

## PART ONE

## Students and Student-Teacher Relations

## Young People Who Are Spoiled or Have Poor Upbringing

There are young people for whom parents show little care. These young people never do what their parents want, never follow directions, and murmur at the least thing that goes against what they think they desire. They are often dirty, disgusting, and unpolished. They are sometimes impertinent, impolite, teasing, and extravagant, openly yawning, making faces, mimicking the faults of teachers and students. They are children spoiled by indulgence who will tire at the least hint of work and who will become disconcerted at the least punishment. They have become accustomed to seeing their least wished satisfied and having their little whims gratified.

Often students who have been poorly brought up are those from rich families, who think of themselves as being so superior as to give themselves an air of authority over their fellow students and independence from their teachers and who believe that they have a right to special consideration and attentions. If it happens that someone makes fun of their ridiculous pretensions, they complain to their parents of poor treatment.

Such young people have great need of being formed by proper education. To achieve this requires much patience, kindness, and charity. A teacher will have to treat them with considerable indulgence, because if they have all these faults, it is not due to a shallow spirit or bad judgement or a poor internal disposition but because they have been left to grow up without direction. You must show them a lot of kindness, display an interest in them, and correct them when necessary, but always in a fatherly manner; when you do correct them, give them only easy punishments that will really help them.

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It is also good to have contact with parents in such situations in order to anticipate the accusations and recriminations of the young person and to support your own authority with theirs. This is a troublesome and delicate task. Expect to have a lot of duplicity and annoyance, but strengthen yourself by remembering the example given by our Lord: he also educated, not only children and young parents but also persons already advanced in age and consequently possessing all the prejudices and the bad habits that people so often pick up in the course of their lives.

In fact, recall that the apostles, chosen and formed in the school of our Lord, were unsophisticated, unlettered, and taken from the lowest class of society and combined a lack of education with a lot of ambition, self-love, and egotism. Admire the unchanging gentleness and untiring zeal that the Lord always showed. In all his teaching and actions, He tried only to inform them, to instruct them, and to make new men of them. As teachers, then, meditate on this example and try to pattern your own teaching after it.

