

## PART ONE

## Students and Student-Teacher Relations

## Lazy Young People

Laziness is not only avoiding work and desiring to waste time away on all those enjoyments that are so natural for the young, but above all laziness is a softness and an indolence that makes students sometimes apathetic and incapable of anything that is serious, noble, and generous. This quality in some students is one of the most irritating, since it amounts to removing the hope of one day seeing the acquisition of good habits. Every good habit is brought about by doing violence to oneself in a series of acts. That is the way one can break in a fiery horse and make it gentle, docile under the master's hand, untiring in work. What good use can one expect from a horse without this vigor?

Lazy students lack the active push that each of us needs from ourselves. They do not have the energetic zest that carries ardent students a long distance. They must then be pressured, sharpened as much by the promise of rewards as by threat of the punishments that they deserve. This twofold way of dealing with lazy students ought, however, to be used with discretion and prudence, for there are young people who, if pushed too abruptly or too far, will resist such efforts and will become obstinate, believing that the impossible is being asked of them. They will then do nothing of what is requested of them. Every hope of then getting them to progress will be lost. The teacher, perhaps thinking them totally inept, will then abandon them to decay for lack of care and nurture.

Thus a teacher should avoid excessive zeal with lazy students and practice combining firmness with wise leniency. Teachers must be aware of the natural trouble that lazy students have with work and let no opportunity to overcome this problem pass by. Teachers must let words and counsel call lazy students to their obligation toward work and also join to that their own example and the example of others, using every possible way to encourage what is most noble in the young people entrusted to their care.

