

A letter written by my mother (Anna Harrington) to her daughter Ruth on the subject of confirmation in the Anglican Church.

Montreal - March, 1910.

Dear Ruth:

I am truly sorry that you did not speak to me before you allowed yourself to be persuaded into being confirmed - and I am surprised that Mr Hethcote who is credited with Catholic views, and an open mind should have suggested such a step.

Had you not been a member of another branch of the Christian church, it would have been well enough for you to unite yourself with the Episcopal church by their established mode of entrance to membership.

But to require you to be confirmed, is to refuse to accept as an equivalent your membership in the congregational, & certainly to infer, that it is not valid or could be recognized by what some call "the church". This action is in the same class as other commandments of men which forbid to hold an Episcopal service in a building belonging to another denomination. Recognize no ordination valid but that conveyed through "apostolic succession" etc. It might be well for you to have Mr H. explain what his views are based upon.

Of course if you admit apostolical succession, you get a logical sequence of ideas - but to credit God with bestowing his Holy Spirit on the shameless & shameful Roman Curia of the middle ages, and actually making them the sole means of conveying God's grace to men, is most dreadful.

On the other hand, leave out this & the eucharistic theory of transubstantiation, & you come to the good Evangelical doctrine of the Eng. church which is most scriptural, but not in logical accord with the prayer book & and should not deny or slight membership in a church of fellow believers.

I fear both you and Ted have had deficient theological training, or you could not have been so easily convinced. The doctrines of man are various and complicated.

God's great free love & grace are clear & splendid, everlasting, straight - Cling to that my children. There are many in the Eng. Church free in spirit, many who would fain join hands with all who love the Lord Christ who hold "One Lord, one faith, one baptism" ! who would recognize either a presbyterian or congregational church, as a church of Christ - & Poor Mrs Phillips, no wonder her Covenanting blood rebelled, you have some too - but on one side we were R.C's to a later date. Tell Ted all I say - there are always two ways of looking at things - But watch and see how God is judging the anti-christian church - and keep away from everything that ever belonged to her.

MOTHER.

*N.B. This is a transcript of her letter by Lois Winslow-Spragge.  
The original was kept by her.*