

PART ONE

Students and Student-Teacher Relations

Unintelligent Young People

It is rare that a teacher will meet any young people so lacking in intelligence and memory that they can understand and retain practically nothing. These young people make no sound except when they think they are being punished. They are often sly, pouting, and surely, do not mix well with companions their age, do not take part in games, and keep themselves apart. A young person like this presents teachers with great obstacles. It is difficult to win the confidence of these young people because they lack openness and are often insensitive to signs of interest and affection. If they inconvenience you in class and bother their fellow students, you will need to work with administrators to ask their parents to withdraw them from the school. But if they are not a source of trouble for the class, it is great benefit to them that you will leave them in peace, limiting yourself to what is possible and being content with the little that they are able to accomplish.

*Recall that the apostles, chosen and formed in the school of our Lord, were unsophisticated, unlettered...*

Self-Centered Young People

You will sometimes meet students totally concerned with themselves, often looking at themselves in a mirror, combing and arranging their hair artfully, possessing an affected walk, having touchy or extremely timid characteristics, constantly excusing themselves, and never recognizing any faults they might have. These young people can often be described as two-faced, lying, presumptuous, and bold. In class they will often be the first to attempt to answer questions; when they make mistakes, they will get angry and pout for some time. At the least correction they will feel hurt and wounded. They will always be ready to quarrel with their companions and will always use a lofty and superior tone of voice. These actions and attitudes point out to a teacher a self-centered young person. The teacher's task is to correct this, and there are ways experienced teachers have found to bring about this result. If you find this in one of the students then rarely speak to the student. When you do speak to the student, do so very seriously. If the student makes an error, do not fail to point it out; when doing this, however, help the student see that the resulting pouting and hurt feeling are ridiculous. Be careful always about not allowing the student to respond to your corrections as a teacher, and help the student understand the ridiculousness of his or her feelings and pouting in private as well as in public. Always, however, approach the student in a way that holds him or her in respect.

