

The Tabernacle

Throughout the course of history, consecrated hosts (the Precious Body of our Lord) has been reserved, primarily for communion of the sick and for *viaticum*. The storage took place in a variety of locations and types of containers: in the residence of the clerics, a side room of the church, a movable container on the altar, a vessel hanging over the altar (often in the form of a *Eucharistic Dove*), a small cupboard on the wall near the altar, or a freestanding tabernacle. It wasn't until the fifteenth century that, after the altar had moved from the center of the hall to one wall of the church where the consecrated hosts were stored in a tabernacle securely attached to the altar, usually surrounded with ornate columns and spires. However, major cathedrals and pilgrim churches retained the practice of a separate Blessed Sacrament Chapel.

The current Code of Canon Law requires that the tabernacle be placed in a part of the church that is prominent, beautifully decorated, and suitable for prayer (No. 938 §2). The current liturgical documents offer two possibilities for the placement of the tabernacle; a separate reservation chapel or located in the main worship space. The documents do not give a preference for one location over the other.

Bishop Campbell has a preference for the tabernacle to be visible from the community's worship space. When the tabernacle is placed within the sanctuary, careful consideration is to be given to a suitable placement for private prayer within the proximity of the tabernacle and free from physical barriers for those who are challenged through physical limitations.

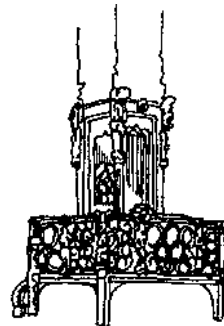
The tabernacle should be located where we see it every time we come to church and it should be easily identified by its prominent location, its beautiful decoration and in a location suitable for devotional prayer. The location for the tabernacle is an important choice. However, its placement is not the personal choice of the current or past pastor. The ultimate decision for the placement of the tabernacle is always made by the Diocesan Bishop.



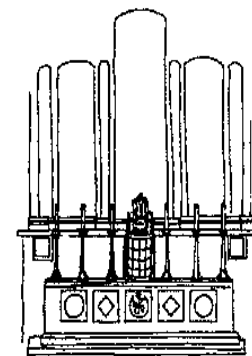
Hanging pyx



Cupboard



Free Standing



Combined Tabernacle
& Altar