

GUIDE PEDAGOGIQUE

Pedagogical Guide

Precepts, rules of conduct, thoughts and advice on the matter of education.

Short, brief and incisive sentences are far better retained in the memory than the best advice given in a lengthy narrative.

THE CULTIVATION, EXERCISE, DEVELOPMENT AND POLISHING OF EVERY PHYSICAL, INTELLECTUAL, MORAL AND RELIGIOUS FACULTY WHICH GO TO MAKE UP THE HUMAN NATURE AND HUMAN DIGNITY OF THE CHILD: - THAT IS THE WORK OF EDUCATION.

All in God
All through God
All for God

1.

Sinite Parvulos Venire Ad Me.

Let the little children come unto Me.

2.

What would it benefit you to gain the whole world if you were to lose your own soul? What would it benefit you to guide others towards heaven if you were not to get there yourself? The best regulated charity begins with oneself.

The first duty of a teacher, as a man and as a religious, is to tend ceaselessly towards perfection.

3. If you are a good religious, you will have the necessary basis for becoming a good housemaster and teacher within the context of the Institute.

4. Always give a good example, and, in your own conduct, never be frivolous or indifferent.

5. Wretched is he who scandalises one of these little children.

6. Love your job; it is God who gave it to you. Do not compare your job with others since this comparison would be very harmful to you.

7. Study the rules of the school and of your class, and engrave them on your memory, since it is the duty of a housemaster and teacher to have them observed as closely as possible.

8. Education is something simple and practical which demands little theory but much care; little in the way of precepts but much love.

9. Moral education alone can produce men and citizens, and moral education cannot exist without religion.

10. Let the supreme goal of your teaching be the growth of your pupils' hearts. Raise them up to the Lord, because they belong to Him.

11. Pray constantly that the education which you give your pupils may be blessed.

12. The labourer casts seeds on the fields; but if the rains and the dew do not enrich the seeded ground it will remain infertile. So it is with the teachers work if he does not ask God to bless it.

13. Be open to your Superiors and Headmasters; do not be afraid to speak with them of the good and bad points of your pupils, to consult them about your job; to admit to them the faults which you have committed either by indulgence or severity, promptitude or delay.

14. Maintain a perfect harmony with those colleagues who share your responsibility, so that a similar spirit may reign in your way of dealing with the pupils and that in everything there may exist that unity without which nothing can be sound.

15. Your own health is a great benefit in itself and an essential tool in the successful accomplishment of the duties of your position. Never omit doing anything which is reasonable for the maintenance of your health.
 16. Even the strongest piety is not sufficient for you to be able to reach the goal of your sublime vocation. Since you are called to sanctify yourself and to work for the benefit of youth, you must have the necessary knowledge to accomplish the second part. Thus for you study is an indispensable obligation.
 17. There are times in our lives when the smallest fault takes on the proportions of a catastrophe. Our moods are like opera glasses which make things look bigger or smaller depending on which way one looks through them.
 18. Never lose heart; a seed sown in the heart of a child is never lost and will, with the help of God, develop and bear fruit, maybe just at the moment when you expect it least.
 19. Maintain a dignity in your language and your bearing in order to strengthen the authority of your teaching.
 20. It is most important to inspire in the young people a respect for the Sacraments which will last them their whole lives and which will teach them to make, at the appropriate moments, a holy and salutary use of them.
 21. The teacher must give his pupils a complete and utter freedom in the matter of their frequentation of the Sacrament of the Eucharist.
 22. Vice weakens or destroys health, blinds the spirit and hardens the heart.
 23. The malicious pupil seeks out his own kind and forms a group away from the others.
 24. Continued laziness calls for much supervision.
 25. A pupil who changes from being conscientious and obedient to lazy and badly behaved does not do so without good reason. Do you know why?
 26. Few people know how to advise children, since in general one loves them too much or too little.
 27. Almost always end your words with the children, however severe these words might have been, with something gentle and kindly.
 28. Never point a fault out to a child without telling him how to overcome his fault and encouraging him to do so, since one must avoid that unhappiness and discouragement which correction inspires when it is dry.
 29. The teacher must live with his pupil, must be his friend and his father. He will supervise the pupil without arousing his suspicion or mistrust.
 30. Never, except in cases of extreme necessity, adopt an austere and imperious pose to frighten the children. You will close their hearts and remove their trust, without which there is no hope that education will produce fruit.
 31. Show yourself to be likeable so that they can be open with you, and so that they are not afraid to show you their faults. To succeed in this, be indulgent with those who hide nothing from you.
 32. Too much freedom gives rise to abuses; too little hardens the spirit.
 33. In your language as in your manner, always respect the conventions of politeness.
 34. Carefully study the different characters of your pupils so that you will be better able to appreciate the good and bad points of each one. Don't be fooled by appearances they have fooled many a housemaster and teacher. Be particularly cautious of those children who seem to flatter you and follow you around. If you permit this they will hamper your actions and harm your authority in more than one way.
 35. It is particularly through their misbehaviour and your resultant advice, reprimands and punishments that the pupils' characters are formed. Note how they play, walk, work, get on with their companions; note their bearing seated and standing; note how they express themselves through their faces, their eyebrows, their eyes and their gestures. When you praise or reprimand a particular pupil, note which of the two has the most effect on him. Note carefully the manner and the tone, off-hand or respectful, in which he addresses the teachers.
- Don't forget, though, that it takes more than a day to really know someone. Don't be hasty in your judgement.

36. In educating your pupils, keep always in mind that it is always their souls that you must consider first.
37. Educate them in habits of obedience; this is a goal which must be reached, whatever the cost. I do not believe that there is any habit which exercises a greater influence on life than that of obedience.
38. Educate them in the habit of always telling the truth; this is a golden rule which many people should take to heart.
39. Be most conscientious in following the movements of the pupils. A moment's lateness or negligence can give rise to trouble.
40. Teachers should never miss a duty without giving notice and being replaced.
41. The essential qualities of a housemaster are prudence, perseverance, and devotion.
42. Where the pupils do not hold their housemasters in an affectionate esteem, education is impossible.
43. If a pupil's guardian angel were to show himself in tangible form, it would be the image of a good housemaster.
44. Have a real affection for the pupils entrusted to your care. Faults and failings of all sorts, ingratitude, insolence, arrogance and even hate do not extinguish the love that God has for sinners; so should it be with you.
45. There must be no favouritism, no antipathy, not the slightest hint of a greater affection for one or another pupil. Pupils are aware of everything, and reason dictates to them that there should be equality between equals.
46. Without silence, work is impossible; without work, dissipation and immorality.
47. The housemaster who works instead of supervising assumes a terrifying responsibility.
48. The quietest pupil can be the one who needs to be the most closely supervised.
49. Idleness is the mother of all vices. Be on your guard that an idle pupil might be badly behaved, but don't make the mistake of thinking that every hard working pupil is good. That would be a most serious error!
50. A bad boy often hides his hands; to put your mind at rest you would do well to insist that your pupils, whether they are reading or writing, keep their hands on the desk.
51. Frequently repeated signals between the same pupils should be paid close attention to.
52. The housemaster should make sure that the pupils are not drawing cartoons, writing notes or reading books which have not been approved by the authorities.
53. Make sure that no two pupils can ever meet outside the normal times, or at least, make sure that they do not meet without supervision.
54. Recreations during which the children do not play can be very dangerous and call for a great deal of supervision. One should, therefore, in every possible way, encourage in the pupils a taste for physical exercise.
55. Housemasters cannot, in recreation times, be too active in their supervision. They must keep their eye on every group of pupils, noting who joins in the games and who remains apart, either singly or in small groups. They should not lose sight of those of whom they are suspicious and of those who seem to want to escape the housemaster's scrutiny.
56. It is very difficult, perhaps impossible, to supervise adequately whilst chatting to or playing with the pupils, it is, therefore normally best not to do so.
57. If, on formal walks, the ranks are broken, care must be taken to see that the pupils do not split into widely separated groups.
58. If a teacher feels it necessary to comment on the food, he should do so personally to the appropriate person; he should say nothing in front of the pupils and the other teachers.
59. In the world a young man's education is normally judged by his table manners.
60. The teacher should, at meals, make sure that the pupils behave properly and develop those habits which, in the world, distinguish a man of good upbringing.

61. Three things will assure discipline in the dormitory; the respect that you inspire for the place, severe punishments for the slightest faults and painstaking supervision.

62. The housemaster should never speak in the dormitory, even in cases of great need, with the exception of cases of illness. Any comments, points or punishments must be made the next morning.

63. Watch carefully over relationships between the pupils and their particular friendships.

A major principle operates here: *Nunquam duo - raro unus - semper tres.*

64. The path to follow concerning these particular friendships is one calling for much tact and prudence on the part of the teacher, and especially a deep knowledge of the conduct, character, tendencies and temperament of the two friends. These matters are therefore best dealt with by Superiors. In such matters, silence can be useful, a fuss always harmful.

65. As you are teachers of youth the pupils should always see in you the shining light of a pious heart and a life devoted to good.

66. No education is possible without religion. A religious spirit should therefore be apparent in every action and word of the teacher.

67. Never commence a task without first having presented yourself to the Lord for His blessing.

68. We can only be the masters of our pupils through prayer, patience and love.

69. Always conduct yourself in class as if you were in the presence of some educated and respectable parents.

70. Each teacher must adhere closely to the curriculum for his class. Nothing is more dangerous than the inconsiderate fervour of certain teachers who always tend to use material which is proper to a more advanced class.

71. When a teacher is known by his pupils as a man who loves them and who wants nothing more than their happiness at all times, he has won a major prize in education since he has the key to their hearts.

72. At any age, example has a great effect on us; in childhood it is all-powerful.

73. If a child discovers the weak and vulnerable side of a teacher, then good-bye respect, good-bye confidence, good-bye application; the teacher's authority will have lost all its prestige.

74. In order successfully to direct a pupil's will, two things are necessary on the part of the teacher: the respect and affection of the pupil. Add to this great soundness of character, but without inflexibility.

75. Your politeness and gentleness in particular will dispose the pupils to respect and affection for you.

76. Do not be weak in your exercise of authority on the pretext of a fear of hurting the pupil.

77. Instruction and education have the same goal. Both aim at the same result: the harmonious development of all the pupil's intellectual and moral faculties, that is to say his happiness.

78. Classroom discipline should be firm without being inflexible.

79. What really ruins everything is a man who allows everything today and punishes everything tomorrow, who allows some boys to get away with everything and others with nothing.

80. Every teacher, in himself, must be a teacher of morality and piety. There is no explanation which he is called on to give from which he cannot bring out some lesson for the moral formation of the pupils.

81. The two factors which ensure progress in a class and in study are order and enthusiasm.

82. Method is the key to success in teaching since it is a guide to study.

83. All teaching should contain three parts: understanding, learning and application.

84. Follow the laws of nature in all your teaching. Let all you do for the child and for the young man have a progressive character; make what you want to teach relevant to what they already know; an interrupted progression is like a staircase with missing steps. It's always best to move by degrees.
85. One of the conditions of progress is in-depth teaching so that the pupils have complete acquisition of what they are trying to learn.
86. To teach in depth one must know how to set limits; one must do a little and well, never anything approximate.
87. Develop all the pupils' faculties in a natural, regular and harmonious fashion. If you neglect one faculty, or develop it to the detriment of one or all of the others, you can only damage the whole.
88. Avoid developing the memory at the expense of the intelligence. One is easily led to believe that one is being successful simply because the pupils are able to repeat what one has told them without using their critical faculties.
89. Asking less of the pupils than of which they are capable makes them weak; asking them for more discourages them. A good teacher follows nature, not forcing it but helping it and polishing it.
90. Be sure in your knowledge of what you claim to teach. What one knows badly one teaches badly.
91. Make yourself understood. Present yourself, your language and your classes at the pupils' level. It is not enough that the cleverer ones understand you; all of them must be able to profit from your lessons. They are all entrusted to your heart and to your conscience.
92. Experience has compared young minds to shifting sand, which easily takes on the shapes one might wish to trace in it, but, sensitive to the least puff of wind, loses them just as easily. Therefore this pedagogical maxim: "Repetition is the soul of instruction"
93. Never go to class without careful preparation. A good teacher makes a regular, daily inspection of his pupils' homework and returns it to them in class, corrected and annotated in his own hand.
94. Grammar should be taught by the text, and the text should be explained by the grammar. That means to say that one should look, in a text, for the application of the rules one has studied in the grammar, and vice-versa.
95. Constantly direct your attention towards unity, either in studying or writing, because the secret of real progress in instruction is contained in this unity.
96. Speak quite loudly, without shouting, adapting your volume to the room and to the number of pupils.
97. Pronounce properly, and articulate each syllable clearly, accentuating it according to the character of the language you are using.
98. Avoid monotony by a variety in your vocal inflections, but use no affectation, no pretension, and adapt yourself to the nature of the subject as well as to the age of your pupils.
99. Avoid pedantry, that would be tending to the ridiculous.
100. If your pupils are constantly occupied, you will have no problem in the maintenance of order and discipline, and punishments will become more and more unnecessary.
101. Be first into and last out of the classroom.
102. A teacher must study the character of his pupils in order to know how best to get through to each individual. He will modify and graduate his method of expressing displeasure; a look, a slightly raised voice will often suffice for the mild and docile characters, for others, threats and punishments will be necessary.
103. Some punishments are like the extreme remedies which one uses in cases of extreme illness; they are effective, but they alter the temperament and are physically wearing.
104. A person who is led by constraints is always the weaker for it.
105. Never argue with the pupils, be very matter-of-fact with them. Nothing weakens a reprimand more than an effusion of words.

106. From the very first days, inculcate into your pupils the need for immediate obedience.
107. Never give vague reprimands; explain the fault; be sure you know all the facts, otherwise a pupil who is fully guilty may only admit to partial guilt.
108. Let it never be possible for anyone whom you punish to say truthfully: he likes to see me humiliated. On the contrary, all should be convinced that in your severity you are bowing to a need which is as painful to you as it is necessary.
109. Since anger is in itself a vice, you will never correct this vice in others by giving way to it yourself.
110. A teacher who punishes is a father who chastises; a basis of love and kindness must be apparent however severe the punishment.
111. Severity without love is hardness; love without severity is weakness. In education the two are equally harmful.
112. Hardness in a teacher forms timid and hypocritical pupils; weakness forms pupils who are soft, self-willed and often insensitive.
113. Slaps, blows and other similar punishments are forbidden to the teacher.
114. Punishments which damage a pupil's pride are to be used with the greatest delicacy.
115. Hurtful words, nicknames and crude comparisons should never be spoken by the teacher.
116. Never confront all your pupils at once, but, if some serious offence has been committed, try to discover the guilty parties, and, until you are certain who they are, pretend and stall for time.
117. Never punish frivolously, and withdraw a punishment, however necessary it might be, if the guilty pupil is indisposed to receive it.
118. You should never use one pupil to humiliate another; you would risk harming both.
119. Demand only such submission as is reasonable and necessary; never ask a pupil to do anything which would demean his personal dignity; children are often very sensitive about this.
120. The teacher should never punish in anger, especially if the offence is against his own person, such as insolence or bad language.
121. Only love can punish successfully, and love punishes in moderation. If a look is enough, don't use a word; if one word is enough, don't use two. The more the pupils can read a teacher's eyes, the less words are necessary for their education.
122. Never impose any punishment which has not been imposed by the authorities.
123. Mass punishments are always dangerous, and a teacher should never use them without the authorisation of the Superiors.
124. Is it your wish to be neither too indulgent nor too severe?
1. Firstly, lay down rules about minor offences.
 2. In particular, reprimand those who make little effort to improve.
 3. At the first offence, give a light punishment whilst threatening, seriously but not in anger, a more serious punishment for a second offence.
 4. Keep to what you have threatened.
 5. Asking for advice from your Superiors can be a great help in many cases.
125. You must always be in control of yourself and be on your guard against all exaggeration. Listen calmly to the pupil's excuses, and, if he presents them in a respectful manner, give him the benefit of the doubt. To whatever extent his excuse excuses him, lighten the punishment.
126. The two major thoughts on discipline in a nutshell: invincible firmness but mildness and courtesy. Unalterable goodness always and to everyone.

127. Offer yourself willingly to the pupils in these ways:

Always give willingly those things which are in your gift. Never make them wait for something which you can give immediately. Foresee the needs, wishes and requests of the pupils and let nothing stand in the way of the immediate action of your charity. It is of little importance that your good intentions might be badly received; children's moods change, but the memory of your goodness will remain engraved on their hearts.

128. You run the risk of discouraging the pupils if you do not praise them when they have done well. Although you must be wary of praise in case it gives rise to vanity, you should try without going too far.

129. Here is the greatest method of education:

All of you who have devoted yourselves to the sacred work of education, love, love the children. But there is love and love. I am speaking here of real, deep and enlightened love; pastoral and paternal love; this love is everything and accomplishes everything.

In a word, be like fathers to them, and that's not enough; be like mothers. You must love the children and make them feel that you love them; not only by avoiding, in your dealings with them, all hardness, unjust coldness and discouraging severity, but by caring tenderly for them and having a blessed and cordial affection for them; letting them see that you have devoted your life to them, that you are happy to be with them and will always be so. you must also identify with them, not only in work and study, but in everything else and in every detail of their school life.

But I must add one thing of the greatest importance:

To love the children and to identify with them, you must love one another. Be of one heart and mind: *cor unum et anima una*. Putting this into effect is as simple as it is pleasant.

Out of this is born life, strength and the powerful fruitfulness of your work for souls, since in this is the union of souls one with another and with God in charity.

If you know these things you will be happy, provided you put them into practice.