

**NOTES OF INSTRUCTIONS  
TO CANDIDATES FOR  
CONFIRMATION**

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Notes of Instructions to Candidates for Confirmation by Anonymous

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BY A PRIEST.



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THE following Notes were made some years ago, for the author's own use, without any idea of publication. They are now put forth (in a somewhat expanded form), at the request of friends, in the hope that they may be useful to others—more particularly to some of the many lay persons who assist the clergy in preparing Candidates for Confirmation. Various books have been consulted in compiling them; and special help has been derived from the *Evangelist Library Catechism*, from Sadler's *Church Teacher's Manual*, and from the *Notes on Christian Doctrine* in the *Priest's Prayer Book*.

It need scarcely be said that, to use such Notes profitably, the Teacher should study and thoroughly digest them, and then make them the basis of his own instructions—in language, and with illustrations, adapted to the capacities and circumstances of those to whom they are addressed. Some of the points noticed, especially those enclosed in brackets [ ], will be found too difficult to teach to very ignorant persons.

In the Second Edition, Chapter III, has been re-written, and a few other alterations and additions have been made.

## SUBJECTS OF INSTRUCTIONS.

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## NOTES OF INSTRUCTIONS.

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### I.

#### CONFIRMATION.

“To be confirmed” means to be made firm or strong—to be strengthened. Confirmation is a Sacramental Ordinance, in which God confirms or strengthens our souls. The Bishop will lay his hands upon your head, (this is the outward sign or form); and God will at the same time give you the Seven Gifts of the HOLY GHOST (Is. xi. 2, 3) to confirm or strengthen your soul (this is the inward grace):—that you may be able to keep your Baptismal Vows—serve God faithfully—and manfully fight under CHRIST’S banner against the Devil, the World, and the Flesh.

*The Teaching of Holy Scripture.*

Confirmation is called in the Bible the Laying on of Hands—(Heb. vi. 1, 2); and St. Paul calls it—with repentance, faith, H. Baptism, the Resurrection, and the Judgment—one of the “first principles,” “the foundation” of the doctrine of CHRIST.

[We find the laying on of hands connected in the Bible with the giving of blessing, and of Spiritual Gifts—*e.g.* Gen. xlviii. 8-20; Deut. xxxiv. 9; St. Mark x. 16; II. Tim. i. 6.]

In the Acts we read (viii. 14-17) that when the Samaritans had been converted and baptized by St. Philip the Deacon, the Apostles thought it necessary for SS. Peter and John to go all the way from Jerusalem (30 miles), in order to confirm them. They laid their hands on them, and they received the HOLY GHOST.

Also (xix. 1-6) that when St. Paul came to Ephesus,



the first thing he asked the converts there was "Have ye received the HOLY GHOST?" or, as we should say, "Have you been confirmed?" "And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the HOLY GHOST came on them."

We see, then, how very important the Apostles considered Confirmation to be.

[In the Apostles' time miraculous gifts were often given in Confirmation, and they have now ceased—but we receive the ordinary gifts, which are far more important (1. Cor. xiii. 1, 2), because we cannot serve God without them.]

*The Teaching of the Prayer Book.*

"The order of Confirmation, or Laying on of Hands upon those that are baptized and come to years of discretion." [Years of discretion means the time when you have to choose for yourselves between right and wrong, and govern yourselves.] In the collect at the end of the service, the Bishop says he has been laying on his hands "after the example of Thy Holy Apostles." Before confirming, he prays, "Strengthen them, we beseech Thee, O Lord, with the HOLY GHOST . . . holy fear."

The Spirit of Wisdom—that you may choose heavenly joys rather than earthly. Understanding—that you may understand God's truth. Counsel—to show you what you ought to do. Ghostly strength—that you may be able to do what is right, and be courageous in confessing CHRIST. Knowledge—that you may know God as your God. True Godliness—that you may love Him and delight in His service. Holy Fear—that you may reverence Him, and fear to offend Him.

You must not dare to come and receive these great gifts—of God Himself—unless you mean to use them—unless you mean to give yourselves up to His service. (St. Luke xii. 48; St. Matt. vi. 24).

In Confirmation the young soldier, long ago enlisted in

Baptism, comes to volunteer for active service, and to be armed for the battle. Don't come unless you mean to fight—till death.

Before he confirms you the Bishop requires you to renew your Baptismal Vows. He asks, "Do you here, in the presence of God . . ." and you answer "I do." "I do here, in the presence of God, solemnly renew my Baptismal Vows." "I do promise to renounce *all* sin—to believe *all* God's Truth—to keep *all* His commandments to *my life's end*."

We must be careful how we promise anything to men—how much more to God!

Have you kept these vows in the past? Can you venture to come and renew them?

God will give you strength—but there will be need of great watchfulness, and of many a struggle.

Our Lord says (St. Luke xiv.) that if any one come to serve Him, he should count the cost. You will have sometimes to give up what is pleasant—to do what is hard—to bear what is hard (ridicule, &c). Count the cost—but consider also the reward—and think of the Love of Jesus.



## II.

### THE CREATION, FALL AND INCARNATION.

I. How is it that we are so weak and sinful—cannot serve God of ourselves?

Because we are not as God made us.

Gen. i. 31, 26, 27. Everything in the world was good and perfect—to make man happy. Man was unfallen—with no evil desires or tempers . . . not subject to disease, decay or death—living in perfect happiness in the presence of God.

Gen. ii. 16, 17. Just one little easy command to test his obedience.

Gen. iii. The Fall and its consequences. Man deliberately chose sin and rejected God.

When a train goes off the rails, it is smashed. When a ship runs on rocks, it becomes a wreck. When man, created to run on rails of God's Will, to ride on ocean of His Love, went off the rails, left the sea and ran on the rocks of sin, he became a wreck.

*Thou shalt surely die.* His body was to die and turn to dust—and became subject to weakness, disease, pain, decay. His soul lost gift of original righteousness and union with God—and became disordered and inclined to sin.

Every child born into the world is born in this state. We know it is so as regards its body—though it has never done any wrong, the child will suffer and die. It is so also with the soul. (Gen. v. 3; Ps. li. 5; Rom. v. 12; Eph. ii. 3.)

II. God in His infinite love did not leave man to perish. Three things had to be done to save him.  
1. Man had become subject to sin and death. He must