

## Confirmation. Its Nature and Necessity.

Confirmation is placed second in the order of the Sacraments, because in the early ages of the Church it was conferred immediately after Baptism, of which it is the complement. Baptism gives spiritual life, Confirmation strengthens it; Baptism brings forth children of God, Confirmation causes them to grow, changing them into strong men and soldiers of Jesus Christ.

Confirmation is defined: A sacrament in which, by the imposition of hands, the unction of holy chrism and the sacred words, the baptized receives the strength of the Holy Spirit to firmly confess the faith which he has received in his Baptism.

The matter of Confirmation is holy chrism, a mixture of the oil of olives and Eastern balsam, consecrated by the Bishop. There are three kinds of holy oils, of which use is made in different Sacraments, and which the Bishop consecrates on Holy Thursday: the oil of catechumens, the oil for the sick, and the holy chrism, the matter of the Sacrament of Confirmation.

The unction is made by the hand of the Bishop, the ordinary minister of Confirmation. Hence this Sacrament is sometimes called the imposition of the episcopal hand, the Sacrament of the Unction.

The form is the words which the Bishop pronounces whilst making the unction on the forehead of those who are to be confirmed, namely: I sign thee with the sign of the cross, and I confirm thee with the chrism of salvation, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

It is the duty of parents to have their children receive the Sacrament of Confirmation; not only because of the graces which accompany this Sacrament, but also because a Christian is obliged to receive it when the opportunity presents itself.

Finally, who does not comprehend the need we all have, but particularly the young, of being strengthened and armed, as soldiers in a hostile country? as the Apostles on the day of Pentecost? (Acts ii).