

It is very necessary to have right knowledge when you are about to do anything of importance; for so you are less likely to make mistakes, to fail, or perhaps to do harm by your ignorance. So I wish you to have a right idea about Confirmation. There are two principal acts in Confirmation; first in order though not in importance, the person, in this case you, confirms the promise made in his name by his or her sponsors in baptism; what that promise was you know from your Catechism. The second, and most important, part is that the person is next confirmed by God, who gives to him the gift of the Holy Ghost. If you will look at the Confirmation service you will find both these made plain. Thus the Bishop first asks the candidates "do you renew and confirm your promises; & also tells the congregation that "it is " convenient" (that is, suitable) that they should " openly before the church confirm the same". On the other hand they are spoken of as " all that are to be confirmed" and as those to whom "Confirmation is to be administered"; and at the end of the baptismal and Confirmation services you will find the same way of speaking, " to be confirmed", in the rubrics at the end. Doubtless the most important use of an equivalent expression is in the prayer before the Bishop lays on his hands: " strengthen them, we beseech thee, O Lord, with the Holy Ghost ". Strengthen is a pure English word, which means the same as confirm, which is of Latin origin. You see then there are two who confirm; the person who confirms his baptismal promise and God who confirms, strengthens, the person by the gift of the Holy Spirit. Of these the latter is by far and away the most important, for man is weak and often will fail in his most honest efforts; but God is All-mighty, " able to save to the uttermost them that so come to Him"; He cannot fail, neither can His promise. Were it otherwise, Papa and Mama might hesitate to bring so young a child to be confirmed; might say: let us wait till she is older and wiser to confirm her promises. But as it is shall we wait all those sweetest and best years of your life, those years in which the Holy Spirit and his grace can most certainly and perfectly enter into you, strengthening you; shall we keep you back from being confirmed by God. You are not too young to receive His blessing;

Look upon Confirmation therefore in this way, chiefly as God's act towards you, by which you shall receive a special favor and blessing, beginning then and daily increasing. \*\*\*\*\* on the other hand you have something to do, \*\*\*\*\* To tend and care for the spiritual life, the gift of the Holy Ghost, which God gave you when you were baptized and strengthens when you are confirmed, you must do every day those things which your sponsors promised \*\*\*\*\*

Do not be afraid to promise this because you may fail. Your promise is not that you will never do wrong and always do right, such a promise would be a lie to begin with. Your promise is that you " will not follow nor be led by " evil. A person does not follow because he falls down, nor is he led by one who suddenly jerks him out of his road; no more does one follow evil because he falls into a sin; nor is he led by it, if it on a sudden overthrows him. Following or being led applies to the daily course to the direction in which you are moving, not to particular falls.

*Copied from letter to H. E. de. from A. T. de.*

*Dec. 31, 1884 -*