



St. Patrick Catholic Parish
1320 W. Henry St.
Pasco, WA 99301
(509) 547-8841
www.stpatspasco.org

Quinceañera Guidelines

Most societies have rituals signifying a passage to adulthood for both women and men, but the Quinceañera is distinctive. Among the Aztec, the maidens were presented to the tribe as an active, adult member of the community, fully ready to take on her share of responsibilities, including being of marital age and status. With the arrival of Spaniards to Mesoamerica, the Catholic Church began influencing quinceañera traditions, with a meaning that goes beyond a debut, claiming a religious dimension.

The *Quinceañera* is a celebration held in honor of a young lady who celebrates her fifteenth or *quince* birthday. This is a very significant moment where the girl renews and embraces the Christian life, its values and demands. This celebration in honor of the teenager is not a sacrament. The Quinceañera celebration in the church is asking for God's continued blessing of His grace to live their lives faithfully in the midst of the pressures of the modern world.

Traditionally, a quinceañera begins with a "*Misa de Acción de Gracias*," or a Mass for giving thanks. Likewise, some families choose to simply have a priest or deacon give a blessing during a regular Sunday Mass or in a Chapel. In a Mass, parents will escort the quinceañera, or birthday girl, down the aisle to a seat of honor. The quinceañera is seated at the foot of the church altar resplendent in an elaborate formal dress. Young men and women are selected as the quinceañera court to stand by the quinceañera. Often, these are siblings, relatives or friends of the family. In the Mass, the quinceañera affirms her faith in the church and its teachings. In addition to birthday gifts, the godparents have bestowed her with special gifts being usually a rosary, bible and saint medallion, significant to religion and a ring or bracelet as a symbol of God's unending love. She may also receive a pair of earrings, which remind her to listen to God, and a tiara that symbolizes the fact that God sees her as a princess. After the mass, the young woman leaves a bouquet of flowers to the *Virgen de Guadalupe*. After the Mass has concluded, lots of photographs are taken and it's time for the party!

In choosing a religious ceremony, you must follow the rules and approved guidelines established by the Episcopal Conference of the United States in the document, the *Order of the Blessing on the Fifteenth Birthday*, which was filed on December 1, 2008. In accordance with this document, the following guidelines and requirements will be followed at St. Patrick Catholic Parish.



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When Scheduling a Quinceañera Celebration, remember...

- 1. Registered**- The family must be registered and actively participating members of St. Patrick Catholic Parish. This means the quinceañera AND her family must be attending Mass faithfully on Sundays and Holy Days of obligation here at the Parish and therefore, able to receive the Sacrament of the Eucharist. Quinceañera's will be required to bring a mass card which will need to be stamped/signed by an usher at the end of mass.
- 2. Youth Group**- The quinceañera must be currently attending youth group (CCD) at St. Patrick's Parish, St. Patrick Catholic School or be enrolled in Tri-City Prep High School, for at least one (1) year prior to the celebration.
- 3. Community Service**- Candidates must complete three (3) hours of community service within the Parish. There are various opportunities throughout the year (average of once a month). These opportunities will be presented during youth group. The candidates are in charge of signing themselves up for these events.
- 4. Sacraments**- The quinceañera must be Baptized, have received First Holy Communion and Confirmation and be actively involved in the parish life at St. Patrick's Parish. If she does not have all of these sacraments then she must be finishing her preparation process (2 years) by the time of her mass/blessing celebration.
- 5. Fee**- There is a non-refundable fee charged to help offset administrative costs and utilities in the church. The offering for a group mass is \$210.00 and \$150 for a blessing. There is a fee of \$300 for any individual mass scheduled on a Friday. Balances are to be paid to the Parish Office prior to the celebration. This requirement will not apply to a simpler blessing, after a regularly scheduled Mass.
- 6. Blessings**- Blessings are celebrated with a Liturgy of the Word celebration NOT a mass. Blessings can only be scheduled in the Guadalupe Chapel, which is located at the East entrance of the church. Blessing dates can be reserved no earlier than six (3) months, prior to the celebration. Weddings; which are a Sacrament, take precedence; therefore, no firm date will be assured sooner than six (6) months prior to the celebration. This will not apply to a simple blessing offered to a quinceañera, after a regularly scheduled parish Mass.
- 7. Mass**- Quinceañera's are celebrated on the 3rd Saturday of the month at 2:00 pm. Friday masses are celebrated at 2:00pm as well. Please arrive 15 minutes prior to the beginning of mass. The celebration will begin promptly at the scheduled time.
- 8. Form**- In order to confirm a celebration date, a *Quinceañera Registration Form* must be submitted to the youth minister for revision. If a visiting priest will be invited, he must write or call the Youth Minister's office personally to confirm the invitation.



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Church Guidelines

- 1. Rehearsal:** A rehearsal will be scheduled for the Tuesday prior to the quinceañera mass date. All practices are scheduled in the church at 4 pm. A courtesy call will be made one (1) week prior to the scheduled rehearsal so please make sure to keep your contact number up to date.
- 2. Lectors-** The quinceañera will be asked to participate in the mass by reading one of the selected readings. Lectors are chosen at the time of the practice depending on a first come first serve basis.
- 3. Musicians:** There are various choirs available to play. A list of the choirs will be provided at a later date. The average fee for a mass is \$100. This fee is NOT included in the mass fee. The youth minister is in charge of finding a choir, unless a family has requested one specifically. If you would like a mariachi to play, please speak with the youth minister personally to ensure that only liturgically approved music is played. No secular or pre-recorded music may be utilized before, during, or after the ceremony.
- 4. Decorations:** In preparation for the weekend Masses the Church is already decorated with simple floral arrangements. If you would like to add additional decorations, floral arrangements may be placed on either side of the altar. The pews in the center aisle may have bows, to indicate that they are reserved for the immediate family, the court, and *padrinos*. Please DO NOT use nails, tacks or glue to attach the bows to the pews. The bows must be removed immediately following the celebration. Flower petals, confetti, bubbles, etc. are strictly prohibited.
- 5. Photos/Videos:** Photos and videos are allowed, provided they are not a distraction during the celebration. Flash cameras and video lights are distracting and are not allowed during the celebration. Photographers are not allowed to enter into the Sacristy, Altar area or move around excessively during the celebration.
- 6. Dress:** The quinceañera may wear a dress of her choosing, while recalling that simplicity and modesty are the main requirements. Strapless dresses, dresses with only one (1) strap, low cut dresses (front and back), short skirts, and high slits are inappropriate for a church ceremony. **Shoulders, FRONT AND BACK, must be covered with materials that are NOT SHEER OR SEE-THROUGH.** Remember this is a church service not a prom. Any quinceañera wearing an inappropriate dress will NOT be allowed to participate in the procession or the ceremony.
- 7. The Court:** They are to be of high moral value and examples of Christian faith. Catholic court members must be actively practicing in their faith. The dresses of the ladies of the court are to follow the same style guidelines as the Quinceañera's dress.
- 8. Gifts:** The following gifts may be presented to the quinceañera, during the celebration: crown, ring, Bible, Rosary, necklace with cross or saint medal, and roses for the Virgin Mary.



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Quinceañera Registration Form

Candidate Name: _____

Address: _____

Father's Name: _____ Mother's Name: _____

Home Phone: _____ Cell Phone: _____ Other: _____

Fill out Part A if you are requesting a mass. Fill out Part B if you are requesting a blessing.

A MASS DATE REQUESTING:

Mass Dates for 2017: (circle one)

January 21, 2017	April 15, 2017	July 15, 2017	October 21, 2017
February 18, 2017	May 20, 2017	August 19, 2017	November 18, 2017
March 18, 2017	June 17, 2017	September 16, 2017	December 16, 2017

Requirements for Mass:

- Received the sacrament of Baptism, First Communion and Confirmation.
- Attend mass weekly (using a mass card)
- Attend youth formation classes for 1 year
- Complete 3 hours of community service hours at St. Patrick's Church
- Attend one (1) junior high/ high school retreat

B BLESSING DATE REQUESTING: (time will vary upon availability)

1st Choice: _____ 2nd Choice: _____

Requirements for Blessing:

- Received the sacrament of Baptism, First Communion and Confirmation.
- Attend one (1) junior high/ high school retreat

I have read and agree to follow all the requirements and guidelines for Quinceañera Celebrations, as stated in the handout provided for me.

Quinceañera /Young Lady

Parent/Guardian

Date