

Diocesan Guidelines for the Preparation of “Quince Años” Celebrations

Diocese of Beaumont

Introduction:

“What matters is to evangelize man’s culture and cultures (not in a purely decorative way as it were by applying a thin veneer, but in a vital way, in depth and right to their very roots)...always taking the person as one’s starting point and always coming back to the relationships of people among themselves and with God.” (Evangelli Nuntiandi, #20)

These guidelines are offered in a spirit of love for all God’s people with a sincere respect for the cultural and faith tradition of celebrating the “Quince Años” among Hispanics. This celebration expresses gratitude to God for the gift of life and supports the youth of our times as they grow in their relationship with God, celebrate their giftedness, and respond to God’s call in their lives.

Guidelines:

1. The young lady should have received the Sacraments of Initiation: Baptism, Eucharist, and Confirmation or be preparing for Confirmation. If she has not received Eucharist or Confirmation, she needs to be participating in a catechumenate process.
2. The young lady is required to participate in religious education classes for at least one year before celebrating her “Quince Años” and currently be enrolled and participating in religious education classes.
3. The young lady and her parents are expected to attend four, two- hour catechetical sessions specifically for “Quinceañeras” in order to help them understand the tradition, its meaning today, and how this celebration expresses and enriches the faith life of the young woman, her family, her friends, and the total parish community.
4. Topics for these sessions include:
 - a. The tradition of the “Quince Años” Celebration: Historically and Today
 - b. Baptism - Call to Christian life and Discipleship
 - c. Christian Character and Christian Conduct for Teens
 - d. Preparing the Eucharistic Liturgy
5. The pastor will establish a parish team who will be trained to coordinate the “Quince Años” celebrations in their parish and who will provide the catechetical sessions for the young women and their parents.

NOTE: The sessions can be adapted for a one-day retreat to include all of the youth who will be accompanying her in the celebration.

6. Through the collaboration of the diocesan offices of Lifelong Catholic Formation/Education, Hispanic Ministry, and Worship, training will be provided for parish teams, as well as the bi-lingual Manual with the catechetical materials for the team and for the participants.
7. The young lady and her family are responsible for scheduling the Eucharistic Liturgy at least six months in advance in order to allow sufficient time for the preparation. If this will be a diocesan liturgy, or a parish liturgy with the bishop, the family will have to contact the Office of Worship.
8. The young lady needs to have an initial interview with the pastor or a member of the team, before scheduling her Eucharistic Liturgy.
9. The parish team will introduce her to a form of Christian ministry according to her own gifts and interests if she is not already involved in ministry. They will explain the expectation that she be involved in ministry, so that she will continue to be an active member of the Christian community after she celebrates her "Quince Años".
10. The celebration is to be a simple ceremony, highlighting the religious significance of the event and avoiding a "wedding-like" appearance and a lavish or excessive display of materialism and expense.
11. The "Quince Años" tradition is best preserved when a special Eucharistic Liturgy is celebrated with each young woman, but if parish circumstances make this extremely difficult or impossible, other models may be used:
 - In the context of a regular weekend (Sunday) Eucharistic Liturgy
 - Eucharistic Liturgy for a group of young women
 - Liturgy of the Word with Holy Communion for one young woman
 - Liturgy of the Word with Holy Communion for a group of young women

APPROVED FOR IMPLEMENTATION IN THE DIOCESE OF BEAUMONT

by Most Rev. Curtis J. Guillory, S.V.D., D.D. September 2, 2005