



# Guidelines for Quinceañeras as St. Pius V Catholic Church

Among several Spanish-speaking countries and among many Hispanics in the United States there is the custom of celebrating the passage from childhood to adolescence with a ritual that expresses thanksgiving to God for the gift of life and that asks for a blessing from God for the years ahead.

United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. *Order for the Blessing on the Fifteenth Birthday*

Quinceañeras are celebrated at St. Pius V Catholic Church in order to help teenaged girls grow in faith and a sense of gratitude to God. This document provides information about scheduling a quinceañera and planning a quinceañera celebration in the church.

**Please note:** The manner of celebrating quinceañeras in the United States is governed by the *Bendición al cumplir quince años / Order for the Blessing on the Fifteenth Birthday*, approved for use by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops and subsequently confirmed by the Apostolic See by decree of the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments (the Vatican department delegated by the Pope to supervise liturgical and devotional matters).

## Scheduling the Quinceañera

Scheduling a quinceañera begins with completing the “Quinceañera Registration” form and submitting it to the Parish Office, along with any required deposit (discussed below), and the necessary documents. It is expected that all young ladies preparing for their quinceañera have already been baptized and have received First Holy Communion. Proof of baptism and First Holy Communion will be required with the Quinceañera Registration form. The quinceañera celebration is then scheduled on the church calendar. (The “Quinceañera Registration” form is available both in the Parish Office and on the “Quinceañeras” webpage of the parish website.)

**Please note:** Priests are assigned to preside at quinceañera Masses according to their availability. Due to the limited number of Spanish-speaking priests in the Diocese of Orange, there is **NO GUARANTEE** that the priest celebrating the Mass will speak Spanish.

Quinceañera Masses are scheduled for Saturdays at 10:00am, 12:00pm, or 2:00pm.

## THE QUINCEAÑERA MASS

Fee: \$1000.00

The presider is a priest.

Includes:

- **Processional**
- **Liturgy of the Word:** The quinceañera may choose one or two readers – one reader for the First Reading (Jeremiah 1:4-10) and one reader for the General Intercessions. The text for these will be provided in a binder placed on the ambo on the day of the quinceañera. In order to prepare for the Mass, the readings are also available in “Readings and Prayers for Quinceañeras” on the “Quinceañera” webpage of the parish website.
- **Liturgy of the Eucharist:** The quinceañera may choose two persons to bring forward the gifts of bread and wine at the Presentation of Gifts. The two persons carrying the bread and wine should be old enough and mature enough to carry these items easily.
- **After Communion,** the quinceañera, her parents and *padrinos de honor* are invited into the center of the sanctuary for the special quinceañera rituals.
  - The quinceañera is invited to make “An Act of Thanksgiving and of Personal Commitment to Lead a Christian Life.”
  - Optional: The quinceañera may take a flower or a bouquet of flowers to the image of the Blessed Mother (accompanied by music ministry).
  - Optional: The priest may invite the padrinos to bring religious articles to be given to the quinceañera, such as a medal, a Bible, a rosary, and other religious objects (which have been *previously blessed before* the quinceañera Mass). Then the padrinos give the blessed objects to the quinceañera.
  - The priest then blesses the quinceañera with a special quinceañera blessing.
- **Recessional**

### Fees, Music, and Coordination

The fee for a quinceañera Mass is \$1000.00, and includes music, church coordinator and altar servers. A \$500.00 nonrefundable deposit is due at the time of the scheduling of the quinceañera – the date will not be reserved until the deposit is paid and the Quinceañera Registration form is submitted with necessary documents. The remainder of the fee is due no later than **one month** before the quinceañera. (This date will be determined at the time of the deposit and will be noted on the registration form.) If the remaining fee is not provided by the determined date, the quinceañera Mass may be removed from the church calendar and the time slot may be reassigned.

**Music:** Music for the quinceañera Mass is provided by parish musicians appointed for this purpose using a set repertoire of music – *no* exceptions. Outside musicians may participate 10 minutes prior to Mass and/or for up to 10 minutes following the final blessing from the priest.

**Coordination of the Mass:** Some families retain a professional event coordinator to help plan and orchestrate a quinceañera celebration (e.g., arranging for reception sites, caterers, florists, photographers, limousine companies, etc.). However, in terms of everything having to do with the quinceañera Mass at the church, the quinceañera's parents must deal directly with the parish staff (receptionists, church coordinator, etc.). In addition, although professional event coordinators are always welcome in our church to worship and may attend quinceañeras as guests, they are to have absolutely no role anywhere on the parish property either in the planning of a quinceañera or the quinceañera Mass itself.

## **Rehearsal**

Rehearsals for quinceañeras usually occur the week before the quinceañera Mass. Parish staff will contact the quinceañera's parents to schedule the rehearsal. It is essential that as many participants in the quinceañera service as possible attend the rehearsal – the more quinceañera participants who attend the rehearsal, the smoother and better the quinceañera Mass will be.

## **Importance of Beginning at the Scheduled Starting Time**

Because our church calendar is often packed with back-to-back services, it is imperative that the quinceañera and her attendants be at the church 30 minutes before the scheduled starting time and **be ready to begin precisely at the scheduled starting time**. If any essential participants in the quinceañera service are late and the starting time has to be delayed, **the presiding priest may, at his sole discretion, delete different parts of the quinceañera service (so as to complete the service on time) or, if essential participants are substantially late, cancel the service altogether (with no refund).**

## **Processional**

The processional in a quinceañera Mass (the opening procession from the vestibule up the center aisle) includes the following, in this order:

1. *Damas, chambelanes* and/or *padrinos* (up to eight couples or processing individually)
2. *Padrinos de honor* (or if the *padrinos de honor* accompany the quinceañera in the procession, the parents of the quinceañera may process here)
3. Altar server(s)
4. The quinceañera accompanied by **one or two** adults (her parents or *padrinos de honor* or any combination thereof (as long as it is **one or two** adults))
5. The priest.

## **“An Act of Thanksgiving and of Personal Commitment to Lead a Christian Life” by the Quinceañera**

During the special quinceañera rituals, the quinceañera is invited to make “An Act of Thanksgiving and of Personal Commitment to Lead a Christian Life.” The text for this will be provided on a card on the day of the quinceañera. This text also can be found (for preparation and practice) in “Readings and Prayers for Quinceañeras” on the “Quinceañera” webpage of the parish website.

### **Recessional**

Following the final blessing and dismissal in a specially-scheduled quinceañera, the following process out of the church down the center aisle, in this order:

1. The quinceañera, accompanied either by her *chambelán de honor* or by her one or two accompanying adults
2. Parents and/or *padrinos de honor*
3. *Damas, chambelanes* and/or *padrinos* (up to eight couples or processing individually)

### **Dress Code for Quinceañera Celebrations**

The Quinceañera Mass is a sacred and holy Mass, requiring that all present dress in a respectful and reverent manner. In particular, dresses for those participating in a quinceañera celebration must follow these guidelines:

- May not be above the knees.
- May not be strapless or backless.
- May not be transparent.
- Must have a modest neckline (no cleavage).

Anyone whose dress does not comply with the above dress code may have to leave the church, at the sole discretion of the pastor, the presiding priest, or the church coordinator.

### **Photography and Videography**

Our church is sacred space, consecrated for celebration of the sacraments, worship and prayer. It is not a “venue” for “events.” Photographers and videographers hired for quinceañera celebrations in the church are required to conduct themselves accordingly, in a reverential and respectful manner. Following are the requirements for photographers and videographers at a quinceañera celebration:

- The quinceañera and her attendants are required to be ready to begin the Mass precisely at the scheduled starting time. This must be taken into account when scheduling any photographs to be taken prior to the quinceañera service (whether at home, at the church or elsewhere). Pre-ceremony, posed photographs, if any, should be kept to a minimum so that the quinceañera and her attendants can focus on being punctual.
- Photographers and videographers should arrive at the church at least 30 minutes before the quinceañera service and report immediately to the church coordinator for direction and supervision.
- Photographers and videographers are **ABSOLUTELY PROHIBITED** from entering into the sanctuary area during the quinceañera service.
- Photographers and videographers are never to position themselves in such a way (1) that the pathway of any quinceañera participant would be blocked in any way (including during the processional and recessional) or (2) that the view of anyone attending the quinceañera celebration would be blocked in any way. In particular, during the quinceañera service, photographers and videographers are not to go into the area between the front pews of the nave (the main body of the church) and the first step of the sanctuary (except to cross from one side of the church to the other). In addition, photographers and videographers are **NEVER** to stop the flow and forward movement of the processional or recessional to set up or pose a photo or “scene.”
- Photographers and videographers should make themselves as inconspicuous as possible **AT ALL TIMES**. This means minimizing movement during the quinceañera Mass so as not to distract those in attendance from the prayer and worship.
- Posed, post-ceremony photographs may be taken in the church but must be completed 15 minutes after the completion of the ceremony. Posed photographs may be taken anytime outside of the church.
- It is expected that photographers and videographers will adhere to all of the foregoing requirements in a professional manner. Any photographer or videographer failing to do so may have to leave church grounds immediately, at the sole discretion of the pastor, the presiding priest, or the church coordinator. For this reason, the quinceañera’s parents are advised to consider the professionalism of the photographer and/or videographer when retaining these services. The photographer and/or videographer also should be directed to this document on the “Quinceañeras” webpage of the parish website so that he or she is well advised and well informed of these requirements.

## **Flowers**

- Because the setup time for a quinceañera service is only the 30 minutes prior to the Mass, floral arrangements for the church must be planned and designed so that the florist can easily place them in 15 minutes or less. (This allows another 15 minutes for the florist to deliver and coordinate bouquets, boutonnieres, corsages, etc.)
- The florist should arrive at the church at least 30 minutes before the quinceañera service and report immediately to the church coordinator for direction and supervision.

- Because the center aisle must be clear for the processional and recessional, and because of fire safety regulations, no free-standing flower arrangements are to be placed in the aisles.
- **NO** candles may be used in any flower arrangements, and **NO** candelabra may be used.
- The flowers, plants and other decorative elements placed by the parish are **NOT** to be touched or moved in any manner.
- It is expected that florists will adhere to all of the foregoing requirements in a professional manner. A florist failing to do so may have to leave church grounds immediately, in the sole discretion of the pastor, the presiding priest or deacon or the church coordinator. For this reason, the quinceañera's parents are advised to consider the professionalism of the florist when retaining these services. The florist also should be directed to this document on the "Quinceañeras" webpage of the parish website so that he or she is well advised and well informed of these requirements.
- Sometimes a quinceañera's family and/or padrinos desire to donate the quinceañera flowers to the church, to be placed somewhere in the church or outside at the shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe. The church coordinator will receive such donations of flowers and place them appropriately according to the existing decorations in the church and the particular season.

For more information, please contact the Parish Office at (714) 522-2193