

often together. But I hope you will not deprive her of making her First Communion. She is a Catholic, as you say she has been baptized, and you know you are bound under serious sin to look out for her religious education. Won't you consider this? You say your husband is opposed, but haven't other women been in your position and come out victorious? What others can do you, too, can do; so take courage and do not be afraid to do what is right."

Meanwhile Mary had finished her prayer, and had returned to find her mother, but not seeing her she passed quickly to the vestibule, and meeting Sister's reassuring smile quickly re-entered the church to wait. The two spoke for some time, and Mrs. Donnelly without realizing it had told Sister the greater part of her life. Sister endeavored to show the woman her duty and urged her to permit Mary to join the First Communion class.

"Mary is too young, I think," was Mrs. Donnelly objection. "She cannot realize what she is doing.

"Oh, my dear, she has attained the use of reason; she knows what is right and wrong, and that is all that is necessary," Sister Mechtilde replied.

"Well, Sister," Mrs. Donnelly replied, "I shall consider your words, and meanwhile, pray that God will strengthen me to do right.

It was Christmas Eve. Everything seemed to make ready for the wonderful event to take place that night, First Communion at Saint Dominic's Chapel at Midnight Mass. Mrs. Donnelly carefully arrayed her daughter in the outward garb of purity, for already her spotless soul had been sanctified in the cleansing sacrament of Penance. The dainty white dress was donned; a tiny white ribbon nestled in bright curls and the golden head covered with the delicate First Communion veil. What a picture! The big blue eyes were filled with a spiritual radiance and the little mouth parted in a smile of peace of one waiting to welcome for the first time the Lord and God of all. What an abode prepared for the coming of the Lover of childhood!

Was it a tear that fell upon Mary's hand? She raised her eyes -- yes, her mother was crying. No wonder!