

Examination and Confirmation.

The Examination.

¶ *The examination of the catechumens shall occur at such a time and place as to permit members of the congregation to witness their good confession.*

¶ *After the singing of a Hymn, the Minister may introduce the Examination by the following or other Address:*

Dearly Beloved: Holy Baptism is the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost, which God shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ, our Savior, that, being justified by His grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life. Through this Sacrament, God receives little children into His covenant and kingdom of grace, working faith in them, and making them members of Christ's Church and temples of His Holy Spirit.

And as God will not suffer His faithfulness to fail, but keep His covenant and mercy, even so He says to each of His own: "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." To the end however, that this purpose of God may be accomplished, and children may grow in grace and Christian knowledge as they advance in years, the Lord gave commandment, saying to parents through the Apostle Paul: "Bring up your children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord," and to the Church, even as unto Simon Peter: "Feed My lambs."

In accordance, then, with Christ's command, children are instructed in the Christian faith. When they reach an age of discretion and understand the covenant entered into by them by the grace of God in Holy Baptism, they should daily give their hearts to God, and let their eyes observe His ways. In particular, being able to examine themselves and to discern the Lord's body, they should for their furtherance in grace receive the Sacrament of Holy Communion with the Church of God.

To encourage such growth in Christian knowledge and faith, the rite of Confirmation is maintained in the Church. The catechumens publicly make profession of the true faith and pledge themselves anew to the covenant made between them and God. The Christian congregation, or Church, the dispenser of God's mysteries, having assured itself that the catechumens possess such knowledge of Christian doctrine as may give warrant of their worthily eating the body and drinking the blood of Christ,

invites them to receive the Holy Supper, and, with the laying on of hands, prays over them for the Holy Spirit of God, that they may grow in grace, be steadfast and unmovable in their profession, become fruitful in every good work, and in the end receive the crown of life.

A number of persons have here presented themselves for Confirmation. We shall now examine them in the chief parts of Christian doctrine, for the purpose of setting forth that they understand the faith they are about to profess.

¶ *Then shall the Catechumens be briefly examined.*

The Confirmation.

¶ *A Hymn of Invocation of the Holy Ghost or other suitable Confirmation hymn may then be sung; if the Confirmation is conducted in the Divine Service, this hymn shall be the one appointed for use after the General Prayer. The Catechumens shall approach the communion rail at the conclusion of the hymn and the Minister shall in the chancel, facing the Catechumens.*

¶ *Then may the Minister address the Catechumens thus:*

Dearly Beloved: When you were little children, [most of] you were received into God's covenant of grace in Holy Baptism. And now, having learned the meaning of this covenant from your instruction in the Word of God, you are gathered here before God and this Christian congregation publicly to make profession of your faith in the Triune God, and to renew your covenant with Him, to dedicate yourselves body and soul for time and for eternity to your God and Lord. [Others of you are to make this public profession and promise and then, in obedience to Christ's command, to receive the Sacrament of Holy Baptism.] Lift up your hearts with me, therefore, to the God of all grace, and cheerfully give answer to what, in the name of the Lord, as a minister of His holy Church, I now shall ask you.

[¶ *When adults not previously baptized present themselves for Confirmation, the Minister may say: Dearly Beloved inasmuch as you have been instructed in Christian doctrine and are desirous of Baptism and Confirmation, I now call upon you to make the following profession of faith, — beginning with question 2 below.*]

1. Do you this day in the presence of God and of this Christian congregation, renew and confirm the solemn covenant which at your Baptism you made with the Triune God?

Answer: We do.

2. Do you, then, renounce the devil, and all his works, and all his ways?

Answer: We do.

3. Do you believe in God the Father?

Answer: Yes, we believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth.

4. Do you believe in God the Son?

Answer: Yes, we believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord; Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost; Born of the Virgin Mary; Suffered under Pontius Pilate; Was crucified, dead, and buried; He descended into hell; The third day He rose again from the dead; He ascended into heaven, and sitters on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; From thence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

5. Do you believe in God the Holy Ghost?

Answer: Yes, we believe in the Holy Ghost; The holy Christian Church, the communion of saints; The forgiveness of sins; The resurrection of the body; And the life everlasting.

6. Do you desire to be members of the Evangelical Lutheran Church?

Answer: We do.

7. Do you hold all the books of the Bible to be the inspired Word of God, and the doctrine of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, drawn from the Bible, as you have learned to know it from Lather's Small Catechism, to be the true and correct one?

Answer: We do.

8. Do you also, as members of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, intend to continue steadfast in the confession of this Church, and suffer all, even death, rather than fall away from it?

Answer: We do so intend, with the help of God.

9. Finally, do you intend faithfully to conform all your life to the rule of the divine Word, to walk as it becometh the Gospel of Christ, and in faith, word, and deed to remain true to the Triune God, even unto death?

Answer: We do so intend, by the grace of God.

¶ *Then shall the Minister say:*

Give now your band at the Lord's altar, as a pledge of your promise, and, kneeling, receive His blessing.

¶ *Then shall the Catechumens come forward, one by one, or in groups, as the Minister may have appointed, and, giving the Minister their right hand, kneel down before the altar.*

¶ *Then shall the Minister, laying his hands upon each one separately, pronounce the Benediction, adding a Scripture-passage as a memorial of confirmation, saying; N.N.:*

1. God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, give thee His Holy Spirit, the Spirit of wisdom and knowledge, of grace and prayer, of power and strength, of sanctification and the fear of God. Amen. or,

2. The Father in heaven, for Jesus' sake, renew and increase in thee the gift of the Holy Ghost, to thy strengthening in faith, to thy growth in grace, to thy patience in suffering, and to the blessed hope of everlasting life. Amen. or,

3. The God of all grace, who hath called us unto His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, make thee perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle thee, and keep thee through faith unto eternal life. Amen. or,

4. The God of peace sanctify thee wholly; and may thy whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen. or,

5. May God, who hath begun the good work in thee, perform it until the day of our Lord Jesus Christ Amen.

¶ *Then the Minister shall say:*

Upon these your voluntary professions and promises, I, in the name of the Church of Christ, invite and welcome you, as members of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, to participate with us in all the rights and privileges of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, in the name of God the Father, and of God the Son, and of God the Holy Ghost. † Amen.

The Lord bless you, and keep you. The Lord make His face shine upon you, and be gracious unto you, The Lord lift up His countenance upon you, and give you peace, Amen.

¶ *Then shall the Minister invite the Congregation to make intercession as follows:*

Since it is God alone who worketh both to will and to do of His good pleasure, it behooveth as, dear friends in Christ, to call upon Him for these young members of this Christian congregation, that He would graciously perform the good work which He hath begun in them. Let us, therefore, [kneel down and] pray.

1.

Almighty and everlasting God, who makest us both to will and to do those things which are good and acceptable unto Thy divine Majesty, we make our humble supplications unto Thee for these Thy servants. Let Thy fatherly hand, we beseech Thee, ever be over them, let Thy Holy Spirit ever be with them; and so lead them in the knowledge and obedience of Thy Word that in the end they may obtain everlasting life, through our Lord Jesus Christ, who, with Thee and the Holy Ghost, liveth and reigneth, ever, one God, world without end. Amen.

2.

Lord God Heavenly Father, we thank and praise Thee for Thy great goodness in bringing these Thy servants to the knowledge of Thy Son Jesus Christ and the truth of the Gospel revealed through Him, and enabling them both with the heart to believe and with the mouth to confess His name. We also entreat Thee to enlighten and strengthen them by Thy Holy Spirit, that they may daily increase in living faith, in godly fear, in patience under trials, in true knowledge of Thee, and in all other things profitable to their eternal salvation. Grant that, bringing forth the fruits of and love, they may continue steadfast and victorious unto the day when all who have fought the good fight of faith shall receive the crown of righteousness, through Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord, who liveth and reigneth, with Thee and the Holy Ghost, ever, one God, world without end. Amen.

3.

Almighty and ever-living God, we thank Thee that Thou hast brought these Thy servants to Thy Son Jesus Christ in with Him by Baptism into His death. And we beseech Thee, of Thy great goodness, to renew in them the gift of the Holy Ghost, that their hearts may be filled with the light of Thy Gospel Increase in them pure knowledge and true faith, that they may firmly believe in Thee, the only true God, and in Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent, and ever cleave to Thee with steadfast confidence. Defend them from the power of darkness, and establish them in the kingdom of Thy Son wherein we have redemption and forgiveness of sins. Fill their hearts and minds with the peace of Christ, the joy of the Holy Spirit, and love to Thee and all mankind. Endow them plenteously with the gifts of Thy heavenly grace, that they may be led into all truth, mortify the deeds of the flesh, overcome the assaults and temptations of the Wicked One, and serve Thee in Thy Church

in holiness and righteousness all their days; and that, together with all true believers, they may, with joyful hearts and watchful prayer, and in soberness and godly living, hope and wait for the coming of the Savior, to the honor of Thy holy name, who livest and reignest, with the Son and the Holy Ghost, ever, one God, world without end. Amen.

4.

Almighty and everlasting God, the Author and Finisher of our faith, who, of Thine infinite mercy, hast added to Thy Church these Thy servants by causing them to be born again of water and the Holy Ghost, and hast given them knowledge of their redemption in Christ, and power to own and confess Thee in the presence of Thy people; we thank Thee for the great mercy Thou hast been pleased to show them, and beseech Thee, strengthen them by Thy Holy Spirit, and daily increase in them the manifold gifts of Thy grace, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord, that they may be kept in the kingdom and covenant of Christ, through faith, unto everlasting life. Fortify them against the assaults of sin. Let not Satan prevail against them. Keep them from the evil that is in the world. Help them to walk in the Spirit, that they may not fulfill the lusts of the flesh, but serve Thee in holiness and righteousness all their days. Defend them from all heresy and schism, from all apostasy and unbelief. Make them faithful unto death, that no man may take from them their crown. And grant that, continuing steadfast in faith and hope, they may at the end be found meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light; through Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord, who liveth and reigneth, with Thee and the Holy Ghost, ever, one God, world without end. Amen.

¶ *The shall the Minister pray:*

Our Father, who art in heaven; Hallowed be Thy name; Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven; Give us this day our daily bread; And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; And lead us not into temptation; But deliver us from evil; For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

¶ *The Catechumens shall return to their places within the Nave. If the Confirmation occurs within the Divine Service, the service continues with the lavabo rite.*