room before leaving the church.

If another wedding party is to follow, please place all the items in one corner, so the next party may begin to prepare for their wedding.

An ironing board and iron is available in the room.

Do not leave valuables in the room.

Groom's Room

The groom and groomsmen are welcome to use the vesting room by the men's rest room.

Because the room is used for vesting, each party is asked to place all items in one corner, so the next party may begin to prepare for their wedding.

Do not leave valuables in the room.

Wedding Attire

The attire of the bridal party is expected to reflect the sacredness of a Church wedding. For example...no bare shoulders, plunging necklines or backless gowns.

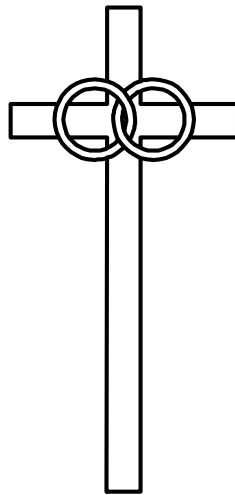
Recent Changes in the Guidelines

Because of recent changes in Church and societal restrictions, the following guidelines are important and must be strictly adhered to:

1. NO rice, birdseed, grass seed, or confetti may be thrown in the Church or anywhere on Church grounds.
2. NO SMOKING - The Church and Chapel, as well as the entire building, are designated as a NON-SMOKING FACILITY.
3. NO ALCOHOL consumption is allowed before or after the service in the Church building or office area.

In Conclusion

We would like to point out that in planning your wedding, please think in terms of simplicity. It is in simplicity that there is beauty. The more complicated the plans, the more complex the implementation of those plans, increasing the number of mistakes and confusion that can result in your wedding. Remember the central focal point of your wedding is a sacramental celebration and everything should flow from that fact. These guidelines are provided in the hope that they will give you some direction in planning your wedding ceremony, as well as preparing for a life of love in the married state.

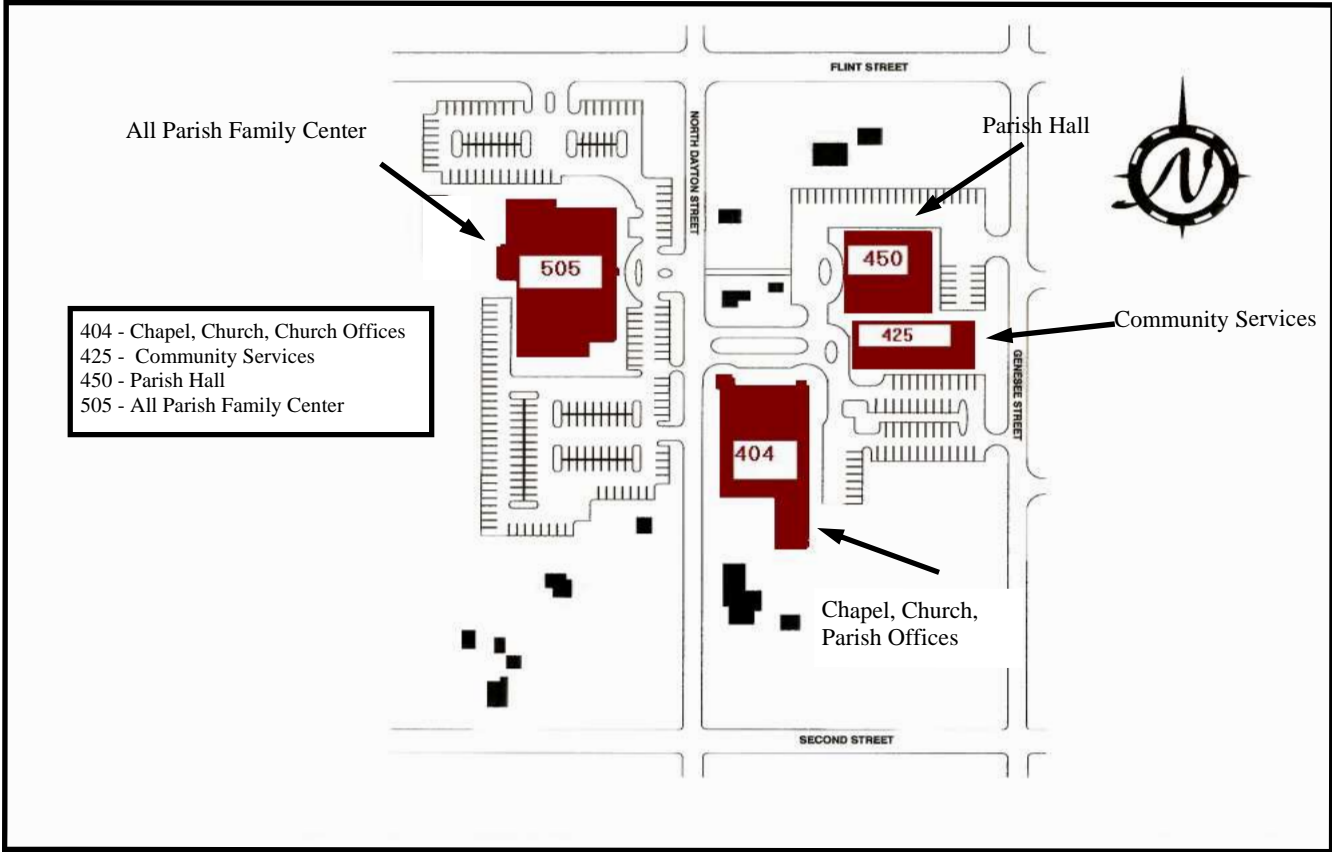




IMPORTANT TELEPHONE NUMBERS

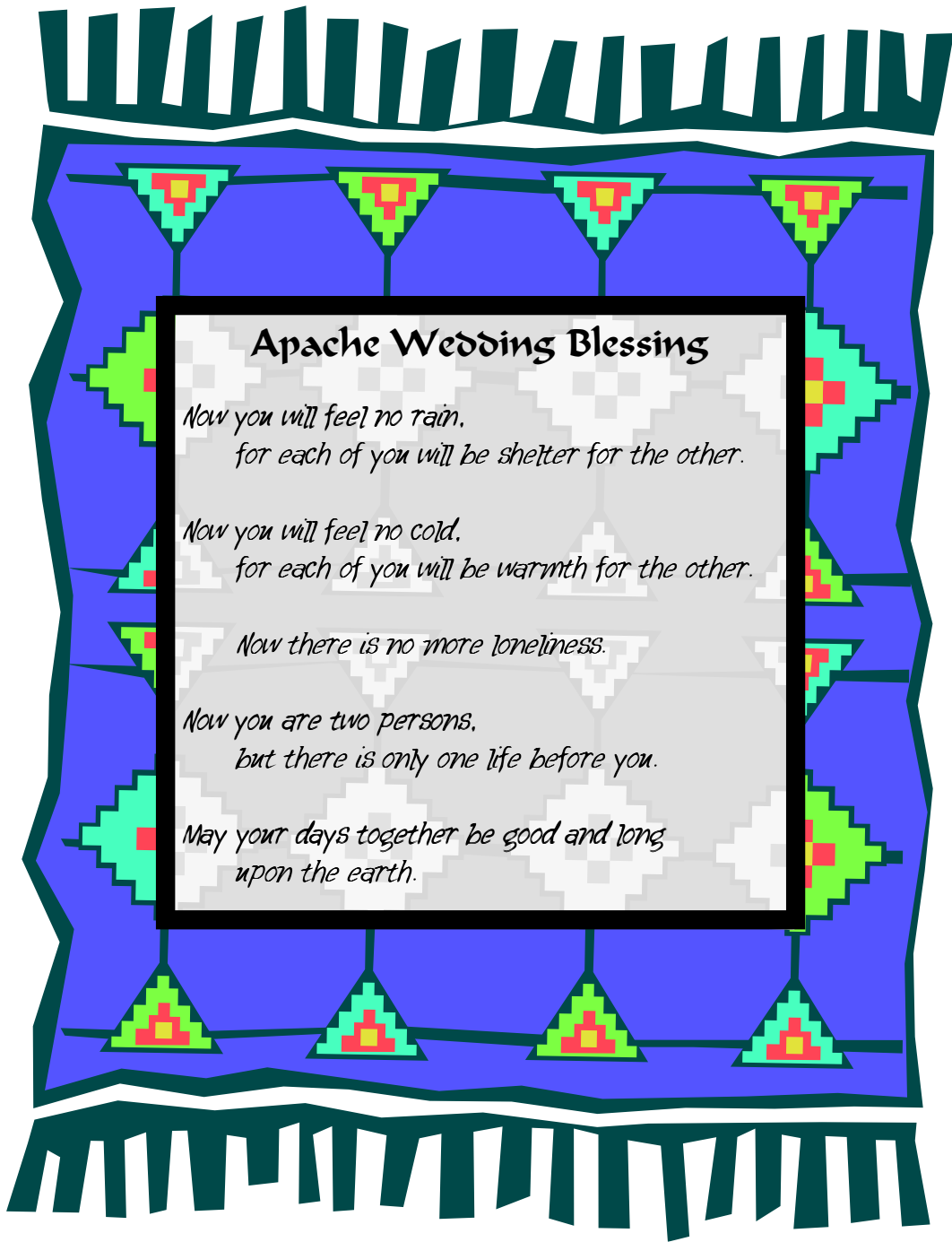
(all phone numbers listed are 810 unless noted)

Father Andrew Czajkowski	653-2377
email:frandrew@stjohndavison.org	
Deacon Dan Fairweather	Home -653-0070
	Pager - 812-4151
Deacon Neil Huiskens	653-4034
St. John Parish Office	653-2377
email:parishoffice@stjohndavison.org	
Julie Richards	658-1135
email:jrichards@stjohndavison.org	
Sister Jane E. Schutz, O.P.	664-7360
St. John Parish Hall	653-9902
St. John Parish Hall - Rental Information	
Laurie Miles	658-5631
lmiles@stjohndavison.org	
Marriage License Bureau -	
Genesee County	257-3225
Lapeer County	664-0356
Altar Society Altar Rentals	
Barbara McCrandall	653-5810
Parish Art & Environment	
Terri Donajkowski	653-4708
Remarriage Seminar	(517) 342-2446
Pre-Marriage Encounter - Lori Ebaugh	
Auburn Hills	(248) 588-9272
Catholic Social Services	
We C.A.R.E. Program	232-9950
RCIA (About becoming Catholic)	
Elaine Ouellette	658-4776 Ext 272
eouellette@stjohndavison.org	



Ten Commandments of Human Relations

1. **SPEAK TO PEOPLE.** There is nothing so nice as a cheerful word of greeting.
2. **SMILE AT PEOPLE.** It takes 72 muscles to frown, only 14 to smile.
3. **CALL PEOPLE** by name. The sweetest music to anyone's ears is the sound of their own name.
4. **BE FRIENDLY** and helpful. If you would have friends, be a friend.
5. **BE CORDIAL.** Speak and act as if everything you do is a genuine pleasure.
6. **BE GENUINELY** interested in people. You can like almost everybody if you try.
7. **BE GENEROUS** with praise - cautious with criticism.
8. **BE CONSIDERATE** with the feelings of others. There are usually three sides to a controversy; yours, the other person's, and the right side.
9. **BE ALERT** to give service. What counts most in life is what we do for others.
10. **ADD TO THIS** a good sense of humor, a big dose of patience and a dash of humility, and you will be rewarded many-fold.



Apache Wedding Blessing

*Now you will feel no rain,
for each of you will be shelter for the other.*

*Now you will feel no cold,
for each of you will be warmth for the other.*

Now there is no more loneliness.

*Now you are two persons,
but there is only one life before you.*

*May your days together be good and long
upon the earth.*

Prayer for Husbands and Wives

*Lord, inspire those men and women
who bear the titles, "Husband" and "Wife."*

Help them to look to You

to themselves

to one another

*to rediscover the fullness and mystery
they once felt in their union.*

Let them be honest enough to ask:

*"Where have we been together
and where are we going?"*

Let them be brave enough to question:

"How have we failed?"

Let each be foolhardy enough to say:

"For me, we come first."

Help them, together

to reexamine their commitment

in the light of Your love -

willingly, openly, compassionately.

Help them, together

to believe how fragile, yet powerful -

how weak, yet how strong -

how impossible, yet attainable

their love can be.

Give "Husband" and "Wife" the courage

to be for each other a person

rather than a title.

Amen