

1. THE OBLIGATIONS OF A TEACHER TOWARDS HIMSELF

1.1 - Piety*

What would it profit a man to gain the whole world if he were to lose his own soul? What would it profit you to lead others towards heaven if you yourself were not to arrive there? Well-ordered charity begins with oneself. The first duty of teachers as men and as religious is to live for God and to tend ceaselessly to perfection. Your Rule is quite specific on this point. Follow zealously the path that it traces out for you; submit yourself with docility to all the practices which it prescribes; do not, through your negligence, omit a single one, and the blessing of God will follow you in all your undertakings. Take care not to invert the order of things; knowledge is a means, so do not seize on it as an end. St. Bernard tells us that it is a dangerous curiosity to study simply in order to have knowledge, a vanity to study in order to make an impression, and ignoble to study in order to acquire perishable goods. You must study either to edify yourself or to edify others. You must therefore always have a correct intention in your studies. Above all your other occupations put your exercises in piety: prayer, the Mass, examination of conscience, visits to the Blessed Sacrament, spiritual reading, rosary, the Office, frequentation of the Sacraments, retreats, recollection, the exercise of the presence of God, mortification, the support of your neighbour, etc. These are the true ways of holding yourself constantly ready to serve religion, to be in the hands of God, to be an instrument of mercy. You would be deceiving yourself if you thought you saw heavenly blessings descending on yourself and on the flock entrusted to your care if you were to ignore these ways and if you did not make every effort to make yourself a model for these lambs, and if your vigilance did not make you their guardian and protector in every circumstance and against every enemy. Children are formed above all by imitation, and their eyes are fixed on their teachers. Let there be nothing in you that they cannot copy; it is only by fulfilling that condition that you will fulfil the numerous obligations that you have contracted to religion, to the parents and to the children themselves.

1.2 - Union with one's Confreres

You have to live with your Superiors, with your equals and with your inferiors. As St. Paul says: "Help one another to bear your burdens and you will be obeying the law of Jesus Christ". Thus you owe to all the general obligations of charity; be polite and honest towards everyone; in every circumstance let it be seen that you understand the precept of religious humility and that your being is suffused with these words of the Master, "Learn from me that I am meek and humble of heart". As far as possible you will avoid the first places, an opinionated manner, and conceited or knowing opinions. You will try to fit in with the moods and opinions of others rather than trying to make them fit in with yours. It is much easier to obtain the patience and courage to put up with your confreres' weaknesses than to obtain the complete correction of all their faults.

Lively, polite and good-humoured conversations are useful. "Illumination is born from the interplay of ideas". But do not argue in a heated or opinionated manner; a point worth making has no need of a raised voice or a hard expression. Don't be too quick to believe the stories that you hear, even if they are offered in an effusion of friendship. Avoid any sort of sign which might lead people to believe that all your confreres do not equally share your affection.

Go to such lengths in this that no-one could reasonably fear being refused if they were to ask a favour of you. Always and everywhere let those whose position, age and rank place them above you find in you the respect that you owe them. A perfect understanding should reign between you and your colleagues for the good of you all. Hide their failings, especially in front of the pupils; severely reprimand any lack of respect which the pupils might show to your confreres in front of you. Come, in charity, to the defence of those who cannot defend themselves. Respect each other, and do not forget your obligations of manners and politeness to one another; let there be no teasing or provocation, and, even in the most lively of recreations, be careful to maintain decorum so that were your pupils to see you they would find nothing to correct or to criticise. Remember always that a religious must temper his abilities with modesty, and that all men attract affection through the heart more than through the intellect.

Speak no evil, and allow no evil to be spoken, of your pupils; rather defend their reputations as much as possible. Have great respect for your inferiors, lead them by your civil and affable good manners so that they can experience the reality of the fact that they are all equal before God in this religious family. Take the greatest pains to ensure that there reigns among you an open cordiality, a charitable politeness and a spirit of religious decency. In order to make easier the numerous duties that this holy and brotherly union imposes on you, meditate often on this fine precept of our divine Master: "Do not do to others what you would not wish to be done to yourself". And this other rule given to us by the Holy Spirit: "Judge your fellow-guest's needs by your own and be thoughtful in every way".

Finally, accept in gratitude any comments which are made concerning your own failings. It is clear that one of the best paths to self-knowledge and self-correction is being aware of one's faults. It is therefore essential to give to those who would do us this act of charity the courage and opportunity to do it on every occasion. Having received such comments

with signs of satisfaction and gratitude you should make it your duty to follow them up; thus you will prove to your real friends that they have not wasted their efforts and that you are grateful to them for their charitable attentions.

1.3 - Care of your Health

Health is, in itself, a great gift and a great support in the successful accomplishment of the numerous duties of your state. Do not neglect any reasonable measures which you could take on this point. Do not miss any sleep for study. From evening prayer until the next morning's meditation occupy yourself only with objects of piety. Make it your habit to speak in a clear and distinct tone, but do not shout. Do not speak too loudly in class; your pupils will be that much more quiet and attentive. Be careful to observe the rules of temperance and sobriety in your eating and drinking. Observe also those rules which concern the ventilation of rooms and the correct way to sit whilst writing and studying etc. Work in moderation and only at the times set aside for work; take advantage of your recreations in the spirit of the Rule for your own good and for that of your confreres. Do not allow yourself any bodily mortifications over and above those sanctioned by obedience. Even moderate your acts of devotion with wisdom and humility. Be guided by those indications which you will find in your rule, in the pupils' rules and in the experience of your Superiors.

1.4 - Study

Even the greatest piety will not suffice for you to attain the goal of your divine vocation.

Since you are called to sanctification and to work for the good of youth, you must have the necessary knowledge to carry out the second part of your calling. Therefore study is an indispensable obligation for you.

To succeed in this, your first rule is that you must follow everything that is laid down for you by whoever is responsible for guiding your learning.

You will follow the order which has been given to you in the areas of time, method and matter.

You will keep several notebooks in which you will note everything which it would be useful to keep in order to help your memory and in order to save time in such research as may be necessary at a later stage in certain parts of your studies.

Avoid any inconsistency and multiplicity in your studies: you should rather progress uniformly and steadily from one topic to another. Make sure of the basic principles before moving on, and concentrate on a few things at a time.

Constantly develop your memory; it will increase through exercise and diminish through inactivity.

Restrict yourself to those studies to which your state obliges you, and do not follow those to which your own inclinations have led you unless your Superiors judge them fitting.

Finally, always begin your study by raising your heart to God in order to direct your intention and to call down the light of the Holy Spirit, promising to use for His greater glory the knowledge which you acquire.

2. THE OBLIGATIONS OF A TEACHER TOWARDS HIS PUPILS

2.1 - In General

The aim of your efforts is to make your pupils Christian and knowledgeable to the degree that their circumstances allow. You should spare no effort to reach this goal. Nevertheless, you should keep constantly in mind that your first care should be the education of their hearts and that you should direct your greatest efforts to creating virtuous men rather than knowledgeable men. Your Institute, dedicating itself to the growth of man's spirit, will never forget that one's humanity and one's usefulness to others lies in the heart. It therefore values the pupils' virtue much more highly than their knowledge, and values most highly among its members' works those which aim to instruct the young people in the duties of religion and to educate them in good ways. However, you are also obliged to do your utmost to give your pupils such knowledge as is within the competence of the class you are given. Here are some ways of accomplishing this double duty.

2.1.1 - Respect your Work

Extending a helping hand to still weak beings; guiding them through the tortuous paths of childhood and through the darkness in which original sin has surrounded them; acting as mothers and fathers and correcting the errors made by the parents with regard to their children; cultivating spirits made to know God and hearts made to love Him; surrounding with prudent precautions these souls created for eternity; preserving them from the thousand traps which await them;

teaching them those ways which avoid endless harm; being the visible guardian angels of souls bought back with the blood of God made man; working for the good of society and to spread the reign of Jesus Christ; glorifying God on earth and peopling the heavens with His elect: this, in a few words, is the happy and honourable career to which you have been called and the glorious aim of your vocation. You will love your fellow man, your country and, above all you will love your God and His holy religion. Thus it is that your talents and virtues which you are called upon to develop will become the means by which you will serve your neighbour and your God, you will comfort the afflicted with hands outstretched in works of charity and you will serve your country through the enlightened and virtuous men whom you will educate. You will honour your holy religion through the worthy disciples whom you will provide; you will glorify God through the souls whom you will instruct in His truth and you will bless Him through the hearts which you will teach to love Him. My Brothers, is there any occupation more worthy of your ambitions? Is there any which can offer you any more real or lasting advantages? The Holy Spirit says. "Those who educate others in the obligations of justice will shine like the stars".

2.1.2 - Authority over your Pupils

In order to do good to his pupils, the teacher must necessarily have authority over them. To have this authority he must have their esteem. He will gain this esteem if he truly loves his pupils, if he gives them frequent signs of this love, and if he gives them a positive impression of his own piety, knowledge and good character.

The following traits will make you generally esteemed and will, de facto, give you authority over your pupils: a mild and modest manner, an open and smiling face, simple and polite manners without pedantry, a confident firmness of character, an exactitude towards your obligations, a balanced temperament and an unswerving justice in all situations, a sincere modesty and an obvious piety. But if you are severe one day and indulgent the next; if you allow everything to one pupil and nothing to another, if you listen to some and not to others, if you are fire one day and ice the next, then in vain will you fall back on your knowledge, your ability, your imposing appearance. You will be disliked by the pupils, and from there it is but a short and slippery road to contempt, subversion and rebellion.

Whatever difficulties your pupils' faults and failings might cause you, you must avoid using caustic wit, angry outbursts and expressions of contempt either against the whole class or against an individual, especially if that individual is less gifted in intelligence, or physically, or by birth.

Never attack all your pupils at once, but, if something serious has happened, try and discover who is responsible, and, until you do know for certain who it is, pretend and temporise. If, nevertheless, your feelings betray themselves through a word or a gesture, do not give in to your anger, but rather give yourself the time to regain control of yourself and avoid at all costs any sort of threat which does not allow room for manoeuvre.

Never punish frivolously, and postpone any punishment, however necessary, if the pupil is badly disposed to receiving it. Never permit yourself to stoop so low as to insult a child or, worst of all, to strike him.

In all your dealings with your pupils, adopt a kindly, even friendly manner and tone, but give to no one pupil in particular any signs of affection which might betray, or arouse suspicion of, some weakness on your part. In this sort of situation any physical sign of affection, however innocent, might have unfortunate consequences; not only might you give cause for suspicion that you might favour one of your pupils more than another, but also you might put your reputation at risk in the most delicate areas.

You can show your approval to those pupils who deserve it, by giving them tokens of your approbation and by making special efforts for them, but never see them in out-of-the-way places, and never devote yourself to them with that kind of zeal which would give rise to jealousy in the hearts of the less gifted.

If, by chance, you find yourself alone with a pupil, conduct yourself in the most circumspect manner, remembering that your looks and your gestures might be observed by dangerous witnesses who might judge you according to their own dispositions and might turn public opinion against you by their inexact or untruthful tales.

Above all, earn your pupils' esteem. If you have a genuine love for them, if your zeal for their progress is sincere and unwavering, if, by the use of a simple and open language which speaks from the heart and overcomes prejudices you make your own virtue an object of their esteem, you will soon be assured of winning their hearts. Never overload your pupils with work; keep the amount within the capabilities of the majority of the class, and never abandon the weaker ones. Have pity on them, and use every means which your charitable dedication puts at your disposal to maintain their courage. Never give an order, never demand anything, unless you are certain of compliance, never make a threat nor a promise unless you can carry it out. When addressing your pupils avoid exaggeration and any potentially humiliating references to any of them, and, if you are reprimanding someone, never forget that any punishment is only effective in as much as the one who is being punished knows that he deserves it.

Avoid any humiliating punishment; rather proportion punishments to the age and nature of the pupil, to the degree of malice in his offence. A misplaced punishment can embitter or discourage rather than correct. Do not use any punishment save those which are sanctioned by the Institute.

Always be wise and prudent, always be fair and open to repentance. If you do this you will know the joy of being esteemed, liked and respected by the children and thus you will enjoy all the authority you need over them.

2.2 - Specific Obligations

2.2.1 - Compliance with what is Specified

If you wish for your efforts to be blessed by God, submit yourself in every detail to what is laid down by the General Chapter and to any individual details which your Superior will communicate to you.

In vain would you hope for the rewards of a faithful servant if you were to take the Master's commands lightly. Your pupils would turn against you just as surely as you would be turning against God; often you would find them to be the instruments of His revenge.

Only teach what you have been told to; follow closely what has been laid down in the areas of time and method; do not permit yourself any study, or method, or look at any book unless it has been specifically permitted or recommended. It is quite in order to make any comments you might have in private to your Superiors, but you are obliged to accept their decisions without discussing the matter with your colleagues. It is only in this way that you will deserve to see your efforts crowned with success and receive the rewards of your faithfulness. Be for your pupils a model of compliance in everything concerning the boarding side and the classroom. Such sacrifices as your obedience demands will earn for you graces which will be reflected in your pupils and will make their tasks and yours easier.

2.2.2 - Care in Self-Presentation

In the same way that children model themselves on the tone and manner of their parents, and inherit from them their opinions, prejudices and even faults, so too do they imitate their teachers even to the extent of giving an exaggerated reflection of these faults. It follows that it is of capital importance for teachers to be, within the bounds of human weakness, aware of themselves in every situation so as not to show in their speech, in their feelings nor in anything exterior, anything which might be a bad example for their disciples. In order to gain salvation to ordinary Christian should model himself on that model which God gave us in His Son, Jesus Christ. How much more, then, must a religious-teacher work to become an exact copy of our dear Saviour. My Brothers, in you your pupils must believe that they are seeing something of Christ, must be able to say that you are living in the life of Jesus Christ or rather that Jesus Christ is truly living in you.

Study your divine Model unceasingly; the way in which he conversed with men and particularly how he dealt with children.

Always remember that He never looked downcast, that He never lost His temper, that He never argued, never "broke the crushed reed nor quenched the wavering flame". He was so kind and unassuming that children came to Him with confidence, and He bowed to social convention in order to become all things to all men in order to win them all. That is your rule. Conform yourselves carefully to it, and nurse the weaknesses of children so scrupulously that you do not let them see anything in you which might be harmful to them.

Be well-ordered in everything. Be neat without affectation. In charity, be polite and obliging; in duty be hardworking; in prudence, be reserved; in wisdom be simple and straightforward and you will communicate these virtues to your pupils, to the great benefit of religion and in particular of the school whose teachers you are and whose interests should be more dear to you than anything else in the world.

2.2.3 - Class Preparation

You should organise your knowledge of your subject into clear and distinct ideas, and should try and find the most relevant and natural way of communicating them to your pupils. It is not enough to know things for your own benefit, you must know them in such a way as to enable your pupils to assimilate them easily. It is without question one of the obligations of your state to acquire knowledge and to add to your store by continuous and daily study, but at the same time you should be seeking out ways and means of communicating your knowledge in an easily memorable fashion to your pupils.

Before each lesson you are to review the material to be taught and to prepare examples which will make more tangible and striking the matter with which you are feeding their minds. It is obvious that of the two things which a teacher needs, knowledge and method, the second is the most indispensable, as will become clear further on. Method is of such

great importance that it is clearly obligatory, and, whatever experience and prior evidence might claim to the contrary, you are not permitted to dispense with it. Furthermore, the burden of such careful preparation will seem light to a teacher who has the well-being of his pupils at heart if in so doing he can make their work easier and hasten their success.

2.2.4 - Methods

This is not the place in which to treat of the methods used in the Institute. The great merit of the one which you must use is in being simple, clear, precise, adapted to circumstances, and varying only according to the degree of intelligence or other needs of your pupils.

Carefully study the great art of coming down to their level; simplify matters, modify your lessons in such a way as to succeed in making your pupils grasp the principles which you are teaching them. Be understandable, make things interesting even if they are dry in themselves. Give your pupils a taste for study and you will enjoy the rare experience of avoiding boredom and discouragement in them. you will awaken in them the natural abilities which they received from their Creator, you will develop these abilities, and you will have laid the most solid foundations of that knowledge and those virtues which will one day come to fruition to the benefit of your pupils, to the advantage of society and to the glory of religion.

In order to arrive at such a goal, carefully moderate that tendency, so common among teachers, of putting excessive pressure on the pupils. What is important is not to go fast but to go well. Frequently revise the material in order to make sure that the pupils have taken in what you have explained to them. In the short term your pupils Will seem less brilliant than the others, but in the long run they will be a credit to you. Their real progress, the soundness of their education and their happiness will be proportional to the excellence of your method and the degree of your perseverance.

Know what you have to teach, broaden your knowledge as much as possible, but above all cultivate your teaching method. That, for you, is your art "par excellence" and, in order to become proficient in it do not spare yourself in research and study. Seek the secret of this art from other men, but above all, seek it from God.

2.2.5 - Encourage a Spirit of Competition

It is universally agreed that it is a great distinction for a teacher to arouse and maintain a spirit of competition among the pupils. Your exactitude in following your prepared order, the clarity with which you give your lessons, your carefully thought-out and uniform method, adapted to the needs of the class: all these things having won for you the respect and affection of your pupils, you will find in their attitude and your zeal for their progress the necessary resources to stimulate zeal and to arouse and maintain a spirit of competition. Whilst giving full rein to the incentives of conscience you should not ignore an infinity of other little methods which will also obtain results. It will not be the intrinsic value of the rewards but rather the ideal value which you will skilfully attach to them which will make them prized and which will stimulate the pupils' efforts. In any case, the purpose of a reward is only to symbolise approval of a success, a good deed or good behaviour. Be prudent in your praise of application or progress so as to prevent discouragement in some and false pride in others. Be kind and full of encouragement to the less talented. Patiently encourage those who have been discouraged by defeats. Show that you appreciate good will, praise and support the efforts of all, but give special attention to those who, through a lack of ability, do not immediately see their hard work rewarded as they would wish. Show them what perseverance can achieve.

In a word, be fair, and reward the limited achievements of the less able just as much as the greater achievements of the more able. That is the way to make all your pupils equal, if not in success then in zeal and hard work. Let it never be lost from sight that the weak need more encouragement than those who get a natural encouragement from their success. Attach great importance to essays [*]; talk in advance and with enthusiasm about those which are scheduled, and let it be known that you will be taking a subsequent interest in the results. You could, as far as possible, give each pupil a "rival" of equal ability and let them compete against each other in their written and learning work. you could also divide your class into two teams, and the one which claims the most successes would be declared the victor. You could also use to advantage a method of having the least able pupil's work corrected by the slightly more able and so on up to the most able. But, if you use this method, you are to forbid absolutely any display of bitterness or anger; you are to take pains to ensure that the exercise proceeds in a gentlemanly and charitable fashion. Rewards will take the form of plus marks or whatever other devices are used in your house. These devices, and others which are used in the Institute, are useful, but if good reasons persuade you not to use them that choice is left to the individual teacher. Do not criticise the fact that others use them. They might have just as good a reason for using them as you have for not using them.

[] N.B. "Essays" here should be understood as the regular grading essays which were compulsory for all pupils.*

2.2.6 - Study your Pupils' Characters

Children's characters are different, and the manner of guiding them should be equally diverse. Such and such a measure might work wonders with one temperament but be poison to another. The same applies to their minds. Trying to guide them all in the same way would be hoping for the impossible. Some need to be stimulated, others need to be held back; one might be open and easy to deal with, another might be introspective and difficult to draw out of himself. You will succeed with gentleness with some, and with a measure of severity with others. The teacher should impose on himself the duty of studying the quality of mind and the type of character of each of his pupils, in order to lead them along the right path, and sometimes the only path which will lead them to their goal. Therefore learn to apply, in correct measure, praise and reprimand, gentleness and firmness. Encourage, stimulate, ask and order according to particular needs and in all things tread the path of moderation between extremes, that wise moderation which will succeed in opening their hearts to you, in showing you their weaknesses and in putting you in a position to be able to give to each the necessary remedy or spiritual nourishment. You will know your pupils if you observe them in chapel, in class and especially if you watch them at their games during recreation time. It is there that they will let themselves be seen as they really are and that one can most successfully observe them.

But be sure that they do not suspect that you are observing them as this could upset them and lead them to hide themselves from you: both these things are dangerous to children.

2.2.7 - Punishments

We have already made several points on this subject in passing. But this matter is of such great importance that it should be specifically dealt with.

You must consider the nature of the offence, the character of the offender, his present disposition, the disposition of the teacher and many other factors.

1. Considered insolence, stubbornness, blatant disobedience in minor matters, sheer malice, talk and acts contrary to religion and to chastity are offences which deserve the most severe punishments which we have. Nevertheless, a teacher should never inflict such punishments without having consulted the Superior. For the minor faults, high spirits, mistakes in written work, thoughtlessness and causing distractions etc., these should be corrected with gentleness, perseverance and consideration.
2. A teacher should never show any inclination to pursue his pupils' faults with that type of petty zeal which discovers a fault at every step. Rather he should try and gain a reputation for charity and balance so that the pupils are at ease with him and that they become used to doing good and shunning evil for motives other than abject fear.
3. The teacher must study his pupils' characters so as to know how best to reach each one. He will, with discernment, modify and graduate his method of correction; a look, a word, a slightly raised voice will often be enough for the timid and docile ones whereas for others he might have to have recourse to threats and actual punishments.
4. When a pupil is upset or in a temper etc. it would be wise for the teacher to postpone his reprimand or punishment so that the offender has time to reflect on himself and his offence and to receive his punishment without making a scene in front of his fellow-pupils. Such considerations will only add to the standing, the authority and the power of the teacher.
5. The teacher will also refrain from punishing when he himself is in a bad mood or when he has lost that calm which is essential in order to act with wisdom; and he will be careful to make no threats which he cannot carry out, nor will he do anything which leaves him without the possibility of compromise. To act thus would be his ruin or that of the pupil.
6. There are some children who are totally disagreeable and even some whose personalities are nothing short of repulsive. On the other hand there are those who are virtuous, of good humour and kind, and who naturally attract affection. This is a point of danger of which teachers should be fully aware: if they show bias or partiality they risk discouraging some and damaging the happy disposition of others, and they will infallibly attract the hateful accusations of favouritism and injustice.
7. General punishments are always dangerous and a teacher should never use them without having informed the Superior of the situation and having received his permission.
8. Correct in private those offences of which no-one else is aware, and in public those which were committed in public.
9. Weigh up carefully all the circumstances before giving a punishment, but once you have announced your decision do not change it except in rare and exceptional cases.
10. When you have to issue a reprimand give no appearance of losing your temper, and avoid using a bitter or scornful tone. If you do, it will often be taken as an insult and will have the same effect. Some expression of compassion for the offender should always accompany a reprimand, whether private or public.

11. Never forget that a punishment is only effective if the offender believes that he has deserved it, and that a misjudged punishment only embitters and discourages rather than correcting.
12. You are under no circumstances to impose any punishment not mentioned in or approved by our regulations.
13. Teachers must take care to make the Superior aware of any pupils in whom they have observed any dangerous traits; a proud and haughty character, indiscreet conversation, and any predilection for ridiculing those pupils who are gentle, well-behaved and pious.

3 - INSPIRE PIETY IN THE PUPILS

The major goal of our efforts and the target of all our care, study and sacrifice is to make true Christians of our pupils, by arousing in them sentiments worthy of this calling and by forming them in to the duties which such a state requires. Knowledge, politeness, good manners and formation of the heart form only a part of the benefit which the pupils have the right to expect from our ministry. We would not be fulfilling our divine Master's expectations if we were not to form disciples for Him. We would not be fulfilling our obligations towards His church if we did not educate for Him these children whom Mother Church has confided to our care. But to succeed in this task we need supernatural help; so, in order to be nourished at the source of a treasury of help we must be united to the Author of Grace. Prayer, visits to the Blessed Sacrament, frequentation of the Sacraments, mortification, devotion to Mary, to St. Joseph, to the Angels and our Holy Patrons - these are the means of helping your pupils to preserve their innocence, or at least to make them atone for the damage which sin might have caused to their souls. Take very great care to instruct your pupils in the duties of a Christian: check frequently that they know their prayers and the catechism, that they fear sin and love God and the Holy Virgin etc. Make virtue agreeable, because if you put all that is sad and burdensome on the side of virtue, and all that is pleasant and pleasurable on the side of vice, all is lost for your pupils. Their aversion for the duties of piety could become the cause of their eternal loss. Frequently underline the sweetness of the service of God. Jesus Christ teaches that "His yoke is easy and his burden is light". These words are true and infallible; those who bear the yoke can attest to that.

Urge all your pupils to experience this yoke and show to those who have already turned aside how easy it is to return at their age.

"Come to me you who are heavily burdened and I will give you rest". What goodness from this Saviour God; not only does He await them with open arms, but He encourages them to come to Him. 'Come" He says "to Me, you will find the rest and happiness which you will not find away from Me". Take advantage of those moments which occur spontaneously in a class and elsewhere to say a few edifying words. But say them in a gentle and serene manner without affectation. Fenelon wisely said "You can insinuate into a light-hearted conversation an infinity of instructions which are more useful even than lessons".

Watch over your pupils' relationships, and warn the Superior in good time of anything dangerous. When you are permitted to see your pupils in private let study and piety always be the object of your conversation; do not permit any idle chatter; that would be a waste of time and a source of scandal to the weak. Nowhere and never are you to cast aside the role of "father in Jesus Christ" which you have for your pupils. If, for a good reason, you try to become a child among children, it is never to be done in a puerile way. Temper with kindness your standing as a teacher: that is permitted as long as it is with the intention of making yourself all things to all men with the goal of winning all.

This Rule should be often read and explained to the teachers, either individually or in a general meeting. Nothing is to be changed in the field of education if it doesn't basically comply with what is laid down here. Superiors are to ensure that all teachers adhere religiously to it; they will make a detailed report on this matter each half-year to the Superior General.

EPILOGUE

What has led me to write to and address you, my very dear Brothers, is on the one hand that desire that youth inspires in me and on the other hand a burning desire to see you progress, helped on every side, in the career to which the Divine Saviour calls you, and to see you collect the reward for your persevering courage. Just as a vessel never loses the smell of the first liquid poured into it, and wool never recovers its original whiteness once it has been dyed, so too does the soul keep the imprint and deep traces of what has been put into it in childhood. "Man does not normally cease following the path he has followed in his youth". Don't pour anything but the purest fluids into these precious vessels which have been confided to your care; only give colours worth keeping to this wool, or rather, acceptable habits to these lambs whose shepherd you have been appointed.

"In as much as you do it to one of these little ones you do it to Me" says the unfailing Truth. What an abundant source of consolation for you who believe in Jesus Christ and whose hearts burn with love for this loveable Saviour. In the midst of troubles and anxieties which are inseparable from our hard but sublime ministry, these words will maintain your courage; they will sharpen your zeal and purify it each day; they will retemper the ardour of your souls for the doing of good to your pupils and, in them, to Jesus himself. They will be a source of great merit and a measure of the reward which awaits you in heaven where you will shine like the stars in endless eternity.