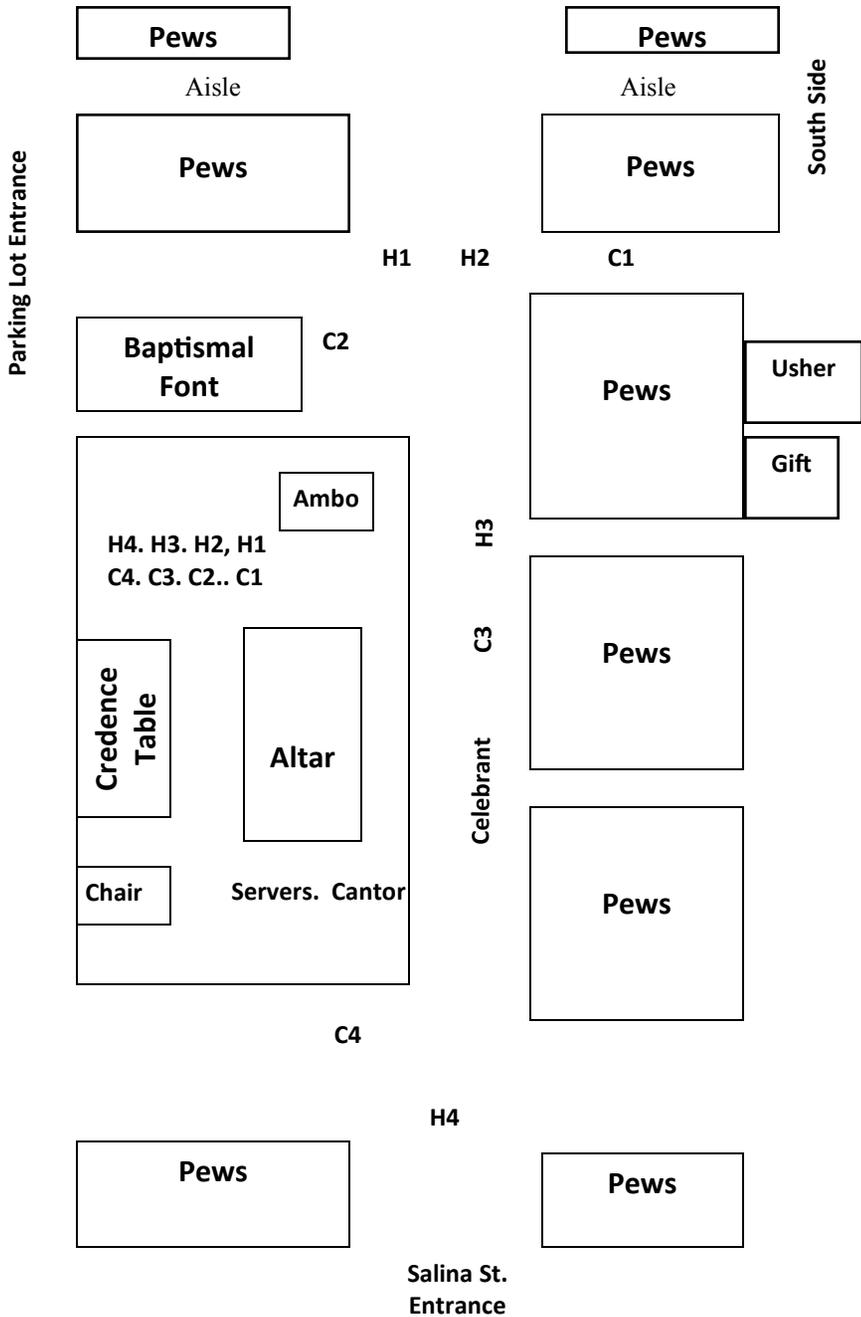


Diagram

Blessed Sacrament Chapel



St. James Church



Handbook for Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion

Theology

The origin of the name **Extraordinary Minister** really means “outside the ordinary” and not “extraordinary” or “extra special” as we think of it today. “Ordinary” ministers of the Eucharist are ordained clergy such as bishops, priests or deacons. **Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion** is the correct term for the role of the lay minister, who assists the ordained minister with the distribution of Holy Communion when the size of the congregation requires it. Those chosen for this most holy ministry should be baptized Catholics in good standing with the Church. The minister should be faithful, believe in God as well as strive to follow Christ and trust in the Holy Spirit. That person should have a genuine love, respect, and reverence for the Holy Eucharist, not only by the way in which he or she handles the Precious Body and Blood of the Lord but also by his or her demeanor and attire.

Practice

An Extraordinary Minister Should:

- Be a Catholic in good standing with the Church and in the state of grace
- Dress appropriately to reflect the reverence of the ministry
- Find a substitute if unable to serve at your assigned Mass.
- Arrive at church 10 minutes before Mass begins and sign in
- Maintain silence and reverence on the Altar
- Make sure that all hosts for the sick and homebound are placed in the Pyx on the Altar by the presiding ordained minister (priest or deacon)

Additional information regarding EMHC can be found in the *General Instruction of the Roman Missal*, available at <http://uscceb.org>

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Procedures

- There are **8** Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion (EMHC) scheduled for each Mass; **4 for the Host and 4 for the Cup.**
NOTE: There is not a need for 8 EMHC when there are visiting priests.
- The EMHC should approach the altar as soon as the priest raises the cup and drinks from it. The cantor and altar servers from the Salina Street side should immediately approach and receive Communion from Father. When approaching the altar the EMHC should bow his or her head before proceeding to the altar and before receiving the Precious Body and Blood.
- The EMHC will line up in 2 rows to the right of the altar so that they are facing the Salina Street entrance and the celebrant. The four ministers of the Cup will be in the row closest to the celebrant and the four ministers of the Host will line up behind them. (See Diagram).
- Once the celebrant has finished consuming the Body and Blood of Christ he will distribute the Eucharist to each of the 8 EMHC. The ministers of the Cup will receive the Precious Blood from the celebrant, turn around and distribute to the 4 ministers of the Host who are behind them. The ministers of the Host and Cup will distribute Holy Communion to the altar servers behind them.
- The ministers of the Cup will go to their stations and the celebrant will hand the ciboria to the ministers of the Host who will then go to their stations.
- When people approach the EMHC with their arms crossed they are declaring that they are not receiving Holy Communion either because they are not Catholic or because they are not in the state of grace. The EMHC may trace the Sign of the Cross on their foreheads.
- When offering the Host or Cup, the only permissible phrases to be used are: “The Body of Christ” and “The Blood of Christ.”
- All EMHC should return to the Altar after the distribution of Holy Communion. Any unconsumed Precious Blood should be consumed by the EMHC, *if* they are comfortable and able to do so. Cups should be placed on the credence table on the silver tray. The ciboria should be placed on the corporal on the credence table for the celebrant (or acolyte) to consolidate and placed in the tabernacle. The EMHC should use of the ablution cup and return to their seats.
- The celebrant (or an acolyte) will purify the vessels.