

CHURCH OF THE VISITACION QUINCEAÑERA GUIDELINES

This page should help you understand the expectations when you decide to celebrate a Quinceañera here at Church of the Visitacion.

We're excited to help you! If you have any questions, please feel free to call the parish office. The young lady celebrating her Quinceañera will be referred to as a Candidate in the below lists to avoid confusion.

PREPARATION GUIDELINES

1. The Candidate must be a baptized Catholic who has received the Sacraments of Reconciliation and First Communion. It is preferred that they have also received the Sacrament of Confirmation. If the candidate has not received Confirmation, she should be enrolled in Religious Education classes preparing to receive the sacrament.
2. The family that wishes to celebrate the Quinceañera of their daughter should be registered members at Church of the Visitacion unless they have permission from their registered parish to celebrate it here.
3. Reserve the Church for the Quinceañera six months to a year in advance. This should be done prior to finding a venue for the reception. Please note that Quinceañeras are normally held on Saturdays at 1:00 pm. Quinceañeras during the liturgical season of Lent will be allowed only as a simple ceremony (no flowers/décor and limited music).
4. Must provide certificates of Baptism, First Communion (and Confirmation if received).
5. If currently in classes, a letter is required from the Religious Education Office stating status of the student/what class are you registered in/attendance.
6. There is a \$400.00 fee for the Quinceañera. A \$200.00 non-refundable deposit is required to save your date. The remaining balance should be paid at least two weeks prior to the Quinceañera.
7. Meet with Father to discuss Quinceañera preparation. Make arrangements for a rehearsal.
8. The Candidate should establish a habit of prayer and attend Mass regularly.
9. The Candidate and all Catholic members of the Quinceañera court should make arrangements to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation prior to the ceremony. Confessions will not be heard on the day of the Mass.
10. If there is to be a worship aid, it should be reviewed by parish staff at least a month beforehand.

CEREMONY GUIDELINES

1. Rehearsal is usually held on a weekday, preferably on the week of the Quinceañera. Everyone participating in the ceremony should be present at the rehearsal. Rehearsal is limited to one hour only. Extra time is not given if you and your court are late. Please arrive on time.
2. A Quinceañera usually takes about one hour. Celebration will begin at the scheduled time, whether everyone involved is present. Please arrange to be at the Church at least 15 minutes before the scheduled time.
3. You will be given half an hour before the Quinceañera to set up flowers/décor. Church pews may be decorated using ribbon or flower wire only. Tape, staples, nails, glue, tacks or anything that sticks is not allowed. Please contact the parish office for full decoration policy.
4. You will be given half an hour after the Quinceañera to take photos. Remember, you are in the Church, so please be quiet and reverent.
5. Please limit the number of your *Corte de Honor* to no more than fifteen – each one representing a year in your life. Traditionally, the *Corte de Honor* is made up of seven girls (damas) and seven boys (chambelanes) plus the Chambelán de Honor. Some celebrants choose to have a male-only *Corte de Honor*. It is also acceptable to have no *Corte de Honor*.
6. The traditional gifts are optional, not required. Gifts that can be brought to the Mass to be blessed: Bible, Rosary, Crown, Ring, Necklace, and Earrings. Padrinos of the gifts are allowed in addition to the *Corte de Honor*.
7. Cocktail dresses, party dresses and other dresses that are revealing and immodest are always inappropriate. Keep in mind the following recommendation for anyone participating in the Quinceañera celebration, including the candidate, her damas, her mother, and her padrinas:
 - Dress may not be above the knee
 - Dress may not be transparent
 - Dress may not be strapless or backless
 - Dress must have a modest neckline (no showing of cleavage)
 - A shawl or cover-up must be worn if dress is deemed too revealing
 - Candidate should be able to sit/kneel, so avoid large hoop petticoat
8. Men and boys participating in the Quinceañera celebration must also be appropriately dressed and may not wear hats during the Mass.
9. No pets will be allowed in the Quinceañera.
10. No signs in the procession.

11. The Family should find readers for the bible readings and the petitions (1-3 people).
12. The Family should also find 1-3 Gift Bearers (optional).
13. Music is recommended but not required, therefore we do not provide music for the Mass. It is the responsibility of the family to reserve musicians/choir as well as their fee.
14. All musical selections should be liturgically appropriate. Music chosen must be approved by the Father a week prior to the Quinceañera.
15. Photographers and videographers are allowed. They must be respectful of the church at all times. They are not allowed in the Sanctuary and may not interrupt the celebration of Mass. Flash photography is not allowed.

OTHER GUIDELINES

1. Liturgical furnishings are sacred. They may not be moved, removed, or replaced.
2. Flowers and plants should be real.
3. Flowers may be placed in front of the Altar or on the steps. No flowers are permitted on the Altar itself.
4. Arrangements may not obscure the Altar or be of a size to detract from the main focus of the ceremony, which is the Altar and the Quinceañera. Arches are not allowed.
5. 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.
6. NO candles may be used in any flower arrangements, and NO candelabra may be used.
7. Bubble machines, balloons, and karaoke machines may not be used at any time before, during or after the Quinceañera.
8. The throwing of rice, birdseed, rose petals, potpourri, confetti, etc. is prohibited on church property for cleanliness and safety.
9. It is important to have people assigned to pick up any garbage, decorations, or anything left behind in the Church.
10. Food and beverages are not permitted within the sacred worship space and smoking is prohibited on all church property.
11. Alcohol is not permitted on church property at the time surrounding the Quinceañera rehearsal and any time prior to the start of the Quinceañera liturgy.