

**CIHM  
Microfiche  
Series  
(Monographs)**

**ICMH  
Collection de  
microfiches  
(monographies)**



**Canadian Institute for Historical Microreproductions / Institut canadien de microreproductions historiques**

**© 1995**

Technical and Bibliographic Notes / Notes techniques et bibliographiques

The Institute has attempted to obtain the best original copy available for filming. Features of this copy which may be bibliographically unique, which may alter any of the images in the reproduction, or which may significantly change the usual method of filming, are checked below.

L'Institut a microfilmé le meilleur exemplaire qu'il lui a été possible de se procurer. Les détails de cet exemplaire qui sont peut-être uniques du point de vue bibliographique, qui peuvent modifier une image reproduite, ou qui peuvent exiger une modification dans la méthode normale de filmage sont indiqués ci-dessous.

Coloured covers/  
Couverture de couleur

Coloured pages/  
Pages de couleur

Covers damaged/  
Couverture endommagée

Pages damaged/  
Pages endommagées

Covers restored and/or laminated/  
Couverture restaurée et/ou pelliculée

Pages restored and/or laminated/  
Pages restaurées et/ou pelliculées

Cover title missing/  
Le titre de couverture manque

Pages discoloured, stained or foxed/  
Pages décolorées, tachetées ou piquées

Coloured maps/  
Cartes géographiques en couleur

Pages detached/  
Pages détachées

Coloured ink (i.e. other than blue or black)/  
Encre de couleur (i.e. autre que bleue ou noire)

Showthrough/  
Transparence

Coloured plates and/or illustrations/  
Planches et/ou illustrations en couleur

Quality of print varies/  
Qualité inégale de l'impression

Bound with other material/  
Relié avec d'autres documents

Continuous pagination/  
Pagination continue

Tight binding may cause shadows or distortion  
along interior margin/  
La reliure serrée peut causer de l'ombre ou de la  
distorsion le long de la marge intérieure

Includes index(es)/  
Comprend un (des) index

Title on header taken from: /  
Le titre de l'en-tête provient:

Blank leaves added during restoration may appear  
within the text. Whenever possible, these have  
been omitted from filming/  
Il se peut que certaines pages blanches ajoutées  
lors d'une restauration apparaissent dans le texte,  
mais, lorsque cela était possible, ces pages n'ont  
pas été filmées.

Title page of issue/  
Page de titre de la livraison

Caption of issue/  
Titre de départ de la livraison

Masthead/  
Générique (périodiques) de la livraison

Additional comments: /  
Commentaires supplémentaires:

This item is filmed at the reduction ratio checked below /  
Ce document est filmé au taux de réduction indiqué ci-dessous.

10x	14x	18x	22x	26x	30x
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12x	16x	20x	24x	28x	32x

The copy filmed here has been reproduced thanks to the generosity of:

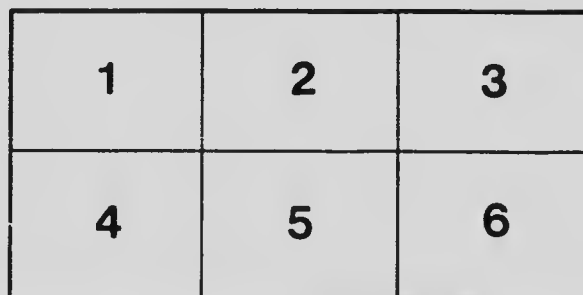
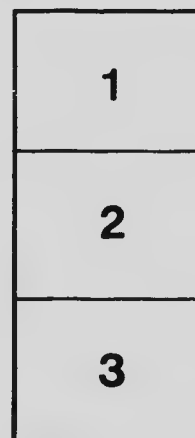
Anglican Church of Canada  
General Synod Archives

The images appearing here are the best quality possible considering the condition and legibility of the original copy and in keeping with the filming contract specifications.

Original copies in printed paper covers are filmed beginning with the front cover and ending on the last page with a printed or illustrated impression, or the back cover when appropriate. All other original copies are filmed beginning on the first page with a printed or illustrated impression, and ending on the last page with a printed or illustrated impression.

The last recorded frame on each microfiche shall contain the symbol  $\rightarrow$  (meaning "CONTINUED"), or the symbol  $\nabla$  (meaning "END"), whichever applies.

Maps, plates, charts, etc., may be filmed at different reduction ratios. Those too large to be entirely included in one exposure are filmed beginning in the upper left hand corner, left to right and top to bottom, as many frames as required. The following diagrams illustrate the method:



L'exemplaire filmé fut reproduit grâce à la générosité de:

Anglican Church of Canada  
General Synod Archives

Les images suivantes ont été reproduites avec le plus grand soin, compte tenu de la condition et de la netteté de l'exemplaire filmé, et en conformité avec les conditions du contrat de filmage.

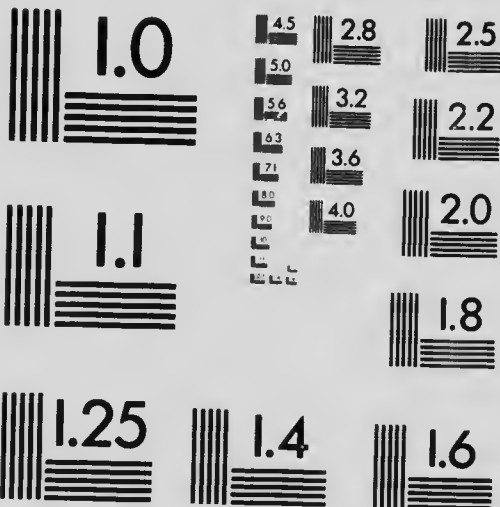
Les exemplaires originaux dont la couverture en papier est imprimée sont filmés en commençant par le premier plat et en terminant soit par la dernière page qui comporte une empreinte d'impression ou d'illustration, soit par le second plat, selon le cas. Tous les autres exemplaires originaux sont filmés en commençant par la première page qui comporte une empreinte d'impression ou d'illustration et en terminant par la dernière page qui comporte une telle empreinte.

Un des symboles suivants apparaîtra sur la dernière image de chaque microfiche, selon le cas: le symbole  $\rightarrow$  signifie "A SUIVRE", le symbole  $\nabla$  signifie "FIN".

Les cartes, planches, tableaux, etc., peuvent être filmés à des taux de réduction différents. Lorsque le document est trop grand pour être reproduit en un seul cliché, il est filmé à partir de l'angle supérieur gauche, de gauche à droite, et de haut en bas, en prenant le nombre d'images nécessaire. Les diagrammes suivants illustrent la méthode.

# MICROCOPY RESOLUTION TEST CHART

(ANSI and ISO TEST CHART No. 2)



APPLIED IMAGE Inc

1653 East Main Street  
Rochester, New York 14609 USA  
(716) 482 - 0300 - Phone  
(716) 288 - 5989 - Fax

**The Sevenfold Gift**

---

NOTES

FOR

**CONFIRMATION CLASSES**

BY THE

**REV. GEORGE W. HODGSON**

**LATE INCUMBENT OF ST. PETER'S CHURCH, CHARLOTTETOWN, PRINCE  
EDWARD ISLAND**



**Church Book Room**

**604 Jarvis Street - Toronto, 5**



H.M.C. 2  
1857

# The Sevenfold Gift

---

NOTES

FOR

## CONFIRMATION CLASSES

BY THE

REV. GEORGE W. HODGSON

LATE INCUMBENT OF ST. PETER'S CHURCH, CHARLOTTETOWN, PRINCE  
EDWARD ISLAND



Church Book Room

604 Jarvis Street - Toronto, 5

## PREFACE

---

These Notes were first edited in 1886 by the Rev. Edward Osborne, S.S.J.E., afterwards Bishop of Springfield, and were re-edited by the Rev. Canon Powell in 1915 for the Sunday School Institute Publications of Toronto. They are now reprinted at the request of many who have found the "Notes" helpful both for Confirmation Classes and also for adult candidates who ask for instruction that they can study by themselves.



# CONTENTS.

---

	PAGE
CHAPTER I.	
THE SERVICE.....	1
CHAPTER II.	
THE SERVICE ( <i>continued</i> )—THE SEVENFOLD GIFT...	8
CHAPTER III.	
THE THREE VOWS.....	17
CHAPTER IV.	
THE CREED—ARTICLES 1 AND 2... ..	24
CHAPTER V.	
THE CREED ( <i>continued</i> )—ARTICLE 3.....	33
CHAPTER VI.	
THE CREED ( <i>continued</i> )—ARTICLES 4 AND 5.....	39
CHAPTER VII.	
THE CREED ( <i>continued</i> )—ARTICLES 6 AND 7 .....	44

	PAGE
CHAPTER VIII.	
THE CREED ( <i>continued</i> )—ARTICLES 8 AND 9.....	51
CHAPTER IX.	
THE CREED ( <i>continued</i> )—ARTICLES 10, 11, AND 12..	61
CHAPTER X.	
THE COMMANDMENTS—FIRST TO THIRD.....	69
CHAPTER XI.	
THE COMMANDMENTS ( <i>continued</i> )—FOURTH TO SIXTH.	77
CHAPTER XII.	
THE COMMANDMENTS ( <i>continued</i> )—SEVENTH TO TENTH.....	84
CHAPTER XIII.	
HOLY COMMUNION .....	96
CHAPTER XIV.	
CLASS IMMEDIATELY BEFORE CONFIRMATION.....	101
CHAPTER XV.	
AFTER CONFIRMATION AND BEFORE FIRST COM- MUNION.....	106

# NOTES

FOR

## CONFIRMATION CLASSES.

---

### CHAPTER I.

#### THE SERVICE.

We will begin our Classes with the Confirmation Service itself. Turn to it in your Prayer Books.

Its position in the book tells you something. It follows the Catechism, which follows the Baptismal Services. You easily see the meaning of that.

In going through this Service I will direct your attention to four leading words or phrases which we find in it. Connecting what shall be said with these words may make it more easily remembered.

First, then, notice particularly, in the first rubric—"all that are to be then confirmed." Observe "BE CONFIRMED," in the passive voice :

something to *be done to you*. Ever let that be the first thought about your Confirmation. Don't put first the thought that you come there to do something, to confirm your Baptismal Vows. That truth has its place, and we shall come to it directly, and at the proper time I shall have a good deal to say about it. But its place must not be first; in this as in all means of grace God's work must be first in our mind, and so *be confirmed, be made firm, be made strong*, is our predominating thought.

In the title you observe two names, "Confirmation, or Laying on of Hands." The latter name gives the outward, visible sign; the former the inward, spiritual grace. Confirmation is of a sacramental nature. In some respects it differs from the two great Sacraments, but it is like them in having two parts. I will refer you to two passages of Holy Scripture in which the laying on of hands is spoken of—Hebrews vi. 1, 2. Read these verses, and carefully notice what the Apostle gives as the six principles of the Doctrine of Christ, viz.: Repentance, Faith, the doctrine of Baptisms (observe the plural, not "baptism" but "baptisms;") the Jews to whom this letter was written had many baptisms or washings; they must learn to distinguish these from the "One Baptism;") of Laying on of Hands, of Resurrection, of the Judgment. You can learn from this that the ordinance is important, is one of the principles of the Doctrine of Christ, and that it is intended for all Christians. If Repentance is certainly needed for all, Faith for all, Baptism for

all, if all shall rise again, and all be judged, how then can we pick one out of the list and say that we need have nothing to do with that? To do so would be to trifle with Holy Scripture.

Now we will turn to another passage, where the inward and spiritual grace is explicitly connected with the outward visible sign, Acts viii. In this chapter we have an account of certain events resulting from the martyrdom of St. Stephen. Philip (verse 5) went down to Samaria. Chapter vi. tells us that Philip was only a Deacon. Remember what his office and its duties were. He preached Christ to them—a Deacon can preach. They believed and were baptized (verse 12)—a Deacon can baptize. But he stopped at that. News of these matters reaches the Apostles at Jerusalem. They send two Apostles down to Samaria (verse 14). After prayer (verse 15) they, *i.e.*, the Apostles (verse 17), “laid their hands upon them” (the outward sign) and “they received the Holy Ghost” (the inward grace). Just as you, though baptized, must wait for your Confirmation until the Bishop or chief ruler comes; so they had to wait until the Bishop, the chief ruler, came to confirm them.

Secondly, we take another matter, and we will connect it with the word “DISCRETION”—“come to years of discretion.” What does this mean? A power of distinguishing, and of making a choice. When a boy or girl is passing from childhood and is entering upon youth, there arises a feeling of independence, a wish to

act for oneself. The Devil will try to turn this to your destruction, will try to make you shake off control, will try to make you choose to please yourself, and to use your discretion to follow your own will. But now see how God's voice comes to you in this way and shows you how to turn this feeling to a good purpose. Yes, use your discretion, but use it wisely to choose God's service and to do His Will. Make this independent step. Hitherto your religion has been almost altogether a matter of direction ; as a child you did, in your religious duties, just what you were bidden to do ; but you feel yourself now more than a child. Let, then, God's grace turn into a safe channel these new powers of which you are growing conscious, and here, on the threshold of expanding life, make your first independent step in the narrow way. Your power to discern, your right to choose are recognized ; prove that in the truest sense you have come to years of discretion.

The next word to which I point you is "EDIFYING." Confirmation is to be ministered to the more edifying of them that receive it. This word means building—building a temple. What has that to do with Confirmation? Turn first to Ephesians ii. 19 to end ; you see there that God intends you to be built as living stones into His Temple. Turn also to 1. Kings vi. 7. That Temple in the earthly Jerusalem was a type of the one which God is building in the Heavenly Jerusalem. But the material must be made ready beforehand ; the work of

edifying implies preparation of the material. God intends you to have a place in that spiritual temple. However large a building may be, its smallest stone is needed for its perfection and completeness. God intends your soul for its own special place in that Temple. If not, why did He create it, differing from all other souls? Why did He redeem it? Why has He called you among His elect? What a grand thought that such a destiny is yours! Will you not willingly be the subject of an edifying work in God's Church? Confirmation is for edifying.

We will now go, for a few minutes, to the Question which will be asked you in the Service. We shall have to spend a good deal of time over it afterward, but this preliminary view shall be a very brief one.

Remember that by this Question you are asked nothing more than what you have been asked every time you were heard your Catechism; in answering it you acknowledge nothing more than you acknowledged every time you said your Catechism. Again and again you have been asked, "*Dost thou not think that thou art bound to believe and to do all that thy Godfathers and Godmothers promised for thee?*" and again and again you have said, "*Yes, verily, and by God's help so I will.*" So Confirmation does not lay upon you any new obligation, except that which comes from the public and very solemn recognition of an old one. This public recognition is, however, a very serious and important thing.

and its consideration brings us to our next point.

Notice the rubric after the question. It is "Every one shall audibly answer," etc. "AUDIBLY" is our next word. It means so as to be heard; literally, it refers only to a distinct answer, but we must think of more than that. "To be heard"—then some one is listening. Who? The Bishop? Your parents and friends who have come to see you confirmed? Your pastor? The congregation? Yes, all these, but not these only; more than these. Will not your guardian angel hear it? Holy Scripture speaks of angels as present in the congregation; will not they hear your answer--and if it comes from your heart will they not rejoice? God Himself will hear you; your Father in Heaven will hear it from the lips of you—His Child. He who died on the cross for you will hear it. The Holy Spirit who is to confirm you will hear it. You will stand a poor, weak, frail mortal, and in the hearing of men, of angels, of God, you will say these words. How can you? How dare you? Shall you not be afraid? You could not, dare not, say them were it not for the thought to which utterance is given by the very next words you hear. Look at your Prayer Book; see what, immediately after you have spoken, the Bishop says, expressing the faith and confidence of the Church:

"Our help is in the Name of the Lord."

And then there comes the response,

"Who hath made Heaven and earth."



Oh! then you need not be afraid. Weak . . . yourself, yet in the strength of the Mighty God you may be strong. I know nothing in all our services more beautiful than these words, coming in as they do just at this place. But go on :

“Blessed be the Name of the Lord  
Henceforth, world without end.”

These words make an act of thanksgiving, as well as an act of faith; thanksgiving to God for all the help that He has promised—for all the help that He will give. But still further :

“Lord, hear our prayer,  
And let our cry come unto Thee.”

What do these words mean, thinking of them as said in your name? It is as though the Church, like an anxious mother, looks forward to, it may be, the many years of life yet before you, and remembers that if you will be true you must be much in prayer. In times of hope and of fear, of joy and of sorrow, of temptation and of penitence, you must pray. Therefore she puts upon the lips of her minister, for your sakes, the words :

“Lord, hear our prayer.”

And the congregation, of whom some at least will then be anxious for your sake, answers,

‘And let our cry come unto Thee.’”

The following Collect gives clearly the seven gifts of the Holy Ghost—the inward grace of Confirmation. We will begin with this at our next class.

And now, one word of practical advice. I cannot prepare you for Confirmation. The most I can do is to try to help you. God's Holy Spirit alone can prepare you, and for that Spirit you yourselves must pray. Take this prayer from the Service, and use it daily at your *morning or evening prayers until your Confirmation*. And do not merely say it, but pray it.

To recapitulate--the words "Be Confirmed, Discretion, Edifying, Audibly," will help you to remember what has been said. Use this prayer from the Service daily.

Almighty and everliving God, who hast vouchsafed to regenerate these thy servants by Water and the Holy Ghost, and hast given unto them forgiveness of all their sins ; Strengthen them, we beseech thee, O Lord, with the Holy Ghost, the Comforter, and daily increase in them thy manifold gifts of grace : the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and ghostly strength, the spirit of knowledge and true godliness ; and fill them, O Lord, with the spirit of thy holy fear, now and forever. *Amen.*

---

## CHAPTER II.

### THE SERVICE—(*Continued*).

We begin to-day with the prayer for the Seven Gifts of the Holy Ghost.

"Almighty and Everlasting God, who hast vouchsafed to regenerate these, thy servants, by water and the Holy Ghost."

"To regenerate by water and the Holy Ghost." This of course refers to your Baptism (see St. John iii.) Ever since you learned your Catechism you have known what was done for you in Baptism. You are now bidden to recall it to mind. Born again--born into God's family--therefore God's child. You are not to wait to be, or to hope to be, God's Child; you are so. It is a fact--you are to believe it. Whether you believe it or not can make no difference in the fact; though it will make a vast difference to you. Accept the truth thankfully, hopefully; trustfully; and with all your heart thank God for it.

Then the prayer, having referred to what was once for all done by the *regenerating grace* of Baptism, with its promise of forgiveness of sins, goes on to pray for the *Confirming grace*, which you are now seeking in Confirmation. "Strengthen them, we beseech thee, O Lord, with the Holy Ghost the Comforter." And so we have the "MANIFOLD GIFTS OF GRACE" mentioned, and you see that they are seven, viz.:

- (1) Wisdom.
- (2) Understanding.
- (3) Counsel.
- (4) Ghostly Strength.
- (5) Knowledge.
- (6) True Godliness.
- (7) Holy Fear.

Here, then, we have stated explicitly and in detail the inward and spiritual grace of Confirmation.

A few words in explanation of each of these.

1. WISDOM. The Spirit of Wisdom teaches us what life is for, what to aim at in life, how to live as God would have us live, *i.e.*, living for God, aiming at perfect holiness. He only who knows these things, and acts upon his knowledge, is truly wise. He who is not thus wise our Blessed Lord calls "fool" (St. Luke xii. 20), though in the eyes of the world he may seem very wise (1 Cor. iii. 19 to end).

2. UNDERSTANDING. Look at and read carefully 1 Cor. ii. 9, 10. This is a text very often misquoted and misapplied. The ninth verse is generally read by itself (it would be hard to tell how many errors the unfortunate division of the Bible into little detached sentences has caused), and the text used as though it said that nobody could know the joys of Heaven. But it speaks altogether of these things which the outward sense cannot (and never can) perceive, which the natural heart of man cannot (and never can) receive, and then goes on to say: "But GOD HATH REVEALED them to us by His Spirit." There are "mysteries" in religion the meaning of which the natural understanding can never reach, but which the "Spirit of Understanding" will enable us in some degree to realize. Religion presents many and very great difficulties to the natural understanding; the Spirit of Understanding removes them. You see how necessary that Spirit is. Some people, honest and sincere enough, give up all their religious belief because they are not able to understand it. Much better and wiser, is it not, to seek for the "Spirit of Understanding" and to use it?

He would be very foolish who should undertake to weigh arguments with scales and weights out of a shop—he must use his judgment, not make the mistake of using material instruments where intellectual ones are required. Is it not an equally great mistake to try to use an intellectual instrument for a purpose for which a spiritual one is needed?

3. COUNSEL. Often through life you will be in doubt what it is right to do, or what it is best to do. Real perplexities may, and often do, meet one honestly desirous of taking the right course. The Spirit of Counsel will point out the right way. But remember this—you can never find yourself in such a position that you must do wrong. There is always a right way of acting. If at any time you think there is no right way, look again and you will see that you have mistaken “very difficult” for “impossible,” two quite different things. The right way which the Spirit of Counsel points can never be impossible, though it may be very difficult; therefore you will want

4. GHOSTLY STRENGTH. The Spirit of Counsel will show you the right way, and then, to help you to walk in it, however difficult it may be, you will have the Spirit of Ghostly Strength.

5. KNOWLEDGE. Accurately to distinguish between wisdom, understanding, and knowledge is a matter for scientific theology, and quite beyond such instruction as this; but we may get an idea as to what is meant by Knowledge sufficient for practical purposes. Our Blessed Lord says: “This is life eternal to *know Thee*,

the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hath sent" (St. John xvii. 3). St. Paul wishes that Christians may prove what the will of God is (Rom. xii. 2) *i.e.*, have knowledge by experiment. Experimental knowledge of God, of our relation to Him, of our consequent duty toward Him, and of our duty toward our neighbors springing from our relation and duty toward God, are some of the things that this gift conveys to us.

6. TRUE GODLINESS. Notice the word "true." Avoid above all things sham godliness—sham religion—a religion of talk and feeling alone, and not of duty; a religion of saying prayers and receiving sacraments, but nothing more; a religion that mistakes means for ends—that puts its trust in outward forms or inward feelings, instead of in God's truth and Jesus Christ. Religion (an obligation—that which is binding, the word means) to be True Godliness must produce in the life holiness toward God, righteousness toward our neighbors. Knowledge shows us the relation of the soul toward God; this gift binds us by the obligations arising from that relationship, and enables us to fulfil them.

7. HOLY FEAR. Observe "Holy," for there is a slavish fear of God which is no gift of the "free Spirit." The reverential, affectionate, filial fear here spoken of is in no way contrary to love, rather is a necessary consequence of it. It is a feeling which will make us fear to sin, not from fear of punishment, but from fear of displeasing a Father who loves us and whom

we love. A feeling which makes us think and speak of holy things with reverence and awe, and saves us from profanity and flippant irreverence.

Briefly, then, to recapitulate :

Wisdom—To know the purpose of life.

Understanding—Of spiritual things and of the mysteries of the faith.

Counsel—To know the right path.

Ghostly Strength—To enable us to walk in it.

Knowledge—Of God and of our own souls.

True Godliness—Practical, experimental religion.

Holy Fear—Springing from love, making us to fear to sin.

Remember carefully these Seven Gifts of the Holy Ghost.

Now look at the rubric immediately following this prayer. The word to which I there call your attention is "SEVERALLY." "The Bishop shall lay his hands upon the head of every one *severally*."

Several—separated—taken apart from others, that God may deal with you alone. Our Blessed Lord "took aside from the multitude" one whom He was about to heal. And so, if any real work of Grace is to be done in your heart, it will be by God dealing with you alone. It is a solemn thought. It will be a solemn moment. And at that moment think of nothing—of no one but God. He alone it is who really blesses you. It is not the hand of man, but the pierced Hand of

Christ that really gives the blessing, and that gift is now brought to you individually. You will be face to face with God, and the face that you will by faith see will be that of a loving Father ready to bless. There are, of course, some times when we should think of ourselves as not being alone, but as being members of a body; but this is not one of those times; there and then you will be taken one by one alone, severally, that upon each one the grace of God may sacramentally be conferred. Think much of yourself being alone with God Alone!

The very words of the Confirmation are very beautiful. Read them carefully and thoughtfully, and particularly notice "DAILY INCREASE" in the Holy Spirit. You see Confirmation is only a beginning, not the end. It is not as though the Holy Spirit was then given once for all. You are to look for a "daily increase." How are you to be sure that you can gain that increase? You will, perhaps, say by prayer, by receiving the Holy Communion, by duly using all means of grace. Well, these are all necessary, and yet you might use them regularly and still no increase come. One absolutely necessary condition there must be, else all other things will avail nothing. That necessary condition is that the grace given be used. Just as food will give health and strength to the members of the body only, they are increased by use. So it is in spiritual things. Suppose your Confirmation over and the next day begun—everything goes on as usual—some little (so



we may think it) temptation comes—an Act of Faith is made—an ejaculation uttered—the temptation overcome. The grace given has been used, and therefore grace will be increased. Or the reverse of all this may take place, and grace will not only be not increased, but even lost. The parable of the talents (St. Matt. xxv. 14-30) will tell you all about this truth.

Then in the Service follows a brief salutation, and then the Lord's Prayer. Directly after you were baptized this prayer was said for you; directly after you shall have been confirmed this prayer will be said with you. It is a prayer that applies to all circumstances; each one of its seven petitions can have here a special meaning suitable to this occasion, specially when you say the fourth petition, "Give us this day our daily bread." You may think that by your Confirmation you are admitted to the receiving of that Bread of God which cometh down from heaven and giveth life to the world (St. John VI. 33).

All through the following Collects you will see prominent the idea that Confirmation is the beginning of a life of more earnest and decided serving of God. Remember that it is only the beginning, and "Let not him that girdeth on his harness boast himself as he that putteth it off." You will also see brought out the thought that the courage to enter upon this life of service springs from the certain belief in what God has done and wills yet to do for you.

By the laying on of hands you are CERTIFIED of God's favor and gracious goodness. His fatherly hand is ever to be over you. His Holy Spirit ever with you. Knowledge and obedience are ever to the end to be increasing—the ways of God's law and the works of His commandments are to be the purposes of your life. His mighty protection will be your help.

And with words of blessing—a blessing that may rest upon you forever—the Confirmation Service ends. The important expressions we have noticed to-day are, "Manifold Gifts, Severally, Daily Increase, Certified."

At the last class, I asked you to use daily, until your Confirmation, the prayer for the seven gifts. I wish to-day to speak to you about a very important devotional practice which (if you do not already follow it) I hope you will now begin and continue, not merely until your Confirmation is over, but to the end of your life. This is a very good time to form devotional habits, and the one I now urge upon you is the regular daily reading of some portion of God's Word. Make this a rule, not to be broken without great reason, and let me give you these few hints. Have a minimum quantity—say not less than ten or twelve verses. Then read some book continuously, not reading just where you chance to open the book. Perhaps you will take alternately a book of the Old and New Testaments, and so in time get through the whole Bible. Have some fixed time for this duty; probably the time of your

Morning or Evening Prayer will be the most convenient. You may not immediately perceive the benefit of this practice ; you will soon grow tired of it, and be strongly tempted to discontinue it ; there will be so much that you have read before, so much that is uninteresting, so much that you cannot understand, so many times that you would rather not take the trouble. But persevere, and in time you will reap your reward, by gaining such an intimate familiarity with God's Word as will be of the utmost strength, help, and comfort to you. If any of you are not already reading regularly, begin to-night, say with St. Matthew's Gospel. Perhaps before the Confirmation, I may ask each one here how much he has read.

---

### CHAPTER III.

#### THE THREE VOWS.

Having gone through the Confirmation Service, specially for the purpose of seeing what God wills, in Confirmation, to do for you, we may now, as the second point (we must never make it the first), consider what, before you are confirmed, you are publicly to ratify.

You are *not* going "to take upon yourselves your baptismal vows." You did that as soon as you could understand the words of the Catechism, for long before this you have been asked, over and over again, if you did not think

yourselves bound to believe and to do all that your Godfathers and Godmothers promised for you ; and again and again you have answered, "Yes, verily, and by God's help so I will." If words mean anything, you took your baptismal vows upon you when you said your Catechism. But you are going before Confirmation, in a very solemn and public manner, to profess, and confess, yourself bound by obligations already in a more private way assumed. So it is very suitable that you should now carefully consider them, and perhaps change a somewhat implied recognition of duties for a more explicit one.

1. To renounce (*a*) the devil and all his works, (*b*) the pomps and vanities of this wicked world, and (*c*) all the sinful lusts of the flesh.
2. To believe all the Articles of the Christian Faith.
3. To keep and, all the days of our lives, to walk in, God's Holy Will and Commandments.

The last of these promises will require an explanation of the Ten Commandments, the second an explanation of the Apostles' Creed, and the consideration of these two will occupy the time of most of our classes.

We shall be able to-day to consider the first one.

I do not intend, under this heading, to speak at all particularly of sins, although it might very well be done here. But I think it will be more convenient to leave the considera-

tion of particular sins until we come to the Commandments. We will now consider, under the first promise, some general principles by which we must try to rule our lives. But first of all, a few words as to the classification here adopted.

The Devil—the World—the Flesh. We meet with these three tempting powers on two most important occasions.

The temptation of the first Adam (Gen. iii.). The tree was "good for food," a temptation of the flesh; "pleasant to the eyes," of the world, its show and appearance; "a tree to be desired to make one wise." Knowledge apart from God is the wisdom of the world, springing from, and at the same time increasing, spiritual pride, the very sin of the devil.

The temptation of the second Adam (St. Matt. iv.), "Command these stones to be made bread," a temptation of the flesh. "Cast thyself down from Heaven," presumption, spiritual pride. "All the Kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them, will I give thee," temptation of the world.

The first time they gained a great victory; the second time they suffered at the hands of the Son of Man an utter defeat. In His strength every son of man may defeat them.

Now, what shall you mean to renounce, speaking generally rather than particularly.

(a) That self-willed, presumptuous spirit which is satisfied with itself and its own powers, which would lead you away from God. And

how many there are satisfied with being away from God, unconverted to Him! There are many lives just so irreligious, just so godless. Is yours to be so too?

But there is another thought. When we first hear of the Devil, he is tempting others to sin. You have much influence, perhaps a good deal more than you think, with companions and friends. A sneer, a laugh, a discouraging word, may incline the wavering balance in the wrong direction, and turn to sin, or away from good, a wavering and weak brother. Or an invitation coming from you, asking another to join in sin, may lead astray one who, but for that temptation, would never so have fallen. Take the utmost care never by ridicule or persuasion to influence for evil another's life. You promise to renounce the devil's work. What more devilish work could you do than by such influence to hinder the work of grace in another's soul. But you will do more than merely refrain from hurting another's soul. Will you not also try to assist him in doing what is right? I do not at all mean to advise you to make a great profession about your religion; to talk much or to cant about it; but in a quiet, practical way you can exercise much influence for good, and show that you have in truth renounced these two chief works of the Devil, viz., encouraging evil and discouraging good.

(b) The power of the World makes itself felt in different ways at the different periods of life. I think that in your earlier youth it will prob-

ably make itself most felt by you as a temptation leading you to a too great regard for the opinions and practices of others. I, of course, am not referring to that proper deference which not the young alone should pay to those whose example is worthy of imitation. I speak of the "wicked world," of your finding yourself among those whose standard for acting and speaking is not that of God's Will, and of your then being afraid or ashamed of differing from them. But if your life is going to be worth anything, if you are going to use the "Spirit of Ghostly Strength," if you are going to have any true manliness in your character, you will often have to take an independent stand and act differently from others—often, too, when your doing so will be most difficult. Make up your mind to this, otherwise you cannot lead a Christian life. Read in Daniel iii. 16, 17, 18, the noble words of the three youths who went one way while all peoples, nations, and languages went another; and see the spirit of manly determination with which one man (Joshua xxiv. 15) announces what he will do, whatever others may choose to do.

Later in life, the World will make its power felt in another way. You may (through God's grace) have formed a character of some independence, then (St. Matt. xiii. 22) "the care of this world," if you have to earn your living, or "the deceitfulness of riches," if you have wealth or are making haste to be rich, will choke the good seed, and make you barren and unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord. Re-

member what was said about the Spirit of Wisdom, that it taught us what life was for. The Spirit of the World, with its narrow views, its empty pretences, and its vain shows, will try to make you live for lower aims. But if you in truth renounce the pomps and vanities of the world, you will not run the risk of losing your soul for the sake of getting rich, or to make a show in fashionable society, or to gain some high position. Yet men and women do lose their souls for such petty things as these. And "what shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul." Often say and think over those words.

You are not required to renounce innocent, rational, and moderate amusements and pleasures. You must renounce all that are in any way sinful, or any that may lead you into temptation; and you must not allow yourself innocent pleasures at such times or in such a degree as may interfere with any duty. In this matter look for the guidance of the Spirit of Counsel.

(c) The Flesh. God has given us certain natural feelings, desires, and appetites; has given them to us for our good, and has joined pleasure to their due satisfaction. But if I follow their lead for pleasure alone, seeking that pleasure for its own sake, the flesh will gain the mastery over me. On this, as on all these subjects, I will afterward speak specifically; we will now only take one or two examples to see what is meant. I must take rest, and rest is very pleasant; but if for the pleasure of rest, I take rest



when I do not need it, and when I should be at work, I fall into the sin of sloth. I must eat, and it is pleasant to do so ; hence the danger of gluttony, and so with all natural appetites.

But to come to a principle. You must make up your mind that, since you have renounced the flesh, a sin of the flesh cannot be excused by such excuses as, "I *like* to do so and so, it is very *pleasant* so to act, it is *natural* so to do." You must once for all settle this with yourself, that if you are going to live an earnest Christian life, you must do many things that you will not like to do, and leave undone much that you would like to do. Unless you are prepared for this you cannot live a good life.

Notice this also in Galatians v. 19, 20, 21 ; there is a list given of the works of the flesh. Read it. You there see some sins that you would expect to see spoken of as works of the flesh ; but there are others, *e.g.*, "variance, strife, seditions," which you would not expect to see in such a list. But if you think a little you will see that they are all caused by one thing, *viz.*, by men taking as their guide their own likings and dislikings, instead of taking the Will of God.

Let us then recapitulate. When I say that I will renounce the Devil, the World, and the Flesh, I mean that I will shun presumption and pride, and be scrupulously careful in no way to encourage evil or discourage good in another, and that not the opinions of others nor my own natural desires shall be my rule of conduct, but the Will of God.

## CHAPTER IV.

## THE CREED.

*Introductory and Articles 1 and 2.*

The subject we begin to-day is the Second Promise, "To believe all the Articles of the Christian Faith."

Remember the way in which the question is put in the Catechism, "Dost thou not think that thou art *bound to believe* and to do?"

It is a too common opinion that nobody is bound to believe anything. There is a very foolish, silly saying that you may sometimes hear, viz., "It makes no difference what a man believes." Very little thought will show what nonsense this is. Suppose you believe that fire will not burn, will this belief make no difference to you? Suppose a very thin piece of ice over a pond on which you would like to go; will it make no difference whether you believe it strong or weak? Will it make no difference to a farmer what he believes about plowing, sowing, etc.? So in common matters about things of this life, it makes a great difference what we believe; but about matters of such supreme importance as God and our souls, it makes no difference what we believe! A wonderful philosophy this, certainly.

Think of it, and you will see that if the subject of our belief is of little consequence, then

our belief about it is of proportionally small consequence, and that the only thing that makes our belief of no consequence is our not acting upon it. Certainly, even about the greatest matter, it is of no consequence *what* we believe, if our belief does not affect our conduct.

The best derivation that has been given for the word believe is "by live"—that which one lives by. As a matter of fact, all conduct is regulated by belief—if by the belief which we profess, our lives are at least sincere; if by beliefs other than those which we profess, we shall be hypocrites. Think that your belief is what you must live by, and you can never have that foolish thought that belief is of no consequence. You will be anxious to believe what is true. Some true things may be hard to believe, just as some right things are hard to do. And if a person tries, and continues trying, to do what is right, he is not to be condemned and called no Christian, even though his efforts sometimes fail; so a person is not to be condemned and called no Christian who, though wishing and trying to find and believe what is true, sometimes, or even for some time, fails to do so.

Before going particularly into the subject of the Creed, a few words about the relation between the Creed and the Bible.

The Bible is the Rule of the Faith.

A rule measures, does not make. The thing is not made by the rule which measures. A yardstick measures a piece of cloth, but the cloth is not got from the yardstick.

As a matter of fact, did anyone of you get the Creed out of the Bible for himself? did you not learn the Creed and the Lord's Prayer before you could read a word of the Bible?

You have often seen school-books which are intended to teach persons about things that they know nothing of. Does the Bible in the least look like a book of that sort? Turn to St. Luke i. 4, and you will see that St. Luke wrote his Gospel, not to teach Theophilus the faith, but that the man might know the *certainty* of those things in which he had already been catechized. So also in 2 Timothy iii. 15. St. Paul says that Scripture can make us wise unto salvation through faith—the faith which is in Christ Jesus. One must have been taught the faith, know it, and hold it, if Scripture is to make him wise.

The Creed of the Jewish Church was much older than the earliest written book of the Old Testament. The Creed of the Christian Church (I do not mean the very words of the Apostles' Creed, but its matter) was believed by Christians before a word of the New Testament was written, and for nearly three hundred years before it was decided what set of books should form the New Testament.

So the Bible is not the source of the Creed, unless the source of a stream can be found some distance down its bed, which is nonsense.

The Bible is one of several means of grace in the Church.

The Bible measures, corrects, confirms Belief, but is not its source.

The Bible confirms the Creed. The Creed throws light on the Bible. They mutually support each other. I believe the Creed the more firmly, because the Bible contains the same truths. I put the more confidence in the Bible, because it contains the same truths as the Creed. You will understand, then, that when we turn to "texts" about the Creed, it is not as though we wait to find a "text" before we will believe the particular article of the Creed we may be considering. But these texts will confirm our faith, and the faith will throw light upon the texts.

The Apostles' Creed is easily divided into twelve articles, as follows :

I BELIEVE

1. In God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth ;
2. And in Jesus Christ His only Son our Lord ;
3. Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary ;
4. Suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried ;
5. He descended into hell, the third day He rose again from the dead ;
6. He ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty ;
7. From thence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead ;
8. In the Holy Ghost ;
9. The Holy Catholic Church, the Communion of Saints ;

10. The Forgiveness of sins ;
11. The Resurrection of the body ;
12. And the Life everlasting.

It is well worth studying the arrangement of the Creed—why the articles follow in the particular order which they do, what subjects are included under one article when more than one is found—but we will not go into these matters. The legend about the origin of the Creed is that after Pentecost, before leaving Jerusalem, the Apostles met together and (St. Peter beginning) each contributed one article. But there is no historical proof whatever of this.

Notice another division of the Creed, somewhat simpler than that given above. You can see that it treats of just four great truths. The first eight articles express our faith about GOD; the ninth, about His Church; tenth, about the forgiveness of sins; eleventh and twelfth, about the everlasting life of soul and body. GOD; THE CHURCH; PARDON OF SINS; LIFE EVERLASTING—these are the four great truths of the Creed. And the belief in GOD speaks of two chief subjects—the *Holy Trinity*, and the *Incarnation*. However, in going through it here, we shall adopt the division into twelve articles.

The first article: “*God the Father Almighty.*” Our Blessed Lord revealed God to us as a Father. He taught us all, when speaking to God, to say “Our Father.” See also Ephesians iv. 6—“*Father of all.*” Now try to think of this truth as a truth by which you are to live. You are here not to be taught as you might be in

school, but in the hope that these old truths may now come home to you with a fresh, new power. And so they will, if you will think over them and pray over them. Think, then, about the truth that God is your Father, that you are His child. You know how your earthly parents love you, are anxious for you, help you; you know with what confidence you can go to your father or mother, how you can count upon their help. Now, are you really going to put just such confidence, just such trust, in God your Father in Heaven? You may do so; you may count upon His love, His help, His care. This enables us to see whether our beliefs make any difference or not. It surely will make a great deal of difference to you whether you do or do not believe that God Almighty is your Father. Think over it, pray over it, believe it, live by it.

“*Maker of heaven and earth.*” In the first chapter of Genesis we read that God made all things “visible and invisible,” as the Nicene Creed says. It is worth noticing that in that chapter some things God seems to have made *directly*, some He is certainly said to have made *indirectly*. Compare, for instance, verses 3 and 24—God said, “Let there be light,” but He did not say, “Let there be living creatures and cattle.” He said, “Let *the earth bring forth* living creatures, cattle,” etc. In the one case, He by His Word called a thing into being; in the other, He by His Word caused that which already existed to produce some other thing very different

from itself. Yet, whichever of these two ways He chooses, in both cases what is done is done by His word and power; in both cases alike He is the Creator. Some of you will understand why I speak of this. There are persons who think that all or nearly all things have been indirectly made—one thing by slow degrees, and through many changes, bringing forth other things. This may or may not be true. It is a scientific question as yet undecided, and we shall be very foolish if we get angry or frightened about it. So long as we believe that God made the world, we may leave quite open the question *how* He made it. His Will is the force that creates, and it is just as much an act of creative power to make a thing which will develop into something else as to make a thing directly. If a man could make a caterpillar which would develop into a butterfly, he would be the maker of both butterfly and caterpillar. Or, suppose one not knowing that butterflies are developed from caterpillars, and believing that God made them both separately; when he comes to learn what butterflies develop from, must he give up his belief that God made them? Surely not.

“Days” are spoken of in this chapter. We cannot say that they necessarily mean what we now understand by “days,” for the days that we speak of are measured by the sun, but the sun was not created until the fourth “day.” There is no measure for these periods that we know of. It may (for aught we are told) have taken the sea millions of years to



bring forth fowls, and the earth as long to bring forth beast and cattle. Nor do we know how long it was until the dust of the ground became Adam (*i.e.*, man) by the creative will of God ; nor through how many changes that dust may have passed before it became so highly organized as to be a fit habitation for God's own breath of life.

When we say that God created all things, we should remember that "all *things*," and therefore all lower animals, are God's creatures. Man has dominion over them ; but that does not mean that he may treat them as he pleases. Cruelty to a horse or a dog, or to any of the lower animals, is a sin ; neither anger nor thoughtlessness is any excuse for it.

The second article : "*In Jesus Christ His only Son our Lord.*" "Jesus Christ"—"JESUS," the "NAME ;" "CHRIST," the "TITLE." Just as of the two words "Queen Victoria"—one is a title, and one a name.

Names in Bible times had a meaning, and were intended to tell something about the character of the persons who bore them, and any name of God is intended to teach us something about Him. Now, God at three different periods revealed Himself by three different names.

In the time of the Patriarchs He was known by the name "The Almighty One" (Exodus vi. 3), His Name of Power.

In the time of the Jewish Church, by the name "I Am" (Exodus iii. 14), His Name of Eternity.

In the Christian Church, by the name "JESUS" (St. Matthew i. 21), His Name of Love.

JESUS means Saviour. He shall save His people from their sins. Notice carefully "from their *sins*"—not merely from hell, nor from punishment; and observe, also, "*from*" not "*in*" their sins. Salvation *from* sin is the only salvation worthy of being so called. Now bring this truth home to your heart and life. Do you believe in—will you live by—the truth that Jesus can and will save you from your sins? Then surely you will not let sin, let any sin, get the mastery over you (Romans vi. 12). It will be quite your own fault if you do, for there is One ready to save you from it. Surely you will not be afraid to think that you can live a good life. You will not give up watchfulness and prayer, and drop into a careless, godless way of living. You can be saved from your sins.

The Church orders special reverence to be shown to the Holy Name of JESUS. It is a very ancient custom to bow the head at that Holy Name, and it is well to follow such ancient and pious practices. It is a direction of the Church on her own authority. Philippians ii. 10 is sometimes quoted as though commanding this to be done; but that text refers to something quite different, viz.: to our offering our worship and prayers in the name of Christ. But "the Church has power to decree rites and ceremonies," and "whosoever through his private judgment doth openly break the tradition and ceremonies of the Church ought to be rebuked openly" (Articles xx. and xxxiv.).

We can easily see why the Church has marked out this name for special reverence rather than any other title of our Blessed Lord. It is the name of His Humility—the name given to Him when He lay a weak infant in Mary's arms, and therefore the name by which we should delight specially to honor Him. Do not neglect the pious custom of bowing the head at the sacred Name whenever it occurs : in public worship, and do not let this be a mere form ; see that your heart ever bows in lowly submission to His Holy Will.

“Christ”—*Anointed* to be our Prophet, to teach us ; our Priest, to make atonement ; our King, to rule us. Believe and live by the truth that He is to teach, to atone for, to rule you. Learn how He does so. Think well, pray well, over each truth here.

You will remember that the Nicene Creed speaks also of the work of the Son in creation : “By whom all things were made.” The following texts explain that : Colossians i. 16 ; Hebrews i. 2 ; St. John i. 1-3 ; compared with Genesis i. 3, 6, etc., and Psalm xxxiii. 6.

---

## CHAPTER V.

### THE CREED—(*Continued*).

To-day we begin with the third article :

“*Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary.*”

By these words we assert our belief that the Eternal Son of God took Manhood—"Was made man."

Does Holy Scripture tell us of any reasons why God was made man?

It tells us of at least three.

Look first at 2 St. Peter i. 4. You will see there that it is God's will that we should be "partakers of the Divine Nature." Think well of all the meaning and import of these words—to take part in, share in, have something in common with, the Nature of God. That we may do this, He took upon Himself our nature. God became partaker of human nature, that man might become partaker of the Divine Nature. That is the first reason for the Incarnation that we will think of.

Before referring to a second reason given, I must ask you to think for a moment of man's position in relation to the whole creation of God. That while creation may be divided into two parts—spiritual and material—man alone fully partakes of both. He has a spiritual part; he has a material part. Touching both, he joins them together; just as a bridge which by touching both sides of a river joins them together, or as Jacob's ladder which touching joined Heaven and Earth. Therefore, it is plain that God by taking man's nature would join to Himself, we might almost say join Himself to, the whole creation. Had He taken on Himself the nature of Angels, He would have come directly into contact only with the Spiritual World; but "He took not on Him the Nature of Angels," but

that of man, thereby joining all to Himself. Now, look at Ephesians i. 10, and observe that just this, which I have tried to explain, is given as part of the Mystery of God's Will, viz.: that *in Christ*, the God-Man, there should be gathered together *in one* all things (notice particularly not *persons* only, but "all *things*"), both which are in Heaven and which are on Earth. See also Colossians i. 20, where the same truth is expressed. This union of all things in Christ is the second reason for the Incarnation.

Now we come to a third reason. You will find it spoken of in the tenth chapter of Hebrews. That in the "body prepared" for Him, He might offer a Sacrifice for Sin. In other words, that he might effect that Atonement of which the next article of the Creed speaks. But you will notice, and to this I particularly call your attention, that the first two reasons would have been equally valid, supposing sin never to have entered this world. Even if man had never fallen, it might have been that the Incarnation would have taken place. We cannot say that it certainly would have been so—that would be presumptuous; but we certainly can say that of the reasons given for the Incarnation in Holy Scripture, some very important ones are quite independent of man's having sinned; and that while the Atonement is *one* object of the Incarnation, we are by no means to think of it as the only one. We may think of the Atonement as resulting from the Incarnation, but we should not think of the Incarnation as merely a necessary preliminary to the Atonement. Were man

unfallen, it yet might have been that the Church in her Creed would have said: "I believe in Jesus Christ His only Son our Lord; Who was conceived of the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary," though "suffered, crucified, dead, and buried" would not have followed.

Under the heading of the Incarnation is the proper place to speak to you about the Sacraments generally, and they are spoken of here because THE SACRAMENTS ARE EXTENSIONS OF THE INCARNATION. I cannot help using these long words, but we must try to get at their meaning; when you understand that, you will easily remember them.

The Incarnation effected certain benefits at one time, in one place, for the human race generally. The Sacraments bring these benefits at various times, in various places, to individuals particularly. But this will be plainer if I show how it is the case in the instance of some particular Sacrament.

At Bethlehem, more than eighteen hundred years ago, the Son of God, by the power of the Holy Ghost, in the womb of the Blessed Mary, united human nature to Himself. By the Sacrament of Baptism, the Son of God, at the particular time when, in the particular place where, you were baptized, united you, individually, to Himself.

On Calvary, on the day of His death, the Son of Man gave His broken Body and His out-poured Blood for the life of the world. By the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar He gives His

Broken Body and His outpoured Blood to you individually for your life. Thus you see by these two great Sacraments benefits of the Incarnation are being continually extended, brought down from Calvary and Bethlehem here and now to us.

There are other ordinances sacramental in their nature "commonly called Sacraments." The twenty-fifth article of our Church says of them, while it tells us that inasmuch as their outward sign is not of Divine appointment, they are not to be counted as Sacraments of the Gospel; that term being confined to those directly instituted by our Lord Himself. Still these "commonly called Sacraments," when cleansed from any corruption that may have gathered round them, are ordinances of the Church ministered in and by the Church as of a sacramental nature, and they, too, extend the benefits of the Incarnation, as may be seen from the following examples.

At Pentecost the Holy Ghost was given to confirm the Church; by Confirmation the same Blessed Spirit is given to confirm each one.

"The Son of Man hath power on earth to forgive sins;" by Absolution that power is exercised here and now for the benefit of individuals.

By Holy Order individuals are commissioned and empowered to exercise that ministry which our Lord (St. Matthew xxviii. 19, 20, and St. John xx. 21, 22, 23) conferred on the Church generally.

By Holy Matrimony a mere natural union is exalted into a mystical, sacramental union, rep-

representing the union between Christ and His Church (Ephesians v. 28 to end); and grace is given by the ordinance to the two persons who desire by their united lives to show forth that mystery.

Anointing of the sick is explicitly enjoined in St. James v. 14, 15. Connected with it were a spiritual and a temporal benefit—the one ordinary, the other extraordinary—just as Confirmation in the Apostles' time had miraculous gifts connected with it. But though they have ceased, yet we continue Confirmation because of its spiritual benefit; so the cessation of the temporal benefits of anointing is no reason why its spiritual benefits should not be sought.

Besides the Sacraments being extensions of the Incarnation, there is another very important relation between the Incarnation and the Sacraments. In both we have the outward visible and the inward spiritual, while in the case of both there must be neither confounding the distinct nor dividing the united. Very really God and very really Man, and yet but one Christ. We must not deny the reality of either Godhead or Manhood. So in each Sacrament—the outward part very and real the inward very and real, and yet but one Sacrament; we must not deny the reality of either outward or inward part; if we do we shall overthrow the nature of a Sacrament.

It is hardly too much to say that when the truth and reality of the Incarnation are clearly seen and firmly grasped, then the Sacraments fall naturally into their place, and the truth



about them is without difficulty received. On the other hand, where the doctrine of the Sacraments is imperfectly apprehended and held, belief in the Incarnation is clouded and weak ; where the faith about the Sacraments is lost, that about the Incarnation soon goes too. Therefore it is that we have considered the Incarnation and the Sacraments together.

---

## CHAPTER VI.

### THE CREED—(*Continued*).

Fourth article : "*Suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried.*"

His Passion (do you understand the meaning of the word "passion" ?), Crucifixion, Death, and Burial.

These are *facts* related by the Evangelists, and it is in these facts that we express our faith. By frequent reading and hearing the Holy Gospels, let these facts be deeply engraved on mind and heart. But as we thought it well to consider not only the fact of the Incarnation, but also some reasons for it, so we may stop and ask if we can learn any reasons for these other facts. The reason commonly given is that they were for an Atonement. To atone is to *at-one*, to make at one those who were separated. It is the carrying on of the work of the Incarnation, or rather it is the removing of hindrance to that work ; as so long as sin is in man there cannot

be perfect union between him and God. The Atonement is one of the deep mysteries of God. I do not pretend to be able to explain it to you. There are in it depths that our thoughts cannot fathom, heights which our minds cannot ascend, though the Spirit of Understanding will make plain to us all that we need know for our salvation.

Let me warn you against one glaring error regarding it, and give one or two suggestions to show in what direction its truths run.

First, then, men think that God the Father, in His anger and justice, was determined to punish and destroy men, until God the Son, in His gentle ways and mercy, came to suffer instead of them. There are half truths in that statement, but they are more misleading than some whole errors. Such a way of thinking really sets up two gods, besides being directly opposed to the teaching of the Holy Scripture, which says: "God so LOVED the world" (not was so angry with it) "that He gave His only begotten Son," etc.; and again, "In this God commendeth His *love* to us, in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us." Ever, then, remember that the Atonement comes from the *love* of God—Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

But now, why if God so loved the world was this suffering, this great death, needed to redeem it? Not yet, while we see only through a glass darkly, can that question be fully answered. But we can see enough to show us here the working of a great law which works everywhere in God's world.

Think a little. Are there not consequences of wrong-doing that no depth of repentance, no reformation however complete, can undo? A child is told not to go near the fire. He disobeys and is burnt. No agony of repentance for his disobedience will put out the flames; no keeping away from fire for all his after-life will get rid of any irremovable scar he may bear. The dissolute man wastes time, money, health on his sins. At last he repents, really and truly, and reforms; but his time is irretrievably lost, his money gone, his health shattered; repentance will not undo all this. Here, then, is our first point. Disobedience (we see it in every-day life) brings consequences which the disobedient one, however penitent, cannot remedy. But now, see another equally evident fact. One man may, by suffering and sacrifice, help another—sometimes can only so help. While the disobedient child is in flames, one may come, and at the cost of his own suffering extinguish the flames. One may, by the sacrifice of his own means, make up to the prodigal what he has squandered. There have been those who have laid down their lives for others. Here, then, we see that consequences which the penitent himself cannot remedy may be remedied by another's sacrifice.

These two principles—the abiding consequences of sin, and the power of sacrifice—should always be in our minds when we think of the Atonement. They do not explain it, but they help us to see in what direction the explanation lies.

Another exceedingly important truth I can only mention. Violation of law *must* bring consequences. What wise head of a family could allow any member of his household to violate his laws? See how the least violation of a natural law will entail often the most tremendous, sometimes even fatal, consequences. It is no slight thing to commit a sin.

This Article of the Creed should have a most powerful effect upon us. Dwell in thought upon it. All that suffering, that cruel death, for love of me, and of such as I! How precious must my soul be! Shall I throw away for some sinful pleasure, or because I am too lazy to arouse me to an earnest Christian life, what He redeemed at so dear a price? Let me love Him who first loved me, and take Him for Master, Guide, and Lord.

The fifth article: "*He descended into Hell, the third day He rose again from the dead.*"

Dead—that word speaks of the separation of the body and the soul. Buried—tells of the body going to the grave. Descended into hell—speaks of the soul in the place of departed spirits.

Of course, "Hell" does not here mean the place of eternal punishment; the word for that is Gehenna; the word for this is Hades—the place of departed spirits where they wait until the resurrection. The soul of our Blessed Lord did not ascend into Heaven until after His resurrection; nor are we to expect that the disciple shall be greater than his Master. You will sometimes hear people say, "He was a good

man, he has died, and gone to heaven." You see that this is a wrong way of speaking. We must follow in our Blessed Lord's steps. Ascension-Day does not come until after Easter. "He has gone to be with Christ, to be at rest;" that is a perfectly correct way to speak. For our Blessed Lord said to the penitent thief, "To-day shalt thou be *with Me in Paradise*," and the idea of Paradise is that of peace and rest; and so St. Paul, "To depart and *be with Christ*." But Hades includes more than Paradise, and this brings us to our next point.

Do we know anything of what our Blessed Lord did in Hades? Was He elsewhere than in its Paradise? Yes, He was in its prison, too. See 1 St. Peter iii. 18, 19, 20, and notice particularly that the Church has appointed this particular passage as the Epistle for Easter-Eve. The latter part of verse 18 is not very clearly translated. It means that our Lord's body was dead and in the grave, but that His spirit or soul being alive by it, "He went and preached to spirits in prison," the spirits of those once disobedient, but to whom now the Gospel came. In the following chapter, verse 6, St. Peter speaks of the Gospel (the good news, the glad tidings) being preached to the dead. Hades, then, and its prison, but the souls there detained are not hopeless, for, as St. Peter tells us, the Gospel can be preached to them. They are, though prisoners in a pit where there is no water, yet prisoners of hope (see Zech. ix. 11, 12).

The latter part of this Article speaks of Christ's Resurrection—a truth of the utmost

importance; but, at the same time, so well known that it need not be dwelt on. It is the very foundation of our belief in Christ. It was *the great truth*, the preaching of which won the old world to the Christian faith; the belief in which changed the Apostles from a timid, frightened group into a band of heroes, each one bold as a lion. Should anyone profess himself unable to believe so great a miracle, he would then find himself confronted with a still greater miracle—that of the growth and expansion of the Church, the courage and perseverance of the martyr, the revolution which Christianity made in the world, and is daily making in the lives of converted persons. That all this came from believing a truth is intelligible; that it came and comes from believing a lie brings such utter confusion into the whole moral world that it is far harder to believe than to believe that one rose from the dead.

When we come to the "Resurrection of the Dead," I will speak of our own resurrection. Meanwhile, read and think well over the Gospel accounts of the Resurrection.

---

## CHAPTER VII.

### THE CREED—(Continued).

The sixth article of the Creed: "*He ascended into Heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty.*"

The fact of the Ascension having taken place is stated by St. Mark and St. Luke. Of these, St. Luke alone, in the Acts, gives any particulars of the event.

Forty days passed between the Resurrection and the Ascension. You must have noticed a difference in our Blessed Lord's presence with His disciples before and after His Death and Resurrection. During His ministry He was most of His time with them, and that in the ordinary way of human life. But after the Resurrection He was mostly *not* with them; He came to them only occasionally (we read in the New Testament of only ten appearances), and when He did come it was generally as an apparition, appearing before them "when the doors were shut," not at first recognized by those who had known Him so well, and then "vanishing" from their sight. He had entered into the order of another world. He, with His spiritual resurrection body, was living the supernatural resurrection life; but still appearing, from time to time, within the sphere of this our present life, and bringing Himself within the range of the senses of mortal men. But at last there came a day when He "was parted from them" for the last time, disappearing altogether from the range of our outward senses. Never since has He been seen by the natural eye on earth; or, to use the words of the Creed, "He ascended into Heaven."

Why did He ascend?

For various reasons. I will touch upon some of them.

First, to continue one most important part of His work as a Priest.

Look at Leviticus xvi. The High-Priest there is a type of Christ. Verse 4 shows us the High-Priest not in the splendid dress of his proper office, but in the meaner garments of the lower priests—a type of the Humiliation of the Incarnation.

The High-Priest offered first for his own sins (verse 6). This Christ needed not to do (Heb. vii. 27).

Then the High-Priest offered for the people. Remember that to "offer a sacrifice" means at least two distinct, though connected, acts. (1) To slay the victim. (2) To offer before God the victim slain. The first of these the High-Priest did without the veil, in the presence of the people. Then, with the blood of the victim, and with incense (the symbol in Scripture of intercessory prayer), he went behind the veil, out of sight of the people, bearing their names upon his heart. But in a few minutes he came back again; it was all over for that year. And next year, and year after year, the same sacrifices were repeated, and thereby their imperfection shown (Heb. ix. 25, 26, and x. 1-4).

But at last there came a Priest after the order of Melchisedec, made after "the power of an endless life;" one who was "Himself the victim and Himself the Priest." On Calvary, as it were, without the veil, in the sight of the people, the victim is slain once for all. Then on Ascension-Day He passes into the Holy of



Holies, behind the veil, out of the sight of the people, there, with our names upon His Heart, to "appear" for us with the incense of His intercession and with the Atoning Blood. He is "a Priest upon His throne" (Zech. vi. 13). There He now is, interceding, exercising the functions of His everlasting Priesthood.

He is a Priest; so He offers and presents the sacrifice, once slain but *perpetually* offered.

He is a Prophet; so the great Teacher of the Church.

He is a King; and so the Ruler of His people.

But there are still other reasons why our Lord ascended into Heaven. "I go to prepare a place for you." These are very mysterious words. We can understand that we need to be prepared for Heaven, but why should Heaven be prepared for us? There are depths of love in the purposes of God that we cannot fathom, but can only hope and wait until their meaning is revealed (Heb. ix. 23).

Another point. Clearly understand that our hope of entering Heaven is grounded solely on our being part of Him—members of His body. No one of us, alone by himself, can nor ever could enter Heaven. Where the Head is there must the members be. "Where I am there ye shall be also." So His ascending into Heaven is the pledge and also the means of our ascending there too.

Also, He went that we may have always before the throne One who can wholly sympathize with us, and so that we may come boldly to the

Throne of Grace, and obtain mercy (for the past) and grace (for the future) to help in time of need.

Think of these great things; you have felt temptation, everyone of you. He, too, has felt it, and thoroughly sympathizes with you. Then what an unspeakably great gift life forever in Heaven is! If you went home to-night and heard that someone had given you a great fortune, you would think much of it. But God promises you a happy, blessed life in Heaven. And remember that there are souls that have lost Heaven because they would not give up the pleasures of sin, and were too lazy to serve God and use the grace He had given them.

The seventh article: "*From thence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead.*"

There are many passages of Scripture which speak about our Lord's coming to Judgment; at your leisure refer to some of them and read them.

One or two points I would impress upon you.

In Holy Scripture the office of *judging* is connected with that of *saving*. All through the Book of Judges, the Judge first judges, condemns, reproveth, moves to repentance, and then saves. Connect with this those beautiful words in the *Te Deum*: "We believe that Thou shalt come to be our Judge; we therefore pray Thee, *help thy servants.*" Help us because Thou art our Judge.

We are too prone to judge others; remember.

if you assume the right to judge, you acknowledge the duty of doing what you can to save those whom you judge. While on this subject we may think for a moment of that matter of judging others.

Distinguish carefully between judging *actions* and judging *character*. The former is generally quite within our power; the latter not so at all, or at most in a very imperfect way.

For instance, I see one stealing; I am certain the act is a wrong one; but what degree of guilt it implies in the person stealing depends upon his education, natural disposition, particular temptation and circumstances, making a complicated question, quite beyond man's knowledge, and so beyond his power to solve.

Now, at the day of Judgment character will be judged; it will be finally decided what the man himself *is*, and resulting from that, what his place must necessarily be. This shows how unmeaning is the objection sometimes made, that God cannot justly punish a few acts of this short life by Hell, or reward them by Heaven. Of course not; a soul will not be sent to Hell merely because some thousands of years before the day of Judgment it did some wrong deeds; or be sent to Heaven because long ago it did a few good ones. It will be sent away from God because it *is* evil; brought to His presence because it *is* holy and good. True, we must remember that a soul becomes what it *is* by what it *does*, and so in this sense deeds are judged. Single acts often repeated form habits; habits continued form character. Here in this world

much is done ; the deeds "done in the body" give the direction, the *set*, so to speak, of the soul ; then after death, the formation of the character by repeated acts and continued habits may continue, until at last all is done, and it stands before the Throne, that it may be judged and sent to "its own place."

There is much told us about Judgment in St. Matt. xxv. You will there find two parables about Judgment and a description of the last day. It is well worth noticing the gradation in the sentences. The unready virgins are shut out from the feast ; the slothful servant loses his one talent, and is cast out into the outer darkness, where are weeping and gnashing of teeth ; and only those who did not the work of charity are bidden depart into the eternal fire.

So you will see also that in the three cases the rewards are different. It is important to remember that neither punishment nor rewards are all the same.

Death, Judgment, Hell, Heaven, these are the four last things. In the thought of these, of what infinite importance does our life here become ! How we must watch against sin ! How we must try, through God's grace, to form good habits, shun bad actions, and break bad habits !

Let the thought of the Judgment be often with you, restraining, encouraging.

## CHAPTER VIII.

THE CREED—(*Continued*).

The eighth article of the Creed : “ *I believe in the Holy Ghost.* ”

The term “ Holy ” is applied to the Blessed Spirit because it is His special work to make Holy—“ He sanctifieth me and all the elect people of God,” the Catechism says.

St. Matt. xxviii. 19 ; 2 Corinthians xiii. 14 speak of the Holy Ghost, together with the Father and the Son. Acts v. verse 3 compared with verse 4, and 1 Cor. iii. 16 compared with vi. 19, refer to Him as being a Divine Person. The Holy Ghost is God, the Athanasian Creed says. 1 Cor. ii. 11 speaks of the Spirit of God as bearing the same relation to God that the spirit of man does to man. Therefore, if the latter is human the former is divine. At Pentecost, fire and a mighty wind were His symbols. The fire, with its light and heat, being a symbol of knowledge and love—the wind, with its strength, a symbol of power. At our Blessed Lord’s Baptism His symbol was the dove—purity and gentleness.

It is His special work to *unite*. He has already been mentioned in the Creed as effecting the Incarnation (see St. Luke i. 35), *uniting* the divine and human nature in the Person of Christ. So it is His power that makes the Sacraments to be “ effectual signs,” *uniting* their

inward part and outward part. A well-known hymn (208 A. and M.) suggests this uniting power as having scope in the mystery of the divine nature :

“As Thou in bond of love *dost join*  
The Father and the Son.”

As the sanctification of the elect is His special work, a few words on “election” will here be in place.

St. Paul most decidedly teaches predestination and election. You will find this in the Epistles to the Romans and Ephesians, as well as elsewhere. God chooses some to higher spiritual knowledge and privileges than others, places them in His Church. But while you may well believe in the doctrine of election, get out of your mind (if it was ever in it) the thought that your election was only in order that your soul alone might be saved—a most selfish, unworthy thought—a thought that will bring you perilously near to the threat that, whosoever wills to save his life shall lose it. To see what the purpose of election really is, let us take one of its earliest instances, that of Abraham (see Genesis xii. 2 and 3). Particularly notice two reasons there given for his election. One, “I will bless thee,” but that is not the only one; there is another equally important—“Thou shalt be a blessing.” So God chooses His elect to be a blessing to those who are not the elect. We can believe in election without believing in reprobation. God’s loving mercies are over all His works; surely, under that head the souls of

men are included. But He elects some first, that He may bless them, so that then they may be a blessing.

Sanctification, or making holy, means a work effected in the will of man, by which it is made to will that which God wills, and to hate that which He hates. It implies the growth of all Christian graces, the bringing forth all the fruits of the Spirit. It is a gradual work—begun here, continued and completed hereafter. And we must be satisfied with aiming at no low standard; “perfecting holiness in the fear of the Lord” are the words we read. And do not let the thought that it is gradual and uncompleted here be made an excuse for sin or lack of holiness. There is a height of holiness to which God wills you to reach here. He knows it; you do not know it; but this much you do know, that if you are less watchful, less earnest in prayer, less diligent in seeking grace and in striving to do God’s will, than you might be, you will not reach here that degree of holiness to which you might attain—and so will run the risk of having that taken from you which you seemed to have.

The ninth article: “*The Holy Catholic Church, the Communion of Saints.*” Having expressed our belief in the “One Spirit,” we then express our belief in the “One Body” (Eph. iv. 4). As the soul or spirit of man acts in and by the body in which it dwells, so the Spirit of Christ acts in and by the Body of Christ; which Body is made up of all who

have been baptized and who have not been cut off from that Body.

God has shown us that it is His will to save each man, not separately from others, but placed in a community, in a body, and so in a "state of salvation." And when God calls upon us to work, it is that we should work not alone, but as members of a society. But this society is not a mere human association, such as Free Masons, Odd Fellows, or Temperance Societies, which decide their own terms of membership and modes of admission; but it is a Divine Society, its founder being our Blessed Lord—conditions and mode of admission, terms of membership, duties of members, being determined by Him and unalterable by us. It is called the Kingdom of Heaven, the Church of God.

There are four "notes," or characteristic marks, of the Church; they are to be found in the Apostles' and the Nicene Creeds.

She is

One,  
Holy,  
Catholic,  
Apostolic.

We will consider them in reverse order.

**APOSTOLIC.** Teaching the same faith as the Apostles taught, without adding to it or taking from it. True, from time to time the faith of the Church may need to be more clearly expressed, more accurately defined, and evidently this would be the more necessary at the beginning of her history. But this must not be done so as to add anything new. The Church may



hold a truth implicitly, and when it is called in question or denied she may state it explicitly. But she could not allow an important truth to be disputed and denied for hundreds of years, and then make it necessary to be believed. For instance, for a considerable time the Divinity of our Blessed Lord was not expressly asserted in the Creed. But as soon as Arius denied it the Council of Nicæa put it into a Creed expressing clearly and accurately by definition what her faith had always been. We cannot imagine the Church allowing the question to remain unsettled for five hundred years after it had been disputed. We cannot conceive that she could allow schools of theology, unblamed, to deny that truth; allow hundreds of her children to assert in direct terms that they did not believe it, and yet acknowledge them as faithful members; then, at last, define it as a truth, and make thousands of her members add a new article to their creed. Yet this is just what the Roman Catholic Church has done about the infallibility of the Pope. For long it was never heard of. Some hundreds of years ago disputes about it began. Schools of Theology, whole Religious Orders, most positively denied it; approved authors contradicted it; for centuries it was an open question. But a few years ago belief in it was inflicted upon the whole Roman Church, and men in that communion found that they must either add to their creed or cease to be members of that branch of the Church. This surely is not to have an Apostolic Faith.

On the other hand, to take away anything

from the faith once delivered is as bad, or even worse.

But Apostolic means also having an Apostolic Ministry. Our blessed Lord Himself is the source of all the power, authority, and duties of the Church and its ministry. This authority He conveyed to His Church in its fulness, when, breathing on the disciples, He said, "As my Father hath sent me even so send I you" (St. John xx. 21). The ministerial functions thus conveyed were either originally given to the Apostles alone, or at once devolved upon them. Now, this authority and power evidently was conferred upon the Church to continue with her as long as she had work on earth to do, and it must be handed on by those who held the offices and performed the duties. Plainly the Apostles could have handed it on to one order alone, or to two, or to any number. What we believe they did—acting either according to our Lord's own teaching during the forty days, or by the guidance of the Holy Spirit—was to hand all their powers to one order, the greater part of them to a second, a much smaller portion to a third. This is what our Prayer Book means when it says, "It is evident unto all men diligently reading the Holy Scriptures and ancient authors, that there have been three orders of ministers in Christ's Church—Bishops, Priests, and Deacons."

Remember that in the New Testament, wherever Bishops are spoken of, the second *order* is meant. Bishops and Presbyters are, in the New Testament, the one order. The first

order was the Apostles. Timothy and Titus were of this first order. It will be plain to you if you read at all carefully the letters which St. Paul wrote to these two men, that their duties were quite similar to those now performed by Bishops.

Look at Philippians i. 1. There you have mentioned the three orders and the laity. "Paul and Timotheus" (of the first order) "to the Saints" (the people, *i.e.*, the laity), "with the Bishops" (the second order) "and Deacons" (the third order).

In the Apostles' times the functions of the ministry were divided among three orders, three namely :

- (1) Apostles.
- (2) Bishops, or Presbyters.
- (3) Deacons.

The division of the functions is still the same, the number of the orders is the same, and the appropriation of duties to the three orders is the same ; but the names given to the first two orders somewhat differ being now

- (1) Bishops.
- (2) Presbyters.
- (3) Deacons.

The members of the first order, now as then, have received from their predecessors, and reserve to themselves and for their successors, the powers of ordaining and of exercising chief rule. They confer upon the second the power of ministering the Sacraments, of absolving and blessing in God's Name, of teaching and of advising about, and joining in, the rul-

ing of the Church. They admit the third to Holy Orders, but confer no power beyond what a duly licensed layman might exercise, except that of assisting in the administration of Holy Communion.

It is well to understand that we have little, if any, difference with "the denominations" about their Ministry and Ordinances. These are valid for all that is claimed for them.

They profess not to have Apostolic Succession. We quite agree with them upon this point.

They assert that their ministers are not priests, have no sacerdotal power or authority. To this assertion we unhesitatingly assent.

They state that they administer an ordinance in which the Body and Blood of Christ are not really present, are not verily and indeed given, taken, and received; but that it is merely a mode of recalling to their own minds Our Lord's death. This statement is quite unobjectionable.

They say that their ministers are teachers of religion, duly appointed and authorized by a voluntary society. They certainly are this.

About Baptism we somewhat differ from them, attributing to that Sacrament, administered by them, a greater effect than their own faith ventures to hope for. Administered with water, in the Name of the Holy Trinity, we believe it to regenerate the soul that duly receives it, and to graft it into the Body of Christ's Church.

So we admit their ministry to be all that they

claim it to be ; their ordinances in one case more, in no case less, than they themselves believe.

The Church is called "CATHOLIC," *i.e.*, Universal. It is by this title contrasted with the Jewish Church, which was for one country and one people. The Catholic Church is for all the world (St. Matthew xxviii. 19, and St. Mark xvi. 15).

It is called "HOLY" because its Head is holy, and all its members are called to holiness. It is sanctified by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

It is called "ONE." As there is but one Spirit, so there is (indeed, can be) but "one body" (Ephesians iv. 4). All the elect are grafted into the one vine, are members of the Body of the One Christ. And Christ is not divided. The outward unity of the Church is unhappily broken, and those who really are one in Christ yet in many ways keep apart from each other. Earnestly should we pray, and do all that in us lies, that the unity of Christ's Church may be outwardly manifested, even as it is inwardly really existing.

"*The Communion of Saints*" is part of the same Article. In New Testament language all Christians are Saints. See the opening of several of St. Paul's epistles ; and observe, also, from what follows in those same epistles, that those Christians, though "Saints," had need of much reproof and warning.

The Church of Christ is a "body," so each

member has its duties toward the whole ; each receives benefits from all the others. And this body is composed of very many parts—to use another Scriptural image, this loaf is made up of very many grains. Try to realize the idea of the whole Church. Think of all the elect now living on earth, and the far larger number who have departed, making up one Body. We share in, we are benefited by, every good work that has been done, every good word that has been spoken. We do suffer, and have suffered loss, from whatever evil has been said or done. And, too, every good work that you through God's grace can do, every good word that you can speak, blesses and benefits the whole Body of Christ. This reminds you of what I have already said, that you have not been given a place in God's Church merely to save your own soul. Remember this, and do not be a useless member of the Body. Take your share, first by true inward holiness, and then by active work. Do not be a drone in your own parish or congregation. Try to make yourself useful.

The Communion of Saints implies, among other things, mutual intercession. The Lord's Prayer is "our" and "us" all through ; the word "I" or "me" does not once occur in it. And when we pray, we pray for all, Christ's whole Church, the living as well as the departed. And so the living and the departed pray for us. But though this is so, the Church of England practically discountenances our asking the departed to pray for us ; for we do not *know* that they can hear any requests that we may address to

them. It is safer to make all our addresses to the unseen world, to God alone. Still we may think that the faithful departed join their prayers to ours in that Communion of Saints which death has no power to sever.

---

## CHAPTER IX.

### THE CREED—(*Continued*).

The tenth article : "*The Forgiveness of Sins.*" This article naturally follows the one before it, for it refers to the forgiveness of sins in the Church of Christ. There are and have been millions of heathen who were not elected to be brought, on earth, into the Church of Christ. How it may please God to offer them forgiveness of sins, is a question we do not here consider. We have to do with what practically concerns ourselves; our subject is God's way of dealing with us Christians.

There *must* be repentance before there *can* be forgiveness. But the subject of repentance will come before us a little later.

God's willingness to forgive us when penitent is shown in the parable of the Prodigal Son.

In Holy Scripture remission of sins is connected with Baptism (Acts ii. 38; xxii. 16.); and so in the Nicene Creed we say, "I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins." One coming to Holy Baptism with genuine faith and repentance is washed from the guilt of all sin, actual and original. But, of course, this for-

giveness applies only to sin before Baptism, and there are sins too many, alas! after Baptism, which also need forgiveness.

Look at the 16th of the 39 Articles. It refers to an almost forgotten controversy; but it is worth thinking of, because it shows us how strong a feeling once existed in the Church about the seriousness of a baptized Christian sinning. And now let us see what provision there is for the forgiveness of "deadly sin," after Baptism, willingly committed; that is, let us see what Holy Scripture and our Church say about Absolution.

We may start with the acknowledged truth that God in Heaven can forgive sins. Now look at St. Mark ii. 1-12. Our Lord worked this miracle to prove a new truth, viz., that not only God in Heaven, but also the Son of Man on earth, has power to forgive sins. It is on this account that we find a favorite quotation of some persons—"Who can forgive sins but God alone?" which they quote as though it were an inspired truth; but we see that it was the language of blind, unbelieving, fault-finding Scribes and Pharisees, who were in these words accusing our Lord of blasphemy for having said, "Thy sins are forgiven thee." Of course there is a sense in which it is perfectly true that God alone can forgive sins, but this is a very unhappy quotation to prove it.

○ This miracle, then, takes us our first step. It proves that the Son of Man, our Lord Himself, could on earth forgive sins, but it proves noth-



ing more than this. If we have nothing else beyond this, we should have no right to assume that anyone else had that power.

But now turn to St. John xx. 21, 22, 23. These words are as clear and explicit as words can be. If it is true that our Lord spoke these words to His disciples, then the objection that no man could have power to remit sins cannot stand for a moment. Certainly there once were at least ten men to whom that power was intrusted. Now, is it at all likely that this power was personal to the original Apostles, and so to be exercised only upon the very small number of Christians with whom the Apostles themselves came personally in contact? In other words, that this most solemn commission was given to last only for some thirty or forty years, and even then to be used only for those whom the Apostles themselves actually and literally visited, saw, and spoke to! It must surely be a power conveyed to the Church for all times.

But although this is self-evident, we are not left to deduction alone. In St. Matt. xxviii. 19, 20, the commission is given to baptize and teach all nations, ending with the words, "so I am with you always *even unto the end of the world.*" Clearly, then, that authority given to the Church was to continue to the end of the dispensation. It makes no difference in the force of this argument whether we consider the commission (St. John xx. and St. Matt. xxviii.) as given to the Apostles alone or to the whole body of the Church. If to the former, it must be exercised by their successors; if to the latter, as soon as

ever the Church became an organized body it must have exercised its functions by its officers or ministers. Indeed, it is well to bear in mind that the Clergy are ministers of the Church, as well as ministers of Christ.

Therefore we see that that commission was not confined to those who were in the upper room on the first Easter-Day, or to the band of disciples with our Lord before His Ascension. And so we see that the Corinthian Church, which certainly came into existence after the Ascension, exercised this power; and St. Paul (an Apostle, though called by our Lord after His Ascension, and one not a whit behind the very chiefest Apostle), confirmed, their sentence (2 Cor. ii 10). Observe, too, that this was done by him "in the person of Christ."

So, then, as to the forgiveness of sins we see:

(1) That the Son of Man had power on earth to forgive sins.

(2) That He conveyed this same power to His Church.

(3) To be continued to the end of the dispensation.

(4) And instances of its exercise are found in the New Testament.

Now, then, having seen the teaching of the Bible, let us look at what our Church teaches on this same point.

Her teaching and practice are as clear as the day.

Turn to the office for the Ordination of Priests and see with what words she commissions her priests: "Receive the Holy Ghost for the office

and work of a priest in the Church of God, now committed to thee by the imposition of our hands. Whose sins thou dost forgive they are forgiven, and whose sins thou dost retain they are retained. And be thou a faithful dispenser of the Word of God, and of his Holy Sacraments; in the Name," etc. Can there be a shadow of doubt whether our Church does or does not profess to confer that power?

Then three times the Church provides for the exercise of this power.

In the Absolution at matins and evensong, and at Holy Communion. These are general absolutions following after general confessions.

Then, in the office for the Visitation of the Sick you will find the following absolution to be used after a special confession (*i.e.*, confession not of sinfulness generally, but of particular sins): "Our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath left power to His Church to absolve all sinners who truly repent and believe in Him, of His great mercy forgive thee thine offences, and by His authority committed unto me, I absolve thee from all thy sins in the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost."

We saw what Holy Scripture taught about Absolution—we see that the very words used by our Lord, to his disciples the Bishops of our Church use in ordaining priests, and provide forms of words in which the authority there given is to be used.

The eleventh article : "*The Resurrection of the Body.*"

There is no necessity to make difficulties for our faith on this point, by saying that every atom, every particle, that is put into the grave must come together again to form the same body. Our bodies even here and now are in a constant state of change, and yet are the same body. Just as you stand on a river-bank on two successive days, every drop of water you see on one day will be different from what you saw on the other day, yet it will be the same river.

It is the living soul that brings together and organizes this matter which now forms the body. Death removes the soul from the range of these material things, and so the body dissolves. But at the Resurrection it will again be brought into contact with matter, and at once, according to the law of its being, will gather around itself, will organize a body suitable to its character and condition then.

A perfect man has both soul and body. Death, caused by sin, separates them and leaves the man imperfect. So long as that separation continues, so long one of the effects of sin continues. Complete redemption, full salvation, imply that the soul is again to unite a body to itself. That union will be effected at the Resurrection.

1 Corinthians xv. is the great setting forth of the Resurrection. Observe carefully the illustration the Apostle there uses, viz., the seed put into the ground ; and notice the two most important principles there set forth. Compare the green blade which springs up with the bare grain put in. That which rises is very different, much more beautiful, than that which is put into the grave. But still, what comes from the ground depends upon what has been sown. The blade of wheat can come from no grain but wheat. So the body that shall rise depends upon the body that has been buried—a most important thought. If in this life the flesh has been subdued to the spirit, joyful will be the Resurrection of the Body ; but if otherwise, if the lusts of the flesh have not been renounced, if the flesh has mastered the Spirit, what shame and contempt will there be at the Resurrection.

We find in 1 Corinthians xv. 42-44 the four distinguishing characteristics of the Resurrection body. It shall be

**INCORRUPTIBLE**—not liable to decay, disease, or death.

**GLORIOUS**—knowing no shame or dishonor. Think also of our Lord's Transfiguration Body.

**POWERFUL**—with powers of sight, hearing, and motion, far greater than now. Think of our Lord rising while the stone was still unre-moved, entering through the closed doors, appearing and disappearing.

**SPIRITUAL**—no longer "the flesh" in an evil

sense, but itself spiritual, an organ perfectly adapted to the highest and most spiritual life.

Notice that it is by union with the Resurrection Body of our Blessed Lord that we can attain to the resurrection. (See St. John vi. 40, 44, 54.)

The twelfth article : "*And the Life Everlasting.*"

Remember our Lord's definition of eternal life : "This is Life Eternal, that they might know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent" (St. John xvii. 3). Eternal Life is not something to be looked for in the future only. It begins here, is developed in Paradise, perfected in Heaven. Opposite to eternal life is death—not to know God, to be away from God ; a disease of the soul that can begin here, be developed after death, reach its fatal end in hell. It should be borne in mind, when reading the Athanasian Creed, that that Creed is simply an expansion of the idea that eternal life, salvation, is the knowledge (not, of course, mere intellectual knowledge) of God. A person being in Heaven forever, and yet not knowing the truth about God and the Incarnation, is inconceivable ; is, in fact, a contradiction in terms, and this is what the Athanasian Creed says.

Thank God, with all your heart, that He has given to His Son power over all flesh to give

Eternal Life to as man, as the Father hath given him (St. John xvii. 2). Thank God for having called you to a state of salvation ; pray that your name may not be blotted out of the book of life.

In this Faith of the Apostles you have been baptized ; to it, at your Confirmation, you will publicly assent ; by it you can live in righteousness and holiness ; only in it can you in safety and peace depart.

Use the Collect for Trinity Sunday as a prayer for steadfastness in the Faith.

---

## CHAPTER X.

### THE COMMANDMENTS.

To-day we enter upon a new subject—the Third Promise, which brings us to the Ten Commandments.

We have now come to an exceedingly important part of your preparation for Confirmation ; a part, too, in which you must do your share, or all that I can do or say will be useless. You are not merely to hear the Commandments explained, but you are to enter upon an examination of conscience, Self-examination, which is an absolutely necessary part of your preparation. I hope to help you in making it, but you must make it yourself.

If you think of what true repentance is, you will see that it consists of three parts :

- (1) Sorrow for sin—Contrition.
- (2) Confession of sin—Confession.
- (3) Intention to amend, and restitution if in our power—Satisfaction.

These three parts are spoken of in our Prayer Book in the first exhortation in the Communion Service, where we are bidden to examine ourselves by the rule of God's Commandments; and when we find ourselves to have offended, then (1) to bewail our own sinfulness, (2) to confess ourselves to Almighty God (3) with full purpose of amendment. These three parts of repentance are commonly called, as I have named them above, Contrition, Confession, and Satisfaction.

You are then, by self-examination, to find out your sins, that you may be sorry for them, confess them, and resolve to do better.

I do not want to set any unreal standard about Contrition before you. If you are really thinking seriously, you will not be able to see your sins without feeling true sorrow for having thereby offended your Father in Heaven. Sorrow for sin, not from fear of punishment alone, but from love of God, is true contrition.

Confession is absolutely necessary. Only "if we confess our sins" does He pledge His faithfulness and truth to forgive them. Whether we



shall use the ordinance of Confession, *i. e.*, confess privately to a priest, is a matter which our Church leaves each one free to decide. The Church of England and the American Church differ from the Church of Rome about private confession chiefly in this particular: that the latter makes it compulsory; the others leave it voluntary, while in some cases recommending it. Our Church speaks of it in the first exhortation in the Communion Service, where we are bidden (only if we cannot quiet our own conscience) to go to some discreet and learned minister of God's Word and open our grief. Again, in the English Prayer Book, in the Service for the Visitation of the Sick (the only one where any directions are given to a priest how to deal individually with souls to be brought to repentance): "The sick person shall be moved to make a special confession of his sins, if he feel his conscience troubled with any weighty matter." This, of course, not because he is sick, but because he is to repent.

So also in the Visitation of Prisoners, the man condemned to death is to be exhorted to a particular confession of his sin.

Understand, then, distinctly: you may repent truly without private confession, and there may be times when you will not be able to repent without it, and so may need it. Remember that whenever you wish to make a confession, you have a right to ask any priest of your Church to hear it, just as much as to ask him to visit you when sick. Let there be no mystery or fuss about the matter; but if you require it,

use it simply and naturally as you would any other means of grace. The ground our Church takes is clear: It is often useful, not always necessary; the responsibility of its use rests with the individual himself.

Satisfaction, if our sin has been against our neighbor, means making restitution; *e.g.*, if one has stolen from another, he must give back what he has taken; if he has spoken untruthfully, he must take back his words. In the case of sin not so directly against our neighbor that we can make restitution to him, it implies very earnest efforts to do better. Of course, it does not in any case mean satisfaction in the same sense in which Christ by His atonement made satisfaction for our sins; that satisfaction is full, perfect, and complete.

Our Lord, in the Sermon on the Mount, showed us how we are to interpret the Commandments. We are to see from what spirit the one particular forbidden act springs, and to consider that all acts springing from that spirit are forbidden. For instance, the particular act murder, forbidden by the Sixth Commandment, springs from hate. So all hatred shown in acts springing from it is forbidden. Further, we are to understand that when a wrong act is forbidden, its opposite virtue is commanded.

Let us now consider the Commandments one by one. I will suggest the leading thoughts upon which you should examine yourselves about the past, and also the leading points on which you should resolve about the future.

Examination under the *First Commandment* must be somewhat general :

Have I thought of the Lord as my God ?

Kept Him in mind in my daily life, or often forgotten Him ?

Have I believed in Him, feared Him, loved Him, with all my heart, with all my mind, with all my soul, with all my strength ?

Have I taken the true God for my God ; that is, a loving Father who cares for me, keeps me, and will never leave sin unnoticed ? or have I One for my God whom I think of as far away—think of only with dread ?

Or do I imagine that God will not care for, will not notice, my sins ; that I and they are too unimportant for Him to care about ?

Do I worship the Holy Trinity—Father, Son, and Holy Ghost ?

The *Second Commandment* forbids that particular wrong way of worshipping God which was then most common, viz., idolatry—worshipping Him under the form of an idol. The first Commandment reminds us whom we are not and whom we are to worship ; the second how we are not and how we are to worship. Worship, then, is the subject of the second Commandment — private and public worship.

Ask yourself :

Have you been regular in saying your Morning and Evening Prayers ? Observe *Morning* as well as *Evening* prayers.

Have you, then, really remembered that you were speaking to God ? Or have you often only

spoken with your lips, while your thoughts were wandering far away?

Remember this, that your private devotions should include more than prayer, more than merely asking for something. There should be also acts of faith, of praise, and adoration. To say reverently "In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost," is an Act of Faith in the Holy Trinity; if at the same time the sign of the Cross is made, it is also an Act of Faith in the Atonement.

"Glory be to the Father," etc., is an Act of Praise. "Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Hosts," etc., is an Act of Adoration. These common forms are often useful and helpful. It is not necessary that just these words should be used, but in some such way take care that your "prayer" includes worship. I shall speak of worship again when we come to consider the Holy Communion.

Examine yourself also about public worship.

Do you go to Church with the purpose of *worshipping* God?

Do you join in the service with both heart and voice? Or have you wilfully allowed your thoughts to wander, or been too careless or too lazy to make the responses in the service?

Bear in mind that united *worship* is the most important reason for our assembling together. We could read our Bibles or sermons at home, an excuse that people sometimes make for not going to Church, thereby showing themselves ignoring the purpose of the "assembling of ourselves together." To preach the Gospel is a

very important part of the duty of the Ministry, to hear the Gospel preached is a duty of Christians, and when they meet for worship is a very suitable and convenient time for preaching. But WORSHIP is the main object of our meeting.

Do not be discouraged if you find much trouble from wandering thoughts—you will find them a great difficulty. But strive patiently against them, and though perhaps not at once, yet at last you will conquer them.

About the *Third Commandment* we have the advantage of our Blessed Lord's own explanation (St. Matt. v. 33-37). Literally it forbids perjury—swearing to what is false. Our Lord goes to the root of the matter, saying in effect: Let there be no room for oaths, when you say "yes" always mean "yes," and nothing else; and let your practice and your character be such that nobody can want a stronger proof that you mean "no" than the fact of your having said "no."

Here, then, examine yourself alone truthfully:

Have I told lies?

If so, when? to whom? why?

What is the last lie I told?

Can I remember the first I ever told?

Is there any subject about which there is any time when I am most likely to tell a lie?

Have I ever gained anything by telling a lie?

If so, have I made restitution, or am I ready to do so?

Do not be too easy with yourself under this head, but include all cases of equivocations and deceit of any kind.

But this Commandment goes further. To call upon God to witness a lie is irreverence ; therefore you must question yourself about sins of irreverence.

Have I used the Holy Name of God lightly, carelessly, irreverently, and profanely ? And observe how our Blessed Lord extends the objects of reverence : The earth is God's footstool ; Heaven is His Throne ; your own head (much less your own soul) is not in your own power, but in God's Hand. How careless, then, how irreverent, how wicked, to speak in anger or in pure thoughtlessness about God, Heaven, Hell, damnation, your own soul, another's soul—subjects that an angel might tremble to speak of—yet how often lightly spoken of by fools !

Examine yourself carefully about cursing, swearing, or profane language of any kind.

Then be careful not to ridicule sacred things. So to do is to be irreverent. Jests the point of which turns on some absurd use of or reference to Holy Scriptures are wrong. They are generally stupid, are always irreverent. You cannot always help hearing, but never repeat, them.

Think also about irreverence in Church—talking or laughing before, during, or after service. Ask yourself whether you have ever been careless in any of these ways. A Church is not like a concert-room, where you may talk and laugh until the performance begins. I hope that you are careful when you go to Church, as soon as you get to your place, to kneel down, worship God, and ask Him to strengthen you for the service in which you are to engage.

Now, between this time and the next class carefully examine your conscience about these three Commandments. Where you see that you have broken them, confess the sins to God with sorrow for the past and good resolutions for the future ; where you can honestly say that you have been kept from any sin, thank God and strive to keep innocency.

---

## CHAPTER XI.

### THE COMMANDMENTS—(*Continued*).

*The Fourth Commandment.*—This Commandment affords us an excellent example of the exercise by the Church of the power of binding and loosing which our Lord gave (St. Matt. xvi. 19, and xviii. 18). This power of binding and loosing must be distinguished from that of remitting and retaining sins, to which we have already referred. The former has for its subject *laws* ; the latter, *persons*.

The letter of this Commandment enjoins us to keep holy the Sabbath, *i.e.*, the seventh day, called by us Saturday. From this the Church has loosed us, and no one now thinks of keeping it holy ; though in the early days of the Church the day was regarded with some special observance.

As Bishop Jeremy Taylor says :

“ But while loosing us from this, the Church has bound us to keep holy the first day—the

Lord's Day, the Sunday—and that law is accordingly of Divine obligation.”

We can see here, also, the limit of the dispensing power of the Church, for though no limits are expressed, a reasonable interpretation must be given to the words. The Church could not dispense even from the obligation of worship altogether, any more than she could dispense with the law against murder or theft. But the particular days for worship are quite matter for her regulating. So also the mode of observing the day is a matter quite within the power of the Church to regulate, provided, of course, that the purpose of the day is kept in view. The general customs of the Christian community where you are living, however, have their weight with you about Lord's Day observances.

We must take care to go beyond the letter of the fourth Commandment. To rest from work is all that the letter of the law demands. So a Jew would have kept his Sabbath very well if he had remained quietly at home and had done no work. A Christian most certainly cannot duly keep the Lord's Day in that way. The same authority which tells him to keep the day, tells him also how to keep it. He must do more than rest from work ; he must give time to the *Public Worship* of Almighty God. Staying at home to “read my Bible by myself” will not do. If a man said prayers and read the Bible and sermons all day at home, that would not be attending Public Worship and joining in Common Prayer, nor be any excuse for the wilful neglect of these duties.



The Church has enjoined the observance of other days. You will find a list of them in the front of your Prayer Book. Some of them are Christmas, Ascension, All Saints', and some minor Saints' Days. There are also penitential seasons and days of fasting and abstinence—Lent, and all the Fridays in the year. The observance of all these days is not equally strict. We must take a common-sense view of things. An ordinary Saint's Day is not to be kept like a Sunday, nor every Friday like Good-Friday. However, the danger lies quite the other way. I should rather have warned you not to keep Sunday with no more strictness than most people give to an ordinary Saint's Day; nor to observe Good-Friday as most observe every Friday; and to take care to give some observance to the lesser days.

Under this Commandment you will ask:

Have I kept from unnecessary work on the Lord's Day?

Avoided making undue demands for work upon others?

Have I regularly attended Public Worship?

Have I stayed away from Church without necessity?

Have I kept away from Church on Sunday morning, going only in the evening? (Fancy a man in business or at a trade not going to his office or workshop until the evening.)

Has any recreation which I have allowed myself on Sunday interfered with due attendance at God's house?

Have I, according to my opportunities, observed the other Holy Days?

Have I practised at least abstinence in Lent and every Friday?

Have I made due use of such special opportunities of devotion and instruction as may have been given me in Advent and Lent?

You should now firmly resolve to be, through life, regular and constant at Public Worship, and not to yield to those petty, miserable excuses by which men try to quiet their consciences when they neglect this duty. When you are tempted to keep away from Public Worship, ask yourself, Would this weather, or this indisposition, keep me from business or pleasure? Answer honestly, and act rightly.

This Commandment speaks of laboring on six days, as well as of resting on one. "To serve God truly all the days of my life" is the explanation given of it in the Catechism. So the due use of all our time should be a subject for your examination and resolution. Such questions should be asked as :

Do I do my work diligently?

Do I waste time in "loafing"—that is, neither in work nor in play, but simply in lazily doing nothing?

Do I read nothing but novels?

Am I too lazy and indolent to read a useful book carefully?

*The Fifth Commandment.*—The explanation given in the Catechism of this Commandment is so full that little further need be said of it. But it is an exceedingly important one, and

you should carefully examine yourself about it. Look back over your life, and see what disobedience there has been to parents, or to any placed in authority over you. Remember, in your examination, the rule the Apostle lays down about obedience, "Not with eye-service as men-pleasers," and judge yourself by that standard. There will be much room for good resolutions for all your life to come. Remember that we are never free from authority. There will always be those to whom we shall owe obedience, even while, as time goes on, there will be those who will owe obedience to us; and we shall never be able to rule well those under us, unless we have been, and are, obedient to our own superiors. Make due submission to all lawful authority a matter of principle all through your life.

And also proper respect is to be shown to those above us. If anyone should unfortunately be such a fool as to think no one is above him, he will not be able to find anyone to respect. But I hope better things of you. I might put this duty on lower grounds: proper self-respect will always lead us to give due respect to others.

Always speak of, and to, your parents with proper respect. Do not neglect them in their old age. If they are poor, and in want, to assist them is a first claim upon you. Your duties continue to them as long as you live. Above all, never make imagined religious claims an excuse for neglecting them. (See Mark vii. 11.)

Ask yourself :

Have I disobeyed my parents? When? Why? Is there any act of disobedience of which I ought now to tell them?

Have I spoken disrespectfully to them? of them? Dwelt upon angry or disrespectful thoughts about them?

Been of as much help to them as I could? Do I resolve, as long as they live, to respect them, assist them, and, if need be, provide for them? Have I obeyed all proper authority? at home? in school?

Have I respected public authorities and laws, not breaking wilfully any of the laws of the land (Romans xiii. 1)?

*The Sixth Commandment.*—Turn to St. Matthew v. 21–26. Anger, quarrelling, hatred are the principal heads under which you will examine yourself about this Commandment. Observe our Lord's directions as to our conduct if we have been wronged or offended by a brother Christian. It is *not* if he smite thee on one cheek, turn to him the other; if he take thy coat, let him have thy cloak also. Those directions referred to the conduct of Christians toward the heathen world without. Quite different is the direction about an offending brother. You will find that in St. Matthew xviii. 15–17, and St. Luke xvii. 3–4, "If thy brother sin against thee, *rebuke him*; and if *he rep nt*, forgive him." But now see how the rebuke is to be given: "Go and tell him his fault, between thee and him alone;" and do so, not thinking chiefly of your own injury, or of

your wounded dignity, but that thou mayest  
"gain thy brother."

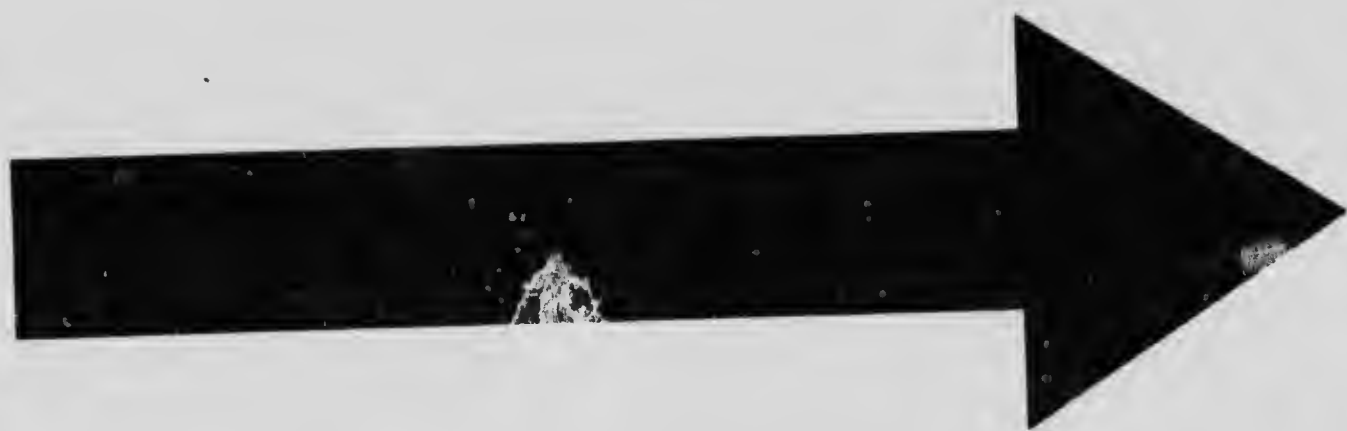
Now, if the simple rule here given were followed, how much ill-will would be prevented. Too often, if a person is offended, he says, "I will not speak to that person again." Our Lord says, "Go and speak to him about the matter." And further—often the offended one goes and tells his brother's fault to some third person, forgetting the words "between thee and him alone." Our Lord directs that speaking to others shall only be a second step when the first has failed; and further (most important), that the offending party is to be present when the offence is spoken of. So take for your rule, "If I am injured, and the injury is worth taking notice of at all, I must speak about it, first to the offender himself alone; if to others, only in his presence." The whole idea running through our Lord's directions is, that a Christian, injured by a brother, is much more troubled about his brother's sin than about his own injury; his great wish is to bring his brother to acknowledge his fault, so that he may be able to forgive him.

As to anger, the first sudden feeling may be unavoidable, but "let not the sun go down upon your wrath."

As to bearing malice, get an honest answer to these two questions: (1) Would I injure this person if I could? (2) Would I do him good if I could?

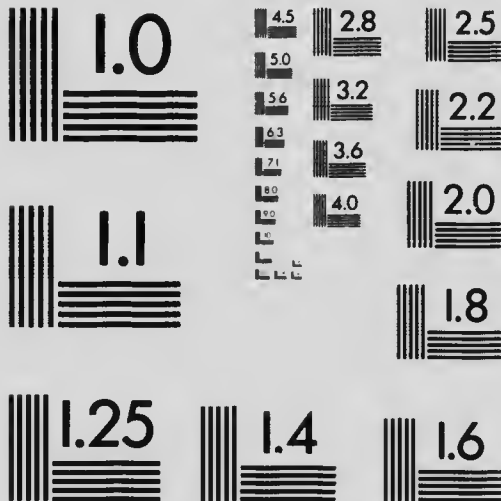
Ask yourself:

Have I been quarrelsome? spiteful? If so, when, and with whom?



# MICROCOPY RESOLUTION TEST CHART

(ANSI and ISO TEST CHART No. 2)



APPLIED IMAGE Inc

1653 East Main Street  
Rochester, New York 14609 USA  
(716) 482 - 0300 - Phone  
(716) 288 - 5989 - Fax

Am I bad friends with anyone? Is there anyone that I do not speak to? If so, make the quarrel up before you come to Confirmation.

Is there anyone I would injure if I could? Do not be too easy with yourself about this question; you may not wish to injure anyone by deed, but is there anyone about whom you have said, would again say, injurious words?

Is there anyone to whom you would not do good if you could?

Is there anyone whom in any way you have led into sin?

I have not thought it necessary to dwell upon the letter of this Commandment, but this much should be said:

To destroy, or to procure the destruction of, unborn human life is a breach of this Commandment.

---

## CHAPTER XII.

### THE COMMANDMENTS—(*Continued*).

*The Seventh Commandment.*—Literally it forbids a breach of the marriage vow. Look carefully at Ephesians v. 22 to end of chapter. You will see that the Apostle has been enforcing various relative duties; in this passage he is speaking of the duties of husband and wife, and then he goes on to illustrate and enforce those duties by the analogy of Christ and the Church. See verses 23, 24, and 25, and notice verse 31, "*For this cause shall a man leave,*" etc



For what cause? The Old Testament (Gen. ii. 23, 24) gives a reason, but that is merely a reason of the earlier dispensation, because Eve was formed from Adam; the New Testament here gives a far higher reason—because the Church is formed from Christ.

This is the key to the lofty view which Christianity takes of Holy Matrimony. It is consecrated to be a mystery (in the lower sense of the word, a sacrament) representing the union betwixt Christ and his Church. By the earthly union, as by an outward and visible sign, is represented the heavenly union, and grace is given to those seeking it, that their earthly life may be true to the heavenly ideal. Hence, when a Christian man and woman have openly and publicly declared their intention of being man and wife, the Church blesses them and prays that they may have grace to fulfil their duties.

Guard against a light, frivolous way of speaking and thinking on this subject, which, though so serious, is often made a matter for idle and foolish jesting.

No one who has entered into the scriptural idea of this subject would contract a marriage where there cannot be union in religion and religious duties. "Mixed marriages" are quite unscriptural.

Resulting from the truth that marriage represents the union betwixt Christ and His Church are two necessary consequences. Divorce—that is, such a separation as would leave both parties free to marry again—cannot be allowed to Christians, for "What God hath joined

let not man put asunder," and "He that marieth her that is put away committeth adultery." Further, a man is to consider his wife's relations as his own, and *vice versa* a woman. As a man should not marry his own mother, sister, or daughter, so he should not marry his wife's mother, sister, or daughter. It is quite clear that the one principle applies to all the wife's relations within the degree. If the relations of a man's wife are not to be counted as his own, then he may marry his wife's mother, sister, or daughter; if they are to count he may not marry any of them. It is absurd and unreasoning to say that he may marry his wife's daughter, and yet not marry her sister or mother; or to say that he may marry her sister, but not marry her mother or daughter.

The Catechism explains this commandment "to keep my body in temperance, soberness, and chastity." Marriage being so honorable, and sins against chastity being in dishonor of it, Christians are specially warned against such sins. Christians have also another strong incentive to chastity, viz., that their bodies are temples of the Holy Ghost. Read carefully the latter part of 1 Cor. vi., beginning at verse 15.

Purity must be not only of deed, but also of word and thought. See Ephes. v. 3, 4. Two kinds of unclean speaking must be guarded against (they are probably alluded to in the passage just read), viz., gross and filthy speech, and, what is equally sinful, speaking with double meaning, using, it may be, no coarse words, but intending

to suggest unclean thoughts ("foolish talking and jesting").

Guard your thoughts. If a thing is wrong to be done, it is a sin to take pleasure in the thought of doing it. When an evil thought comes into the mind, at once turn the attention to something else. Short prayers (ejaculations) to God will help you, but use other helps too. at once get away from yourself if possible, by going into some company, and joining in useful or pleasant conversation. If that cannot be, take up some interesting or amusing book, and so occupy your mind. Idleness, spending time in either laziness or in doing nothing with mind or body, is always a great danger.

God marks his displeasure against sins of this class by temporal punishment. Lifelong diseases are contracted, sometimes mind or body or both are in this world utterly ruined, by sins of uncleanness.

Ask yourself if you have been guilty of fornication? self-abuse? immodest actions of any kind with yourself or others? If you have used unclean words? or spoken with double meaning to suggest unclean thoughts? If you have allowed and taken pleasure in unclean thoughts? (1 Cor. vi. 9; Eph. v. 3, 5.)

But the Catechism speaks of temperance and soberness as well as of chastity. Temperance is a general term, and its meaning should not be confined to the one matter of drink. All bodily desires for food, for rest, for all other things necessary for the support of life and for the continuance of the human race, are given

us by God for wise purposes, and all those desires we must hold in restraint, or they will master us, and make us the meanest of slaves; they must be satisfied when, and as, and in such manner as God's law permits; either his particular commands, or the general one which bids us "whether we eat or drink, to do all to the glory of God." We should be temperate in speech, in maintaining our own opinions, in thought.

Ask yourself, Do I try to be temperate in all things? in lawful appetites? in lawful pleasures? Am I keeping the mastery over my desires? or is any one or more gaining the mastery over me?

Intemperance in the matter of drink is a sin so exceedingly common, and so terribly destructive, that something must be said about it.

*Temperance* about drink, as about everything else, is an absolutely necessary Christian duty; about it (if you want to live a Christian life) you can have no choice. *Total abstinence* from all intoxicating drink is not commanded, but it is so much safer, so much more prudent, frees you from so many temptations and difficulties, that I most earnestly recommend you to make it your rule. Its advantages are so many and great, what it requires to be given up is so little, that I cannot understand anyone who can adopt it hesitating a moment about so doing.

And about temperance, bear in mind that a man or woman may be intemperate without once getting drunk. Remember what was said in speaking about renouncing the sinful lusts of

the flesh. To drink *for the mere pleasure of drinking* is wrong. That staid, sensual way that so many have of "taking a glass," "treating," "having a drink," when there is no conceivable necessity for so doing, is sinful and one of the commonest causes of habitual drunkenness. Experience shows these two ways by one or the other of which the habit of drunkenness is formed. First there comes the danger in youth, when a young man forms dissipated habits, and goes right down or, at the best, loses all chance of ever being good for much in this world. But this danger is evident; this rock is above water. There is another hidden one on which many a life is wrecked. How common it is to see one who has safely passed the dangers of early life, and who when young has been sober. But years go on, and he has come to middle life. He is now confident. In youth he feared, and was careful, but latterly has not thought that necessary. He has always been in the habit of "taking something," and gradually, unnoticed by himself, the "takings" have become more frequent. Health, it may be, is somewhat failing, worries are increasing, and there are so many fatal facilities for him to drink. It is not necessary to go on with the story. It is but too well known. There are men whose youth gave promise of better things, who when they come to the prime of life, when they ought to be most useful to the community and at their best, are rendering themselves more and more unfit for their life's work, and are preparing for themselves a dishonored old age, if

they ever reach old age at all. Only the strictest temperance can save you from this; only total abstinence can make you perfectly safe from it.

I have supposed the cases of men, but women are far from being without danger, particularly from the second and more subtle form of the temptation.

*The Eighth Commandment.*—This commandment enjoins perfect uprightness in all transactions between man and man; *to be true and just in all my dealings.* Examine yourself about this. If your conscience accuses you of any dishonesty, if restitution is possible make it. If it is not directly possible it is always possible to get rid, in some way or the other, of the dishonest gains. Do this or you cannot truly repent.

This commandment is so far-reaching that, instead of going into details, it may be more useful to get one or two principles which may enable us to settle details for ourselves.

In all bargaining, all buying and selling, all business transactions, take this certain rule: Every fair, honest bargain will be an advantage to both parties, and a Christian is bound to consider the case of the other party as well as his own (1 Corinthians x. 24). I might enlarge upon this to any extent, but do that for yourselves. Apply the principles to questions of prices, wages, rates of interest, and you will see how it works.

Further, this rule at once condemns gambling and betting in every degree. If I win a bet I

gain by another's loss, and no man who has a high view of Christian justice would allow himself to be in that position. The world's sense of honor is satisfied if a man pays a bet he has lost. A keen sense of Christian honor would make a man feel himself degraded by taking a bet from another.

In these days, when competitive examinations of every kind are so frequent, when "getting marks" is such an important matter in school work, you should remember that prizes or places gained by any dishonest means in these respects is really stealing, as you would thereby take what did not belong to you; perhaps, also, dishonestly depriving another of it. If you have ever done anything of this kind you should make restitution just as much as if you had stolen money, for it is quite as bad to steal money's worth as to steal money itself.

Another subject comes under this commandment, namely, that of debt. He who wilfully refuses to pay a just debt is a thief. And it is just as bad, though he should not actually refuse to pay, but keeps putting off and off and does not pay; he who carelessly incurs debt without prospect of being able to pay it when due is not honest; he who is negligent and dilatory about paying a debt is acting unjustly. Some people will put off paying some debt—perhaps some shop account, or their washing bill—saying that they have not the money to pay it, and yet right afterward they will spend money on a concert ticket, or on kid-gloves, or cigars, or drink, or some other thing unnecessary. He or

she who acts so is a liar as well as dishonest. I cannot here refrain from speaking strongly about the suffering and distress that are often caused by those who, from thoughtlessness or selfish regard to their own convenience, do not immediately pay to poor persons what is due them. A poor woman has earned by a day's work perhaps fifty cents, or a poor man by a job, has earned a dollar or two. They need their money for the very necessities of life, and should have it the very day that it is due them. They are kept some days, or weeks, it may be, without it by persons who will not remember that by keeping back his wages from a poor man they are guilty of a sin specially denounced in God's Word (Leviticus xix. latter part of verse 13; Malachi iii. 5—"that oppresses the hireling in his wages;" St. James v. 4; see also Proverbs iii. 28).

Extravagance in expenses is sinful. It leads to unpaid debt; leads us more than to debt—leads us into debt, plunges us into it head and ears, and we ought to keep away from debt altogether. Just as about the matter of temperance, I will point out a command and a counsel. The command—pay your debts promptly as soon as they are due; the counsel—incur no debts at all.

Still another subject comes under this commandment, viz., that of almsgiving (Malachi iii. 8), in which term is included all giving for charitable or religious purposes. It is the third of the three Gospel good works (St. Matthew vi. 1-4). Prayer is the homage of the soul, fasting



of the body, alms of the property. Soul and body include all we are, our property all we have. About almsgiving it is easy to find a principle; it is this:—*give some fixed proportion of what you have.* When your wages, salary, profit, income—whatever it may be—come in, put to one side the determined proportion, feel that that is not yours to spend; and then, in judging at what rate you can afford to live, reckon as yours to spend not your whole income, but your income less the determined portion. The Jews were required to give a tenth of the produce of the soil. No proportion is commanded to Christians; you must decide that, each for himself—only let it be a fixed proportion.

To give or receive a bribe is against justice. Examine yourself thus: Have I stolen anything? cheated in any way? or gained anything unjustly? If so, have I made restitution, or when do I intend so to do? Have I gambled, won bets, or in any way tried to gain by another's loss? Have I any debts unpaid? If so, when do I intend to pay them? Have I kept back wages from anyone? Tried to beat down unfairly a poor person's wages? Am I living beyond my means or extravagantly? What fixed proportion of what I get do I give away?

*The Ninth Commandment.*—We considered untruthfulness generally under the third commandment. Only one particular form of untruthfulness is now brought before us, that which is directly aimed at a neighbor's good name and character.

To report, to my neighbor's disadvantage,

that about him which I know to be untrue, is the most flagrant form of this sin. But we must go deeper than that. To report, to my neighbor's disadvantage, *that which I do not know to be true*, is to break this commandment. No excuse can be more vain than for one convicted of spreading a false report, to plead, "I was told it; I believed it to be true." Further questions must be asked such a one. "Did you investigate its truth? Did you trace it out? Did you hear what the accused person himself had to say?" You are bound either to take all this trouble or, what is much easier and safer, to hold your tongue, and not run the risk of spreading a false report. But Christian charity will go even further than this. Even if you should know that something to the disadvantage of your neighbor is certainly true, you will not repeat it, unless for some reason it is your duty to do so.

Your rule should be—If I have anything good to say about my neighbor, I will say it. If not, I will say nothing about him at all, unless duty requires me to speak.

Commit to memory Philippians iv. 8, and make that the rule of your thoughts; and then, out of the abundance of your heart, your mouth will speak.

Ask yourself—Have I ever reported against my neighbor what I knew to be untrue, or did not certainly know to be true?

Have I ever reported against him what I knew to be true, without necessity?

When required by duty to speak, did I take

all possible precautions to be sure of the truth? Did I watch my words carefully to see that I reported accurately, and, where possible, hear the accused's own story?

*The Tenth Commandment.*—I spoke, under the eighth commandment, of covetousness in its more special form, and will just point out that the general teaching of this command may be summed up in one word—"contentment." "To do my duty in that state of life unto which it shall please God to call me." This does not mean that we are not to hope and try to better our worldly condition; but that we are to do so by faithfully using our present opportunities, not by grumbling at them.

Guard carefully against thinking that if your circumstances were different, your opportunities greater, your hinderances less, you would be better. Why should you think so? God knows better than you do what is best for you, where you can do best, and He has put you here. Do not sit down idly and discontentedly, and regret that your position is not a different one; but, being where you are, and what you are, "work out your own salvation" with fear and trembling, and yet with hopeful confidence in that "God that worketh in you." In worldly matters certainly try to get on. But try in the right way. Think very little of getting into a higher place, but think very much of doing your duty faithfully where you are. This last is true Christian ambition, and the condition of genuine worldly success.

Examine yourself. Am I, or have I been,

discontented? grumbling? thinking it no use trying to do better until circumstances change? Have I tried faithfully to do my duty where my duty is?

I would point out one thing with reference to all the Commandments. Whatever they forbid is forbidden because it would hurt us. Whatever commanded is commanded because so to do will make us happier. To be irreverent, untruthful, quarrelsome, unclean, must injure and degrade any character. On the contrary, reverence, truth, gentleness, purity make us not only better but happier. The Commandments are really a revelation, telling us what things will hurt, what will benefit us. Thank God for this.

Now I hope that from week to week you have been carefully examining yourselves on these subjects; and that, by sorrow for the past, confession of your particular sins, and good resolutions for the future, you will truly repent you of your sins. Without true repentance, you can get no good from Confirmation and Holy Communion.

---

## CHAPTER XIII.

### HOLY COMMUNION.

To-day I direct your attention to the last rubric of the Confirmation Service—“*There shall none be admitted to the Holy Communion*”

until *such time as he be confirmed, or be ready and desirous to be confirmed.*"

Confirmation enables you to add to what you have already been able to do, and to receive the Holy Communion, as well as to join in the service. So I must now direct your attention to the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar. It will not be necessary now to do more than remind you of two or three main principles, for, this Sacrament being treated of in the Catechism, your Sunday-school teaching and catechizing should by this time have made you acquainted with the chief truths about it; and practical suggestions about your own receptions I will defer until we meet between the Sundays of your Confirmation and first Communion.

Notice that in the Catechism the first question about Baptism is, What is its outward sign? but this is the second question about the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper. The first question about this Sacrament is: Why was it ordained? and the answer is: "For the continual remembrance of the Sacrifice of the Death of Christ."

Now, there are two aspects of this Sacrament; they may be called its Godward and its Manward aspect, and it is to the former of the two that that first question and answer of the Catechism apply.

At the end of our prayers we say, "through Jesus Christ our Lord," or words to that effect. In this way we, *by words*, plead, make a remembrance before the Father of Christ's merits and

death ; in the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, we, by an action, by *doing something* ("This do in remembrance of Me"), plead, make a remembrance before the Father of the fact of His Death, and of the merits of that one atoning Sacrifice.

The Sacrifice of this Death of Christ fulfilled all the sacrificial types, the sin-offering, peace-offering, meat-offering, burnt-offering (see the opening chapters of the book of Leviticus), and so the memorial that we make represents all these.

From a consideration of the ceremonies of the great day of Atonement (Leviticus xvi.) we may understand what our Blessed Lord had to do to fulfil the types there given. I spoke of this when instructing you on the Article of the Creed: "He ascended into Heaven," and I would ask you to try now to remember what was then said. As the high priest went behind the veil with the atoning blood, to intercede before the Mercy Seat, so our Lord, with the Blood of the Victim, once for all slain, passed into the Heavens, there to intercede for us. He is a "Priest upon His throne" (Zech. vi. 13). He is in Heaven among the elders, "a Lamb that had been slain" (Rev. v. 6).

Now get clearly in your mind this idea, that Christ, now in Heaven, is there perpetually presenting Himself as the Mediator between God and man, as the once slain Victim, the Atoning Sacrifice for "all the sins of the whole world." Then, further, remember that the worship of the Church on earth must correspond

to the worship in Heaven ; so here sacramentally, as there not by a sacrament, the all-prevailing death is pleaded. Every baptized Christian has the right of joining in that service wherein Christ's death is set forth ; and should use that right, and join often in that service. But though you may often have joined in pleading and offering the sacrifice, you have never yet been able to receive it. You have not yet been admitted to your full priesthood. Confirmation will do that for you.

This brings us to the second or Manward aspect of this sacrament, that which God therein and thereby offers to man, viz., "The Body and Blood of Christ, which are verily and indeed taken and received by the faithful in the Lord's Supper." We must not be content, after we have been confirmed, with never doing more than joining in offering the Sacrifice ; we must ourselves from time to time "be partakers of the Sacrifice." It was not enough for the Jews that the Paschal Lamb be slain—they must eat of the Paschal Lamb. So with "Christ, our Passover, who is sacrificed with us." For the teaching of Holy Scripture on this subject I would refer you to the sixth chapter of St. John's Gospel, for, as the third chapter of that Gospel teaches about Holy Baptism, so the sixth teaches about Holy Communion. Briefly observe the main lines of the narrative and argument. Our Blessed Lord had miraculously fed the multitude, and crossing the Sea of Galilee had stilled the storm. A great multitude gathered round Him ; He bade them labor for

the meat which abideth to Eternal Life. They asked him for a sign such as the Manna from Heaven which Moses had given. He told them of the true "Bread from Heaven." Further on, He says: "I am the Bread of Life. I am the Living Bread." They murmur at this. He adds a still harder saying: "The Bread which I will give is my Flesh, which I will give for the life of the world." As they strive among themselves He in no way explains away, in no way weakens His own words; if anything He makes them harder, for next He speaks of eating His Flesh, and drinking His Blood. Not only the Jews, but now His own disciples, murmur at this hard saying. He makes it apparently still harder, as He tells them that the saying will be true even though they see the Son of Man ascend where He was before; and that these words of His are not fleshly and unprofitable, but that they are the quickening, life-giving Spirit. But all this was too much for many of them; they went back and walked no more with Him. But a faithful few remained and believed His unexplained words, and waited His time for making them clear; and their faith and patience were then rewarded, when in the upper chamber He took bread and blessed it, saying: "This is My Body," and of the cup of blessing He said: "This is the New Testament in My Blood." Then they learned how they were to "eat the Flesh of the Son of Man and drink His Blood."

In accordance with this teaching our Church, to the question, "What are the benefits we re-



ceive by the Lord's Supper?" gives the Scriptural reply, "The strengthening and refreshing of our souls by the Body and Blood of Christ, as our bodies are by the bread and wine."

One point more. Being thus, by the partaking of His Body and Blood, united to Christ, we may go further, and offer ourselves wholly as a living Sacrifice to God. Remember we can do this only because we are parts or members of Christ. Neither now nor hereafter, neither here on earth nor hereafter in Heaven, dare we, apart from Christ, approach God. But united with Christ, we may offer and present ourselves to Him here, and stand before Him without fear hereafter in Heaven.

Think, then, of Holy Communion (1) as pleading Christ's life, death, works, merits; in a word, presenting Him to the Father. And (2) then we sacramentally receive Him from the Father as the Bread from Heaven. And (3) being thereby united to Christ, in and with Him we present ourselves to God.

## CHAPTER XIV.

### CLASS IMMEDIATELY BEFORE CONFIRMATION.

The course of instruction has been completed, and I have at this time merely to give you a few directions about the Service on the day, and about the day itself. Let me begin by reading one to you. Hymn 242 (Hymnal.) I want you

afterward to read over it, and think over it for yourselves. It very beautifully expresses the desires with which you will, I hope, come to Confirmation. Listen to it now—

“ Arm these, thy soldiers, mighty Lord,  
With shield of faith and Spirit's sword ;  
Forth to the battle may they go,  
And boldly fight against the foe,  
With banner of the cross unfurl'd,  
And by it overcome the world ;  
And so at last receive from thee  
The palm and crown of victory.

“ Come, ever-blessed Spirit, come,  
And make thy servants' hearts thy home ;  
May each a living temple be,  
Hallow'd for ever, Lord, to thee ;  
Enrich that temple's holy shrine  
With sevenfold gifts of grace divine ;  
With wisdom, light, and knowledge bless,  
Strength, counsel, fear, and godliness.”

When the introductory service (probably the Litany) is over, you will stand up, and the short address at the beginning of the service will be read. After that the Bishop will address you. He will probably tell you that you may sit down while he speaks. Try to pay careful attention to what your Bishop will then say to you. His words will be full of instruction, full of warning, full of encouragement—and he speaks to you in the name of Christ. Toward the close of the address the Bishop will tell you to stand up, that he may put the question to you. He will then ask you—listen now to every word of the question :

“Do ye here, in the presence of God, and of this congregation, renew the solemn promise and vow that ye made, or that was made in your name, at your Baptism ; ratifying and confirming the same ; and acknowledging yourselves bound to believe and to do all those things which ye then undertook, or your Sponsors then undertook for you ?”

Give your answer clearly and distinctly ; don't each one wait for the others to speak first, but each one for himself or herself audibly answer :—

“I DO.”

Then will follow the few short versicles and responses. At the “Let us pray,” you will kneel down, and then will be said for and with you the prayer for the Seven Gifts of the Spirit, which I hope you have in the last few weeks often used for yourselves.

[Here the Clergyman will give particular instructions according to the custom of his own parish. If the Hymn *Veni Creator* is sung while the Candidates are kneeling, he will direct them to that effect. He will explain to them in what order they are to come to be confirmed, and how many at a time. It adds much to the comfort of the Candidates and to the general decorum of the service, when everything, even to minute details, is arranged and explained beforehand.]

When all have been confirmed, the concluding prayers of the service will be said.

[It is well that the candidates should remain until the congregation have left, and then be taken by the Clergyman into the vestry and be dismissed with a few words of prayer and blessing.]

Now a few hints about the time before and after the service.

Begin the day, if you can possibly, by attending an early Celebration of the Holy Communion. You will be there on next Sunday for your first Communion, and on this Sunday you will think of that. Be as quiet and recollected as you can through the day. There is one thing that I very particularly want you to do. Spend quite alone, some time of the day, say half an hour; think well over what you are going to acknowledge, what you hope to receive; once more renew your good resolutions, and put yourself in God's presence.

At the service the girls will wear some suitable covering for the head. The covering you usually wear would interfere with the laying on of the hands, and for girls to be then bare-headed would, as the Apostle tells you, be unseemly (1 Cor. xi. 5, 6, 13). Wear some very

simple cap or veil, and take care that it does not cover the front part of your head. And do also take care that you do not dress it up with ribbons, or try to get some very fine-looking veil. Let everything be as plain and simple as it possibly can be, and if any of you are a little better off than others, do not try to show this by better and handsomer dress. [Here the Clergyman will tell the girls what arrangements he will make for them to have a place where they may conveniently put on their caps or veils.]

Be at Church in good time—not too early, lest you be distracted and tired—and not too late. Come quietly and sedately, and take your places, doing, of course, then as you are always in the habit of doing, and kneeling down as soon as you come to your seats. [Here it will be explained to the boys and girls where and in what order they are respectively to sit, and if anyone is at the time to point them to their proper seats. They will be told who this is to be. Arrangement by age is generally the most convenient.] While kneeling before the Bishop fix your whole thought on the Gift you are waiting to receive. You may say softly to yourself “Come, Holy Ghost.” Let there be no thought of fear; rest in the love of God. With quiet, confident trust in God your Father, and in Him who by His death has won for you the Sevenfold Gift of the Spirit, come. You are weak, but He will strengthen you and

will teach you His will. He it is who is willing and able to comfort and help you when you are weak-hearted, to strengthen you when you stand, to raise you up when you fall, and finally to beat down Satan under your feet. Christ, your Saviour, calls you all to be on His side, and though you may be few, and seem to be of little influence, yet it will be no small gain to the cause of Christ if you live consistent, Christian lives. May God's fatherly hand ever be over you, His Holy Spirit ever be with you, and so lead you in the knowledge and obedience of His will, that in the end you may obtain everlasting life through JESUS CHRIST our Lord.

For the rest of the day after your Confirmation, be quiet and thoughtful. Guard yourselves, lest the good seed be at once carried away from your hearts. A good prayer to use during the day would be the collect for Whitsunday.

---

## CHAPTER XV.

### AFTER CONFIRMATION AND BEFORE FIRST COMMUNION.

I will to-day begin by reading to you, without comment, the second chapter of the first Epistle of St. John. I wish you would afterward read it for yourselves and think over it. Perhaps each year, as the anniversary of your Confirmation comes round, you would read it,

and try to revive the impressions of that day. Listen now to it.

“ My little children, these things I write unto you that ye sin not.”

Our principal subject is some practical directions about your Communion. It is an advantage to you to have an interval of a few days between Confirmation and First Communion, and you are making use of that advantage by now coming to think over your next duty.

In preparing for Confirmation you prepared for that which you received once for all. The Sevenfold Gift is given but once, we cannot be confirmed a second time. It is quite otherwise with Holy Communion. So that you will come, I hope, regularly and frequently. How often should you come? There can really be no clear principle found for any but weekly Communion, and I hope that you will gradually come to that; but it may be well that, being beginners, you should have room to grow; so I advise you to begin with monthly Communion. *Begin*, I say, but do not stop there. As special seasons, such as Advent and Lent, come round, you will, I hope, increase the frequency of your Communion, and then having made that advance, do not, when the season is over, go back from it; but let it continue as your rule, and so gradually you will come to Holy Communion weekly, or even more frequently than that. The very least that you can come is three times a year, *of which Easter must be one*. Never neglect your Easter duty.

Now with regard to Preparation, and Thanksgiving. There are many good books of devotion which can easily be procured, and which will assist you. But after all, I believe you will find that the best book of devotion, the one that wears best, is the Prayer Book, and these directions will not assume the use of any other. Two or three days before your Communion, use at your morning and evening prayers the Prayer of Humble Access. "We do not presume to come to this Thy Table, O Merciful Lord," etc. The evening before make an examination of conscience, thinking specially of the time since your last Communion. Confess any sin into which you have since fallen; renew your resolutions; ask God to give you a thankful heart (you are going to a Eucharistic or Thanksgiving Service), and be sure that there is no ill-will against anyone in your mind. Before the great festivals you will do well to make your examination more general, and to extend it, at least, over the whole period since the same festival of the previous year.

It is a good practice always to read carefully over, beforehand, the Collect, Epistle, and Gospel for the Sunday on which you are going to communicate, and from them to select some one subject (it may be either a promise, or a warning, or a command, or an article of the faith), and to bear it specially in mind. Or you may have some special grace to ask for, some special blessing to thank God for, or some special person to intercede for. Any such particular object is called a Special Intention.



It is a custom of very long standing—one of the oldest and most widely-spread Catholic traditions—that the Blessed Sacrament should be the first food taken on the day of its reception. Do not violate this custom without absolute necessity. If you attend a Celebration in the earlier part of the day, you will have no difficulty about this matter; but even if you come later, it is no killing matter to put off your breakfast for a few hours. If, however, you have no opportunity of attending an early Celebration, or if you cannot so do without neglecting imperative home duties; and if, further, your health is so feeble and delicate that you cannot, without danger, put your breakfast off for two or three hours, then the lesser must give way to the greater, and better a non-fasting Communion than no Communion at all. But do not, in this matter, excuse yourself; be sure and speak to your Clergyman about it. It is always a dangerous thing to trust to our own judgment to excuse ourselves from any act of self-denial.

Be as quiet and recollected as you can in the morning before your Communion. Some persons make a rule not to speak, without necessity, until some little after their Communion. This is a very useful rule to make and keep.

The Service itself is so familiar a one, that there are scarcely any special directions that I need give about it. You will notice that the rubric directs that the Sacrament of Christ's Body is to be delivered into the Communicant's hand. So receive it in the palm of your right

hand. Say softly to yourself "Amen" when the priest has said "The Body [or Blood] of our Lord Jesus Christ preserve thy body and soul unto Everlasting Life." Remain kneeling until the one next you has been communicated, then go quietly to your place. Be on your knees while in your own place, both before and after your own Communion. You can spend the time in praying, or in reading hymns or psalms; but be on your knees. In all minor matters follow, as far as you can, the customs of the Church where you are receiving.

Remember that you should not only make special Preparation before receiving, but also offer special Thanksgiving after. Take your prayer books and look at that prayer which comes immediately before the *Gloria in excelsis*. Use that as a thanksgiving for two or three days after your Communion.

I have shown you prayers in the Prayer Book suitable for private use before and after Communion, and I have no doubt that you will now find such forms helpful, if not necessary; but distinctly understand that I do not mean that you should always use these very words, or even any form. I am pretty sure that before very long you will naturally express your feelings of humility, trust, and thanksgiving in your own words, and perhaps discontinue the use of these forms in private devotion altogether. By all means do so whenever you feel that you can pray better without them.

And now let me give you a most earnest exhortation and warning against discontinuing

your Communion. After a while you will most certainly be tempted so to do. When the disinclination is felt, at once ask yourself whence it arises; honestly face the question and get the true answer. Is it from mere indolence? Remember that sloth is a deadly sin—all the more dangerous because not a gross one, but subtle, and too little guarded against. It ruins many, many souls. Remember this, shake off sloth, quit you like men, be strong. Or is it because your conscience tells you of sin indulged? In God's Name, then, give up your sin; don't give up your Communion. If you cannot quiet your own conscience, consult your pastor, or some pious friend. And remember always that if you are inclined altogether to give up your Communion, you may be sure that something is wrong, seriously wrong; and act about your soul as you would do if you became aware that there was something seriously wrong about your bodily health.

But another warning. Don't allow yourself to go to Communion with unrepented sin. There is a danger that, having formed the good habit of regularly communicating, you, *rightly*, are unwilling to give up Communion, but, *most wrongly*, are also unwilling to give up your sin. But the two cannot continue together. Make your choice, make it wisely, and give up your sin.

And now, on next Sunday, come to your Saviour with quiet, hopeful trust in His love, with thankful remembrance of His death; come, that by Him your souls may be strengthened and refreshed.

And now our instructions are over. Earnestly do I hope and pray that while our lives are spared, I may see or hear of you all leading godly, righteous, and sober lives ; and that all, not one missing, may at the last be given a place at the right hand of the Throne.

“ The very God of peace sanctify you wholly, and I pray God your whole spirit, and soul, and body, be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord JESUS CHRIST.” Amen.

