

PART ONE

Teachers and their Relationship with Students

In order to succeed in the very difficult task of effectively educating young people, a teacher truly must possess certain qualities.

Faithfulness is a virtue that draws us to fulfill faithfully our duties to God. Saint Paul has said that piety is necessary for everyone because it is the opening to all that God has promised us.

What about teachers without virtue? They are left with only their own resources, complete their tasks without real excitement and even with negligence, and are unable to teach all of the values and responsibilities contained in a Christian education. They have no concern or desire to teach or to practice the life of a Christian; prayer and the sacraments are not important to them. While these teachers may be able to help students develop intellectually, and though they may pass on some knowledge that is useful in life, the important knowledge that students need—the knowledge that leads them to the totality and completeness of the Christian life—is neglected. Such teachers may develop scholars, but they will not develop Christians. They have forgotten the essence of their mission—the development of the heart and the soul, on which good values depend. Consequently, their true goals are forgotten. The tender plants that these teachers have to cultivate will show real potential in their hands, but for lack of real care they will perish, because they have not received the true nourishment they need.

How different, on the contrary, is the result with those students who have been given truly reverent teachers. Convinced that the Lord Himself has given them the students they are instructing and are responsible for, reverent teachers will try above all to bring their students to the completeness of the Christian life. Such

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teachers see their students’ souls more than they see their students’ bodies. They know that young people have been won at the price of the shedding of the Lord’s blood, and they consider them adopted children of God and temples of the Spirit. Their

enthusiasm for their work increases because of this. Their major duty becomes instruction in the faith, and with untiring patience they help students learn to pray. They do not cease reminding students of Christian commitments, the works of God, and the effects of the sacraments. Finally, this kind of teacher helps students become able to deal with the values they will find opposed to Christianity and inspires in students a devotion to the sacred.

The Lord will bless such efforts and reward such enthusiasm with the greatest results. Anyone entering a Christian school will be able to note the reverence of the students. They will grow from day to day both in knowledge and in Christian values. Those who have formed students in such a way “will shine like the stars of the heavens for all eternity.”



Christian Education, By Basil A. Moreau
June, 1856