

# Diocese of Yakima



# Diócesis de Yakima

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Guidelines for the Preparation and Celebration of  
Quinceañeras in the Diocese of Yakima

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Normas para la Preparación y Celebración de  
las Quinceañeras en la Diócesis de Yakima

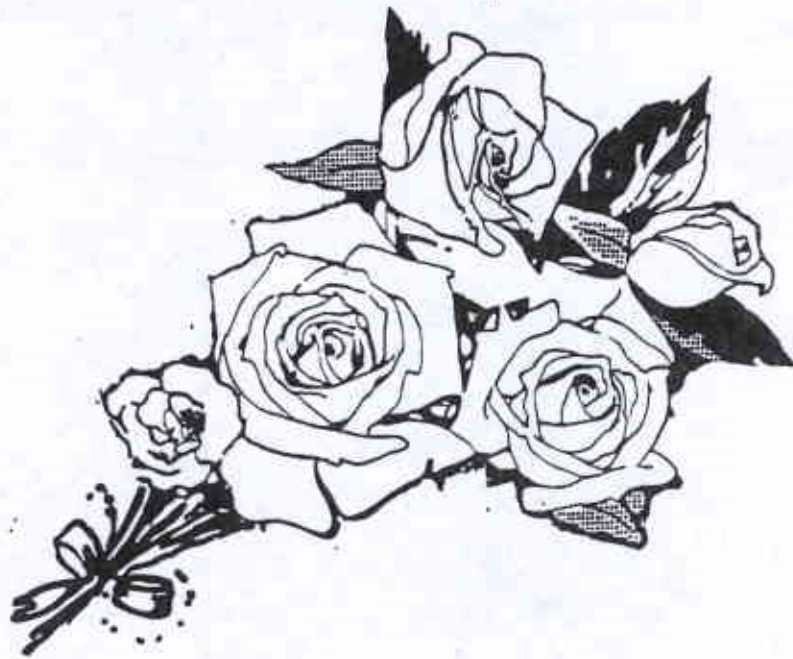
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Office of Hispanic Ministry  
Oficina de Ministerio Hispano

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October / Octubre 2005

*Normas para la Preparación y Celebración de  
las Quinceañeras en la Diócesis de Yakima*



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October 2005

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

I am very happy to be able to present you with this updated version of the diocesan guidelines for the celebration of a Quinceañera in the Diocese of Yakima. This manual is the result of collaboration of an advisory team under the direction of the Office of Hispanic Ministry. The manual not only contains the guidelines for the preparation and celebration of the Quinceañera, but also has a series of topics to facilitate the catechesis of the young women and their parents and gives some pastoral guidelines for the liturgy of the celebration. The fee schedule found on page 3 was set with my approval. The Council of Priests gave its favorable vote to these guidelines during its October 2005 Convocation.

The National Pastoral Plan for Hispanic Ministry reminds us that the model for Church that we have to live and promote should make it clear that our Church has to be “communitarian, evangelizing and missionary, incarnate in the reality of the Hispanic people and open to the diversity of cultures, a promoter and example of justice that develops leadership through integral education that is leaven for the Kingdom of God in society.”

The traditional celebration of the Quinceañera, even though it is not a sacrament, but a sacramental that we can use as a positive moment to bring the young women and their parents nearer to the Lord, is a “celebration of community” which renews in the young woman her capacity to give life through service to her Church.

On our part, this Hispanic cultural expression needs, not only our acceptance, but also that we respectfully offer pastoral care in such a way that our Hispanic brothers and sisters feel that they are not “a pastoral problem, but rather a blessing” within the Catholic Church in the United States.

This manual is an excellent pastoral resource; I invite you then to take full advantage of it and we can have a common criterion for the education of our young Hispanic women in this respect.

A text for the Mass of the Quinceañera was approved by the U.S. bishops at their meeting in November 2004, and that text was sent to Rome for approval. When that approval is received, the text will be available for purchase through publishers in the United States.

I am profoundly grateful to all those who took part in the preparation of this diocesan material. May God abundantly bless our pastoral efforts.

Sincerely in Christ,

Carlos A. Sevilla, S.J.  
Bishop of Yakima

CAS:pr

## I. Introduction

One of the customs which the Hispanic-American community has brought to the Church in this country is the celebration of the Quinceañera. This celebration consists of the presentation of a young woman to the community in two aspects, one religious and the other social. The religious aspect consists of an act of Thanksgiving to God for the gift of life, which can be done with a Celebration of the Word (Para-liturgy), especially when the Quinceañera and her family do not receive Communion, or with a Eucharistic Celebration during which the young woman renews her baptismal promises and promises to work for the good of her community. The second aspect consists of a reception and social gathering where the young woman is presented to society by her parents.

### The Quinceañera in the Church in the United States

In the Diocese of Yakima, we support the celebration of the Quinceañera as a special moment of thanksgiving and family togetherness. In order to celebrate with dignity this tradition of the Hispanic community in the Catholic Church, it is recommended that the following guidelines be followed.

#### Requirements:

1. The family of the Quinceañera should be registered as members of the parish; if the family is registered in another parish, they need to provide written permission from their pastor.
2. A baptismal certificate must be provided.
3. The Quinceañera has to have made her First Communion.
4. She must attend Mass regularly, on Sundays and Holy days.
5. The church must be reserved at least four months in advance of the celebration.
6. The Quinceañera must receive sufficient preparation. According to these guidelines, there are nine sessions for the Quinceañera and her parents. The parent sessions are separate from those of the quinceañeras.
7. She must actively participate in youth ministry.
8. The Quinceañera should give a minimum of 15 hours of community service. Suggestions for community service are: assistant in Religious Education, food banks, choir, youth group, acolyte, lector, hospitality ministry, church decoration, church cleaning, office help, etc.
9. The family should give a donation to the parish. (It is not for the priest, but for the parish.) The following donations are suggestions; it is left to the discretion of the pastor for adaptation to the circumstances of the family making the offering.

#### Donations and Stipends:

1) <u>Registered, Active Members</u>	<u>\$250.00</u>	<u>Includes:</u>
a.- Use of the church:	\$150.00	
b.- Preparation	\$100.00	
2) <u>Members not Registered</u>	<u>\$350.00</u>	<u>Includes:</u>
a.- Use of the church	\$250.00	
b.- Preparation	\$100.	
3) <u>Refundable Deposit</u>	<u>\$100.00</u>	

This deposit must be made to reserve the church; it is refundable if all of the following requirements and recommendations are carried out.

## **Recommendations:**

### **Music**

Before selecting the music for the quinceañera Mass, ask at the office if the music and songs are appropriate for the Church's liturgy. The liturgical guideline for music notes that it should be some form of live music and that pre-recorded music should be avoided.

### **Rehearsal for the Ceremony**

The rehearsal should take place the evening before the ceremony. A reservation for this rehearsal is required.

### **Dressing modestly**

Out of respect for the house of God and the Christian community, it is recommended that the Quinceañera and her attendants dress modestly. (Ask what is acceptable to wear in Church.)

### **Decorations and Flowers**

Neither arches nor balloons are permitted next to the altar; they can only be used at the entrance. It is suggested that the flowers (not artificial) that are placed on the altar be left as an offering, decorating the altar all weekend. The other decorations should be removed immediately after the celebration. The decorations should be simple and should not give the impression of a wedding.

### **Photography and Video**

Only one photographer will be permitted to take photos during the Mass. Professionals are preferred who do their work with discretion and respect, without interfering with the religious celebration. Photographers are not permitted in the sanctuary or next to the altar during the celebration.

### **Security and Cleanup**

Because of safety guidelines for the property and to avoid accidents and to keep the church clean, it is not permitted to throw rice, flower petals or confetti, neither inside nor outside of the church.

## **Formation:**

### **Catechetical Formation**

The preparation for the quinceañera celebration is an opportunity to catechize and evangelize the young women and their families.

### **Formation Goals**

To understand the celebration and prepare oneself to celebrate it actively and conscientiously. This preparation for the quinceañera celebration is obligatory both for the young woman and for her parents.

### **Formation Plan**

Plan to have 9 two-hour catechetical sessions, a group retreat and a general rehearsal for the celebration with all the Mass participants and the Quinceañera's attendants.

### **Participatory Method**

The catechist makes a brief presentation and then the participants break up into groups to share their experiences, reflections, and help each other with the answers to the questions on each topic.

## **II. Program:**

### **1.- Appreciation and Thanksgiving for Life**

My relationship with my faith and my culture: tradition, the religious event, the social event

### **2.- The Bible and You**

My relationship with the Word of God

### **3.- Jesus Christ, Eternally Young**

My personal relationship with Jesus

### **4.- Mary, Model of Woman and Youth**

My relationship with the most Blessed Virgin Mary, Jesus' mother and my mother

### **5.- The Church: One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic.**

My relationship with and participation in the life of the community

### **6.- The Sacrament of the Eucharist**

My relationship with God through the sacraments

### **7.- The Sacrament of Reconciliation**

My relationship with God through the sacraments

### **8.- Courtship: Journey to Maturity**

My emotional relationship with young men

### **9.- Prayer**

My relationship with God through prayer

### **Group Retreat**

My mission in life according to God's plan

### **General Rehearsal**

A general practice of the celebration with all of the participants

### **Quinceañera Preparation Team**

The Quinceañera preparation team is generally formed by the catechists, the parents, youth ministry leaders, religious and young people who have received their formation and have celebrated their Quinceañera.

*Note: Because the program of preparation for the Quinceañera, consisting of nine classes, a group retreat, and general rehearsal with all of the participants, places what may be an unreasonable burden on some parishes, especially smaller ones in outlying areas, parishes are urged to organize the course of preparation by region or deanery level. This allows for the sharing of resources, and/or making their programs open to people from neighboring parishes in their region. Such arrangements can be organized at the regional level to ensure that all are aware of when and where the preparation is available, and to ensure that all are included.*

## TOPIC 1: APPRECIATION AND THANKSGIVING FOR LIFE



- ♦ My relationship with my faith and my culture
- ♦ Tradition, religious and social event
- ♦ History of the Quinceañera
- ♦ Why do we celebrate the Quinceañera?
- ♦ Information session on the process of preparation and parish requirements.  
**Note:** It is suggested that this session be conducted with parents and Quinceañera together.

**Tradition of the Quinceañera:** Some Latino families in the United States have adopted the celebration of the Quinceañera as a rite that marks the passage from childhood to adolescence of young women on their 15<sup>th</sup> birthday. This celebration has a dual character, a social one where the young lady is presented to society and a religious one in which she gives thanks to God for the gift of life and youth and professes her faith before the Christian community and promises to live responsibly and in service to the community.

**The religious rite:** It can be as simple as the young woman, accompanied by her parents, going to the church to request a blessing from the priest. Also it can be a prayer service celebrated in the home where someone leads a simple celebration of blessing and thanksgiving. Nevertheless, many families ask that the celebration be done during a Mass. A celebration of a Quinceañera during a Mass can be done with an individual or with a group of quinceañeras who have prepared together and who celebrate together in accordance with the arrangements available in each parish.

Only for the religious celebration are the Bible, rosary and medal or cross brought to the church to be blessed and given to the Quinceañera. The other gifts are not brought to the church nor are they blessed unless the Quinceañera wears them as jewelry or other personal adornments. All of the gifts that are not religious articles should be given to the Quinceañera before the celebration if they are to be worn or afterwards at the party.

**The social celebration:** It is important to remind the parents and the young women to maintain decorum and to have celebrations that are not ostentatious, extravagant, or excessively costly.

**Resources:** This manual explains this topic in more detail; another helpful pamphlet is “You are Fifteen Years Old” from *El Momento Católico*, Claretian Publications.



## TOPIC 2: THE BIBLE AND YOU



1. **OBJECTIVE:** To learn more about the Word of God contained in this Historical Library.

### 2. LIFE EXPERIENCE

Ingrid has received a letter from a distant relative in which she expresses how she feels. In the letter, this relative asks her to behave properly with her teachers, with her companions, with those who live in her home, and above all, to prepare herself well for the Mass and party for her Quinceañera. Ingrid, who is obedient and a good student, did what the relative asked in her letter.

### 3. LET'S SHARE:

How did the relative send the message to Ingrid?

What do you think about what she told her?

What other means could the relative have used to send the message?

Is it true what she said to Ingrid in the letter?

### 4. QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS:

1. What does the word "BIBLE" mean? \_\_\_\_\_
2. How many books does the BIBLE have? \_\_\_\_\_
3. How is the BIBLE divided? \_\_\_\_\_
4. What is the first book of the BIBLE? \_\_\_\_\_
5. What is the last book of the BIBLE? \_\_\_\_\_

### 5. THE CHURCH, MOTHER AND TEACHER

#### ➤ MOTIVATION

1. When you look at a book or a magazine, first you notice the title, then you look for the name of the author. After you open the book, you look over the table of contents, and finally, you look at the pages. And if you are interested in the work, you buy it in order to read it slowly.
2. We are going to do something similar here in reference to the Bible, "the most important book in the world", knowledge of which we want to propose to you, not obligate you.

#### ➤ TITLE: WHAT IS THE BIBLE?

1. The word "**Bible**" comes from the Greek (ta biblia), which means "the books".

#### ➤ NUMBERS: HOW MANY BOOKS ARE THERE?

1. There are seventy-three (73) books.

➤ **CLASSIFICATION: HOW ARE THEY DIVIDED?**

1. In two groups:
  - a. Old Testament – 46 books
  - b. New Testament – 27 books

➤ **CONTENT: WHAT DO THEY TALK ABOUT?**

1. Old Testament – Old Covenant:  
It tells us the story of the Jewish people and how God helped them with their problems, asking that they live according to his will given in part in the Ten (10) Commandments.
2. New Testament – New Covenant  
It tells us about Jesus Christ: his life, his teachings, miracles, passion, death, and resurrection. It gives us the history of the Church and the first Christian community.

**6. OLD TESTAMENT – ITS BOOKS**

- **PENTATEUCH (5):** Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy
- \* They speak to us about the beginning of the world, the origin of the Jewish people, their laws, worship, etc.
- **HISTORICAL BOOKS (16):** Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1 and 2 Samuel, 1 and 2 Chronicles, 1 and 2 Maccabees, Tobit, Judith, Esther, Ezra, Nehemiah
- \* They tell us the history of the Jewish people: their struggles, difficulties, kingdoms, and how God helped them.
- **BOOKS OF POETRY – BOOKS OF WISDOM (7):** Job, Psalms (150), Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs, Wisdom, Sirach.
- \* They are books of prayer by means of poems, wise sayings, books which contain teachings, etc.
- **PROPHETIC BOOKS – TWO CLASSES OF PROPHETS**
- A. Major: Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel
  - B. Minor: Baruch, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi
- \* The “Prophets are men sent by God to proclaim his message of salvation and to denounce the injustices of men”.

**7. NEW TESTAMENT – ITS BOOKS**

- **GOSPELS:** Matthew, Mark, Luke and John
- \* They speak to us about the person, message and work of Jesus, our Lord.
- **ACTS OF THE APOSTLES:**
- \* They tell about life in the first Christian communities.

- **PAULINE LETTERS (14), CATHOLIC LETTERS (6), LETTER TO THE HEBREWS:**
  - \* They are letters that tell us about the actions of the Apostles, etc.
- **APOCALYPSE BY JOHN.**
  - \* A book of hope, of optimism – Christ has conquered death and evil.

## 8. CHAPTERS AND VERSES

The first thing we have to tell you is that the division of the books of the Bible into Chapters and Verses is not something done by the biblical authors, but something done much later.

- **CHAPTERS:** They have the large numbers. In 1214, the theologian, Esteban Langton, Archbishop of Canterbury, England, made this division. For example, Genesis 14.
- **VERSES:** They have the small numbers. The division into verses of the Old Testament was done in 1527 by a Dominican monk, named SANTES PAGNINI, and resulted in very long verses. Then, a French typesetter, ROBERTO ETIENNE, redid the division into verses, and since 1551, we have kept them the same. For example, Genesis 14<sup>10</sup>.

## 9. SOME INTERESTING FACTS: EVERY DAY LEARN MORE AND MORE

- |                                |  |
|--------------------------------|--|
| ✓ In the Old Testament we have | 46 books and a total of 383,621 words. |
| ✓ In the New Testament we have | 27 books and a total of 137,986 words. |
| ✓ In summary, we have          | 73 books and a total of 521,607 words. |



## TOPIC 3: JESUS CHRIST

### ETERNALLY YOUNG



1. **OBJECTIVE:** To learn more about the adorable person of Jesus Christ, our Lord.

#### 2: TO SHARE:

Where was he born? \_\_\_\_\_

Who were his parents? \_\_\_\_\_

Where did he grow up? \_\_\_\_\_

What perils did he undergo? \_\_\_\_\_

Who persecuted him? \_\_\_\_\_

What did the prophets say about him? \_\_\_\_\_

What did he do? \_\_\_\_\_

What did he say? \_\_\_\_\_

So, finally, who is he? \_\_\_\_\_

#### 3. THE CHURCH, MOTHER AND TEACHER, IS TEACHING YOU: PAY ATTENTION

##### A. Personal Data:

- Name: Jesus
- Meaning: God Saves
- Born: Bethlehem of Judea
- Nationality: Israelite
- Father: God
- Mother: Mary
- Guardian: Joseph
- Person: Divine
- Nature: Human – Divine
- Mission: Save Mankind

##### B. A Man Called Jesus of Nazareth

- One day Jesus asked his disciples, “Who do people say that I am? ... Who do you say that I am?” (Mark 8: 27-29)
- Our identity as a Christian, and therefore, our salvation depends on the reply we give to this question.
- We believe and acknowledge that JESUS of NAZARETH –  
was born a Jew, son of a daughter of Israel (Luke 2: 7), in Bethlehem (Matthew 2:1), during the reign of King Herod and Emperor Caesar Augustus (Luke 2: 1).  
He was a carpenter by trade (Matthew 13: 55),  
was crucified and died in Jerusalem (Luke 23: 22, 44-46),  
while Pontius Pilate was procurator (Luke 23: 1, 24) and  
Tiberius was emperor. (John 19: 12, 15) –  
He is the SON OF GOD, MADE MAN (Mark 15, 39).

- The Christian faith is very far from being just a philosophy or way of looking at life and history. The Christian faith is a PERSON: JESUS CHRIST. HE IS THE TEACHER, the center and purpose of catechesis.
- To communicate the faith is to proclaim Christ so that all might BELIEVE in HIM (John 20: 30-31) and by believing, have eternal life (John 17: 3).

### C. PERSONAL REFERENCES:

- ✦ PARENTS: Simple and humble peasants (Matthew 1: 18-19)
- ✦ BIRTH: In a stable, of a poor family (Luke 2: 6-7)
- ✦ CIRCUMCIZED: The rite of initiation into the Covenant (Luke 2: 21)
- ✦ PERILS: The flight into Egypt and the massacre of the innocents (Matthew 2: 13-18)
- ✦ HIDDEN LIFE: An ordinary life – worked in Nazareth (Matthew 2: 23; Luke 2: 39-40)
- ✦ INTIMACY: With his Father, GOD (Luke 2: 41-49)
- ✦ ANNOUNCED BY: The prophets (Isaiah 7: 14; Matthew 5: 1)

### D. HIS INTIMACY WITH HIS FATHER

- The importance of prayer to Jesus: Matthew 14: 23; John 17; Mark 1: 35; Matthew 26: 36-44; Luke 5: 16; 6: 12-16; 9: 18-20
- How did Jesus pray? Mark 1: 35; Luke 6: 12; 9: 18, 28-29; 9: 41-44
- For whom did Jesus pray? Luke 23: 34; Luke 22: 31-32; Hebrews 5: 7-10
- Jesus teaches how to pray: Luke 11: 1-4; Luke 11: 21-36; Matthew 7: 7-11

### E. HIS NAMES

Each one of the names with which we refer to Jesus Christ contains an aspect of the marvelous reality and richness that is He.

**JESUS:** means “**GOD SAVES**”. That is his identity and mission. It is the name that the angel gave him (Matthew 1: 12).

**CHRIST:** means “**THE MESSIAH**”, the one long awaited by all the peoples, “**THE ANOINTED**”. In Israel a man was anointed, was consecrated for a special mission—kings, priests, prophets. The angel proclaimed him as Messiah to the shepherds (Luke 2: 11). St. Peter declared it (Matthew 16: 61, Acts 2: 36).

**LORD: “THE LORD”** is the name the Old Testament uses to designate the divinity of the God of Israel. In the New Testament it is given to the Father and to Jesus (John 21:7; Acts 2:36).

**ONLY SON OF GOD:** This is the most exalted title, the mysterious identity of Jesus. The Father tells us so (Matthew 3: 17; Peter; Matthew 16: 16; Luke 22: 70).

**SON OF MAN:** expresses not only the human condition of Jesus, but also his being the fullness of mankind (Luke 9: 58).

**SON OF DAVID:** expresses that Jesus is a descendent in the line of David (Matthew 12: 23; 15:, 22).

**4. INTERESTING FACTS: LEARN A LITTLE BIT EVERY DAY**

- ✓ The armadillo can have as many as 104 teeth. In regards to teeth, he wins out over all the other animals of the earth.
- ✓ Each one of the eyes of a locust has 13,000 lenses which are like miniature eyes, all equal, forming one large eye. If a locust loses a whole eye, he will grow another one with its 13,000 lenses.
- ✓ A little bird called a house sparrow from India makes its nest in the highest part of the tree. In order to light up the nest, the house sparrow traps fireflies and sticks them in damp clay from which they cannot escape.

**5. TO READ AT HOME:**

**LUKE 18: 18-23**

**6. FOR YOUR ENJOYMENT: BIBLICAL WORD SEARCH**

O	O	O	T	N	E	M	A	T	S	E	T	T	W	C	C	N
T	R	N	Y	C	E	M	A	O	S	E	T	T	W	M	T	W
Z	W	O	O	Q	S	M	A	P	R	C	A	O	E	C	C	N
A	J	T	M	N	O	K	O	P	P	I	C	N	O	C	O	R
C	J	W	T	C	I	K	I	C	L	B	S	O	O	I	O	B
E	E	Z	N	C	D	N	W	B	R	A	O	G	U	O	O	O
T	S	K	K	Q	C	T	I	K	J	A	C	G	U	O	O	K
O	U	M	O	R	P	B	N	E	J	C	I	G	R	O	V	C
I	S	L	M	N	O	N	N	E	N	T	R	M	P	T	E	C
L	K	S	O	N	T	A	K	W	N	T	N	N	O	N	U	N
B	N	S	A	N	T	A	C	A	T	B	C	C	N	N	N	D
I	T	N	T	T	T	R	B	R	A	X	Z	D	A	B	C	D
B	W	C	C	S	O	R	B	I	L	X	W	A	B	C	D	D



## TOPIC 4: MARY, MODEL FOR WOMEN AND YOUTH



1. **OBJECTIVE:** Recognize in the Most Holy Virgin Mary a valid model for living the faith and womanhood.

### 2. LIFE EXPERIENCE: THERE ARE TWO TYPES OF STUDENTS

For one, it is easy to learn and understand everything, but his life doesn't follow the teachings of the Catechism. For the other, it is more difficult to learn and understand, he makes a better effort to turn himself around and to practice what the Catechism teaches. The second one has taken the Catechism seriously and that is how it must be taken.

### 3: LET'S SHARE:

What do you think about this story?  
Is what it says true?  
With which type of student do you identify?

### 4. QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS:

1. What does the name "Mary" mean? \_\_\_\_\_
2. Where was the Virgin Mary born? \_\_\_\_\_
3. What were her parents' names? \_\_\_\_\_
4. What joys did she have? \_\_\_\_\_
5. Do you remember any words she said? \_\_\_\_\_

### 5. THE CHURCH, MOTHER AND TEACHER, IS TEACHING YOU

Today women have acquired rights which would have been inconceivable in other times—voting, public offices, the professions, etc.

In the Bible, in particular in the New Testament, we find some parts which permit us to see how women were treated.

- ✓ A woman could not be greeted by a man in public nor be touched by a Rabbi (John 4: 9 and Luke 7: 39).
- ✓ A woman could not argue with her husband.
- ✓ A woman did not have to know how to read or write.
- ✓ What a woman possessed belonged to her father or husband.
- ✓ A woman had to have her head and face always covered.
- ✓ A woman could be repudiated / divorced (sent away, thrown out) by her husband for any reason (Matthew 19:3).
- ✓ If a woman is caught in adultery (cheating on her husband), she is stoned to death (John 8: 1-11).
- ✓ A woman can be married after reaching the age of 12.

What do you think of this? Do you think that women are treated this way today?  
Better or worse? What do you see, hear?

It seems a lot like Ripley's Believe it or Not? This gives us a basis to talk about Mary, a simple and feminine woman.

## 6. WHO WAS MARY?

### A. Personal Data:

- \* Mary is a name which means "Lady", "Princess".
- \* She was from the town of Nazareth, in the region of Galilee.
- \* Her parents were Joachim and Anne.
- \* Her life passed in the normalness of daily tasks (washing, scrubbing, cooking, getting water at the well, etc.).
- \* Her piety was unmistakable, her faith firm and constant.
- \* She dressed in a feminine and modest fashion.

### B. Mary, the Beloved of Joseph

Like all young women, Mary met and interacted with young men. One attracted her attention: Joseph, the "Just Man". They talked, joked and their friendship led them to get to know each other better. They fell in love and became engaged to marry.

### C. The Preparations for the Wedding

It was the custom in this region to wait a year before living together. Each one lived in his/her parent's house in order to prepare themselves for the coming wedding: where to live; how many children to have; how to feed them; how to educate them.

### D. A very Special Call

The gospel according to St. Luke (1: 26-38) tells us how the Lord God addressed Mary by means of an angel to propose a very important assignment: to be the Mother of God, of his Son.

### E. Mary, the Mother of the Son of God

At this proposal, Mary did not make him wait for her reply: "May it be done to me according to your word." (Luke 1: 38).

### F. Mary, the Servant

When Mary became filled with the Holy Spirit, in an attitude of service, she went to visit her cousin Elizabeth for 3 months in order to wait on her. (Luke 1: 39-40)

### G. Mary and Joseph: A Small Problem

The gospel according to St. Matthew tells us about the state Joseph was in when he learned about Mary's pregnancy. He was a JUST man and he put the matter in the hands of God who let him know about the Mystery hidden in Mary (Matthew 1: 18-25).



## H. Mary, the Sorrowful Mother

For Mary, being the Mother of the Son of God brought her many sorrows during her life:

1. The birth of Jesus in a poor stable (Matthew 1: 18-25)
2. The presentation in the Temple (Luke 2: 22-30)
3. The flight into Egypt (Matthew 2: 13-15)
4. The loss of Jesus in the Temple (Luke 2: 41-52)
5. Meeting Jesus on his way to the cross
6. Seeing her son die on the cross (John 19: 25-27)
7. Jesus is lowered from the cross and placed in the arms of his most holy Mother.  
(Luke 23: 50-56)

## I. Mary, our Mother

In the gospel according to St. John (19: 25-27), we find the task that Jesus entrusted to his Mother: the task of being the Mother of his disciples.

## J. Mary, model for all young people

Mary became a model of virtue for all young people: faith, hope, charity, fortitude, chastity, service.

## 7. TO REFLECT ON AT HOME:

- ✓ What is being a woman for you?
- ✓ What models do you have to live your femininity?
- ✓ What do you think about courtship and marriage?



**TOPIC 5: THE CHURCH:  
ONE, HOLY, CATHOLIC  
AND APOSTOLIC**



1. **OBJECTIVE:** To consider ourselves active members of the church to which we belong through our Baptism.

2. **WORD OF GOD: Matthew 16: 18**

Jesus said, "You are Peter and on this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of hell will not prevail against it."

3. **QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS:**

1. How many Popes has the Church had?
2. What does "One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic" mean?
3. Who is Peter right now and what is his office?

4. **THE CHURCH, MOTHER AND TEACHER, IS TEACHING YOU: PAY ATTENTION**

In the previous teaching we saw the person of Our Lady, the ever Virgin Mary. Now we will look more closely at our Holy Mother Church. She is One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic. But, what do we mean by each of these words? Above all, they are not merely words; they are SIGNS CHARACTERISTIC OF THE CHURCH. We will look at each one in particular: the word "Church" means "Meeting or Assembly" to worship God; the word "Catholic" means "Universal" or extending all over the world.

**A. THE CHURCH IS ONE**

The Church is ONE through its origin. The unity of God is the origin of the Church. It is ONE because Christ, its founder, has desired to unite in her all peoples. It is ONE because the Holy Spirit brings about this communion of all the faithful in Christ. He is the source of the unity of the Church. Nevertheless, within this UNITY there is a great DIVERSITY: peoples, races, gifts, duties, ways and conditions of life.

READ: 1 Corinthians 12: 1-30

**B. THE CHURCH IS HOLY**

The Church is HOLY; she cannot stop from being so. Christ has loved her as his Spouse and he has given himself to her to sanctify her. He has united her to himself and has filled her with his spirit. She is sanctifying—word, sacraments, the Saints that are in her—in spite of the sin that is in her.

READ: Matthew 5: 48

### **C. THE CHURCH IS CATHOLIC.**

We have already seen that “Catholic” means universal, or extended over all the earth. She is Universal because Christ is present in her and she has been sent by Christ to all of humankind.

READ: Matthew 28: 91-20

### **D. THE CHURCH IS APOSTOLIC.**

Founded on the apostles, witnesses chosen by Christ and sent forth by Him, the Church guards and transmits the faith that she has received from them and she continues teaching, sanctifying and guiding through those who have succeeded the Apostles, that is, the Pope and the Bishops united with him.

READ: Matthew 10: 1-2; Matthew 16: 18; Matthew 28: 19-20

## **5. VOCABULARY:**

- **POPE:** He is the Supreme Pontiff of Rome, successor to St. Peter, Vicar of Jesus Christ on earth, whom we are obliged to obey.
- **BISHOP:** Means “Watchman”. He is the successor of the Apostles who has received the fullness of the priesthood by means of the Sacrament of Holy Orders.
- **PRESBYTERATE:** Means “Elder”. In the language of the Catholic Church it means priest, father, curate.
- **DEACON:** He is a man who has received the Sacrament of Orders in order to attend to the needy. There are permanent Deacons, single and married.
- **DIOCESE:** It generally refers to a geographic area where some of the People of God live; a bishop is entrusted with their care. It is also called the “Particular Church”
- **PARISH:** It is a specific community of parishioners whose pastoral care is entrusted to a particular priest, the pastor.

## **6. DO YOU KNOW THAT...**

- ✓ A COUNCIL is a meeting of the Bishops of the world to deal with questions of faith and morals.
- ✓ There have been 20 Councils in the Catholic Church. The first was in Jerusalem under the direction of the 12 apostles. The last was Vatican Council II from 1962 until 1965.
- ✓ The Catholic Church has 800 million faithful, 3,000 Bishops, 400,000 priests, 2 million religious, 40,000 missionaries, 500,000 churches in 177 countries and it has had 265 Supreme Pontiffs (Popes) up to now. Its martyrs have numbered more than 26 million.

## **7. TO READ AT HOME: 1 Peter 4: 1-6**

Bring a written summary of what you learned from it.