

18. EDUCATION- TO BRING UP

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1. EDUCATION

1.1. Employment in the 17th century

The word EDUCATION is met with 37 times in the writings of St. La Salle. The words EDUQUER (or EDUCATEUR) figure nowhere for these words were not in current use in the 17th and 18th centuries. The DICTIONNAIRE TREVOUX (1721) does not include the word “EDUQUER”, nor does Richelet (1709), or LE GRAND VOCABULAIRE FRANÇOIS (1769). LE DICTIONNAIRE DE TREVOUX (1771) criticizes the use of the word “EDUQUER”: to impart education, to bring up.

A new word which people wished to render fashionable: it is a verbal barbarism which would fit quite well in the DICTIONNAIRE NEOLOGIQUE of the small master or the *Précieuses Ridicules*.

EDUCATION:

Richelet 1709. It is the way in which a pupil is educated and instructed as a child. “To give a

good education to one’s children”.

GRAND VOCABULAIRE FRANÇOIS. 1769: It is the care taken to instruct children, in that which concerns the mind or in that which regards the body and in particular in matters of morality.

TREVOUX 1721: It is the care which is taken to bring up and feed children. It refers particularly to the special care taken to instruct children, on what regards the body, or the mind and especially morals; anything that helps to enlighten, to embellish or control the mind.

So, judging by most of these definitions, it can be said that EDUCATION relates to: the manner of bringing up, instructing a child; it is the care one takes to instruct him. It concerns the exercises of the spirit: to enlighten, to control the mind; as physical exercises and morals.

Education concerns itself with the formation of personality, behaviour, morals. In a nutshell, the relationship which exists between a person and the world that surrounds it. This education can only find its place in a specific world: morals de-

pend on the place, the time and the social conditions.

1.2. Education in Lasallian writings

1.2.1. How often EDUCATION is mentioned in:

The Duties of a Christian	2
Instructions and Prayers	1
Letters	1
Meditations for Sundays and Feasts	15
Meditations for Retreat Time	5
Collection of small treatises	1
Rules of Decorum	9
Common Rules 1718	4
TOTAL	37

Note the small number of times La Salle used this word, as well as its restriction to the Meditations, particularly to those of the Sundays and Feasts Days.

1.2.2. Christian education

The word EDUCATION is often accompanied by the adjective CHRISTIAN (or by a similar expression). To bring up, to embellish the mind, to control it, to instruct, to do physical and intellectual exercises, morals... all that will deserve the qualification "CHRISTIAN", for it will help to make a Christian out of the child.

"To provide their children with a Christian education", is the main duty of the parents, in their marriage (Da 385). They are given a special grace to do that. However, certain circumstances and life's trials may hinder them in this respect: "Artisans and the poor... cannot themselves give them the knowledge which they need to have and an honest and Christian education" (RC 2.4). To give a Christian Education was, even at the time of the Founder, one of the duties of the municipal authorities, who in this took the place of the parents. They manifested their need and their desire; "the eagerness and the ardour which you show me for the instruction and the education of your children" writes John Baptist de La Salle in reply to a request made to him by the administrators of the town of Château-Porcien (L. 111.2). The purpose of your Insti-

tute, the aim of your state, your vocation, your ministry, "is to work continually at the Christian education of children" (MF 15.2 St. Dominic. RC 2.3).

The practical way to ensure that this education is imparted was, in the context of the XVIIth century, to send the child to a school: "They shall keep schools" (RC 2.3). The method is specified: the children are "under the supervision of the teachers from morning till night" (RC 2.3).

This work is wanted by God: God has called you to impart to the children a Christian education" (MF 177.1 St. Theresa).

This work requires a man's full attention, and perhaps even the sacrifice of his life: "It is your duty, in the profession you have embraced, to add to a retired and mortified life, zeal for the salvation of your neighbour" (MF 150.2). "For it was the ardent zeal you had for the salvation of those whom you should teach, which has made you undertake to sacrifice yourself, and to spend your whole life imparting to these children a Christian education and to procure for them the life of grace in this world and eternal life in the next" (MR 201.3).

To a Christian education are associated the Brother's zeal and the salvation of souls. Hence, the Brother's prayer is meant to help him succeed in making a success of this Christian education: "You should ask for his spirit and assistance for the Christian education of the children" (RC 77.22) and that every day.

This education is based on the Gospel, as far as the Brother and his pupils are concerned. To live the Gospel is to live God's salvation, manifested in Christ. Hence, in this Christian education, teacher and pupil must get to know the person of Christ and attach themselves to him...

This education aimed at teaching children Christian morality, to recall the preceding definitions, it must preserve the innocence of children (MF 110. St. Joseph) and piety (MF 103-177.1 - MR 199.3). It contributes towards good. It teaches to live well, teaches the mysteries of our religion, inspires the Christian maxims (RC 2.3).

Christian education, a Christian life's apprenticeship, cannot be dissociated from the person who imparts it. To start with, it is not a science to be taught, but a life to be lived, a life experience to

be carried out. In fact, La Salle speaks more often of “disciples” than of “pupils”.

St. Joseph is the model of what the Brother’s role should be with regard to the children confided to his care: “God has entrusted these children to you just as he entrusted the Saviour of the world to St. Joseph” (MF 110.3 St. Joseph). No Christian education is possible without a model which the children can relate to and be identified with as a model.

RC 2.4 suggests “an education both honest and Christian” for that is the aim of the Institute. In RC 2.3., the sentence is strongly focussed on the teacher’s role:

THE AIM OF THE INSTITUTE

is to GIVE a Christian education to children it is for this reason that schools ARE ESTABLISHED so that THE CHILDREN finding themselves supervised by TEACHERS from morning till night	RECEIVING a suitable education INSPIRING THEM with Christian maxims and TEACHING them the mysteries of our Holy Religion
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THESE TEACHERS MAY TEACH THEM TO LEAD AN HONEST LIFE.

To impart a Christian education to children, that is the education that suits them. And the means to do that: the Schools where they are inspired with the Christian maxims, where they are in the constant care of teachers, where they are taught the mysteries of our holy religion. All this is done by the teachers when they teach them to lead an honest life. And by the same token, they reach the end/purpose of the Institute. That comprises the whole of the child’s existence during which the teacher is entrusted with a salvific mission in his regard because persons and mutual relations are essential to Christian education: they contribute to make possible “a life well lived”.

1.2.3. Education and instruction

Education is associated with INSTRUCTION (or to instruct), sometimes with the adjective “CHRISTIAN” qualifying it on 12 occasions in the writings of La Salle.

To educate children is “to feed them, to bring

them up” (MF 111.3 St. Benedict). The context shows clearly that the sciences referred to here are the sacred sciences or those which lead to them.

St. Germain’s uncle (MF 131.1) entrusted with his education, instructed also and formed him in the sciences and the practice of solid virtue. Thanks to this education “he attained a high degree of sanctity”.

Education involves, as was seen in the definition mentioned previously, the formation of the spirit and apprenticeship in Christian morality. However, a certain number of notions, connected with things related to God, seem indispensable to reach that result. The Christian Sciences are an integral part of Christian education (MF 168.2 St. Yon). That may be called “the Catechism”.

At times La Salle associates, without any further detail, education and instruction of the poor. They are “children of the same God”: “Take greater care of their education and instruction than you would do for the children of a King” (MF 13.2 St. Margaret of Scotland). “To instruct and to educate children is the end of this Institute” (MR. 64.7) because their parents “cannot themselves give those instructions which are necessary and a decent Christian education” (RC 2.4). It is likewise by associating “Christian education and instruction of your children that De La Salle interprets the request made by the authorities of the town of Château-Porcien” (L. 111.2).

“The instruction and education of youth” are means to spread the Christian religion; it is a battle and a source of conflicts (the Emperor) and responsible Christians (MF 155.1 St. Cassian).

“Christian instruction and education” make us become “true children of God, citizens of heaven”; “on them is based piety and all the good that is done in the Church” (MR 199.3). They provide us “with the life of grace in this world and eternal life in the next” (MR 201.3).

In RC 2.3., Christian education may look more to a way of life, the child’s attempt at experiencing the Christian life, all day long, with the same teacher; whilst “instruction” is more closely connected with specific “religious notions”: the mysteries of our Holy religion, the Christian maxims. Instruction is included in Christian education, since Rc 2.3 concludes: “and thus impart to them the education they need”.

1.2.4. Education (unspecified)

EDUCATION is used 17 times without any qualifying adjective (apart from the pejoratives used further on). 9 times, we are told that the author is referring to the education of children and of youth. The other eight times, it is the context that reveals the meaning of the word.

This "education" is binding on the parents and on those who hold similar responsibilities: possibly the secular authority (Da 119). Parents are bound in conscience by this duty and ought to examine themselves on this point when they go to confession: "sins which concern the education of the child" (I. 137).

The aim of this type of education is the salvation of the child: nothing less than to help them to become saints.

The title of MR 194 reminds us of this: "Concerning the means which must be used by those in charge of the education of children to bring about their sanctification" (and also MR 199.3 and 201.3).

For the teacher, his own prayer life is fundamental. In fact, to pray to God for those that are being educated implies that the real Master of these children is God. For the rest: "the methods, the teacher himself, ...all that lies far behind". "She (St. Margaret) applied herself with all possible care to her children's education, for she rightly considered that this work was the most agreeable to God that she could do. For this reason, it was also the chief intention in her prayers" (MF 133.2).

Moreover, the children of the poor are the ones God loves most. To help them live as children of God requires from the teacher total dedication: "you will make of education your principal concern" (MF 186.1. St. Marcel).

This mission is God given: "Those whom Providence has chosen to educate children" (MR 197 Title).

On several occasions, La Salle stresses the analogy between the Brother and the Guardian Angels: "You exercise the functions of Guardian Angels" (MR 197, 198). The Guardian Angel is he who is always present, who accompanies, walks side by side, is there, as an older Brother to whom God entrusts the children: "To edify your neigh-

bour and inspire piety to those whose education has been entrusted to you" (MF 127.1 St. Peter Celestine).

Piety has frequently been pointed out as an essential factor in education: MF 110.3 St. Joseph, MF 113.3 St. Benedict 127.1, 186.1 St. Marcel. It is at once its context and one of its results: education leads to piety. The Règles de la Bienséance in Preface II, remind us that it is the teacher's whole life that must be dedicated to this work: "What mothers and fathers must keep in mind in the education of their children ... is that all their actions must be made for purely Christian motives and that they possess the characteristics of a virtue".

Education teaches children "to live well" (RC 2.3), to "live the Christian maxims" (RC 2.3), through the practice of solid virtue (MF 131.1 St. Germanus).

1.2.5. Education (in a negative context)

Eight times in the Rules of Decorum and once in the Med. for Feastdays, EDUCATION is mentioned in a negative context.

Without education, with a poor education (3 times) or with a very poor type of education, having a little bit of education (twice), unworthy... of those who are educated...

La Salle declaims against conduct which children should refuse to accept if they are to find a place in society.

It does seem here that La Salle sees education within a sociological context, that of a world which the children are urged to emulate. These remarks may be taken to refer to social customs, somewhat foreign to the poor classes. However, we may also consider these suggestions as invitations, addressed to the children of the poor to rise above the level of their status. However, what is certain is that the choice of this "other" world occupied by the rising middle-class of the period, is not as innocent as it looks. But it is in the dynamic middle-class society of his time that he proposes to integrate these children...

In MF 168.2., St. Yon, La Salle associates "POOR" and "LACKING EDUCATION"... What is extremely baffling is to hear La Salle utter

these words. Does that reflect a class prejudice which shows up on this occasion? Should the text be authentically attributed to La Salle? This association raises some doubts... How in fact does it fit in with the dignity of the poor which La Salle defends, with God's preferential love for the children of the poor?

Yet the vastness of La Salle's writings leaves room for such incoherence.

1.2.6. The education of Jesus Christ

The model to follow here is St. Joseph who dedicated himself "to the education and protection of Jesus Christ" (MF 110.1).

This parallel has already been mentioned: Joseph, teacher, Christian educator par excellence; and therefore a model for Christian teachers, and the Child Jesus, a model for any child.

Moreover, La Salle often presents children, and particularly those of the poor, as temples inhabited by Jesus Christ, as living portraits of Jesus Christ today: "Adore Him in them" he says in the meditation for the Feast of the Magi (MF 96.3).

For St. Joseph as for the Brother, God's design is to "preserve" the child, to lead him to adulthood, so that "when he grows up, you may see him leading a life of justice and piety" (MR 207.3).

2. USED AS AN ADJECTIVE

The meaning RAISED: reaching an elevated position in its proper and figurative sense, is excluded here.

This word occurs twice in the Conduct of Schools, four times in the Rules of Decorum, and each time in a pejorative sense.

It is to be found once in the Meditations for Feast Days on the occasion of the Feast of the Magi in which case it is referred to "the Gentiles".

"Ill-educated" (CE and RB), is a characteristic of children whose conduct is defective because they do not find in their environment: family, society, company... the proper guidance to achieve that. All six negative uses are to be found in the pedagogical writings of La Salle, associated some-

times with "a lower type of upbringing" (RB 112,196).

In MF 96.2, The Epiphany, the Kings who are "Gentiles", hence brought up in the errors of paganism, acquire however the true faith and acknowledge the Saviour in the small child of the manger. Hence, to be "ill-educated" or "brought up in the wrong religion" is not an obstacle to one's salvation. It is God who grants the grace of conversion. The entire apostolate of the teacher, taking into account the children's defects, is to make of these "ill-bred" children, beings who can welcome God's salvation which will change their lives. It is to make them proclaim their readiness to accept God's redeeming grace.

3. THE VERB TO BRING UP

3.1. Its use in the XVIIth century

RICHELET. 1709. To feed and take care of; "to breed a bird, to breed a horse". This woman had several children without being able to raise any one of them.

Raise also means to "instruct", (bring up) to impart the required instruction. "They do not bring up children according to the whims of their fathers and mothers" "never has anyone seen such a well raised girl, a youngster so docile and well informed".

LE GRAND VOCABULAIRE FRANÇOIS 1769. To feed a child until he begins to use his reason. "She is a mother who has raised all her children well".

In a figurative sense: to instruct, to impart education.

TREVOUX 1721. Figuratively speaking: to cultivate the mind, to teach young people the sciences, the arts or morality. (TREVOUX 1771): to initiate young people in the study of the sciences, etc.

"This gentleman has been made a page of the King".

"This girl has been brought up in the Christian religion".

"This priest has been prepared for the priesthood in a seminary".

“This Prince has been well educated, taught properly”.

“All the towns of Greece used to have their children educated in Lacedaemonia, in order to be exposed to examples of genuine virtue” (The word “élever” is used in all these cases).

It may also mean: to cultivate, to nourish a plant, an animal and take care of it. “Elever” is used here also:

“Here are some carnations which this gardener has cultivated from seed”.

“In Europe, elephants are not bred easily”.

“This woman cannot bring up children, they all die young”.

“Elever”: To raise has hence a literal meaning: to nourish, to cater for, and a figurative sense: to instruct, to fashion the mind, to initiate to the study of the Sciences and the Arts, to sound morals. This meaning is akin to that of “EDUCATION”.

3.2. To educate in the Lasallian writings

3.2.1. How often is TO BRING UP found in La Salle’s writings

In the writings of La Salle, ELEVER (TO BRING UP) is used 45 times as a verb:

The Duties of a Christian I	10
The Duties of a Christian II	4
The long summary of the Duties	1
Information and Prayers	2
Meditations for Sundays and Feast Days	16
The short summary of the Duties	1
Collection of different small treatises	3
The Commun Rules	3
TOTAL	40

If one excepts four uses, “élever” (to raise or bring up), is always associated with words or expressions implying a moral or religious content. When this association is not obvious, it is the context which carries a moral or religious reflection.

In the *DEVOIRS* I and II, in *Le Grand et le Petit Abrégé des Devoirs*, all of them catechetical books, “élever” is used in connection with marriage and the parents’ duties towards their offspring. In the Collection where sometimes the text

is literally that of the Common Rules, “élever” is used in in practically identical sentences.

3.2.2. To raise (élever) in the fear of God

On 14 occasions, “to raise (bring up) is associated with the fear of God”, in the *DEVOIRS* I and II, in *Le Grand* and *Petit Abrégé des Devoirs*, that occurs solely in articles, in questions and answers dealing with marriage, married people and their obligations.

The fear of God does not mean to be frightened of God but rather to adopt towards him an attitude of respect, expectation, marvel at His greatness.

“The third duty of married people is that of bringing up their children in the fear of God”. (Da 385).

To the fear of God one may associate the service of God, and this fills the expression with more dynamism, as in Da 203: “The purpose of marriage is to breed children and to bring them up in the fear and service of God”.

It is worth noting that the 5 uses drawn from the *Devoirs d’un Chrétien* I to bring up children in the fear of God is linked also with procreation: to produce children, to do so within the law, to give children to the world, a very large or a very small number of children, as many as it pleases God to give them. To have children is a mission the parents have in relation to the world’ and it is a gift of God. “It is God who gives children to them” (Da 385).

To bring up children in the fear of God is according to Da 385 : to provide them with a Christian education, to give them good example, to accept the children God sends irrespective of their number.

In the catechetical books featuring questions and answers (*Devoirs* II, *Grand et Petit Abrégé des Devoirs*), “to educate in the fear of God” is associated with loving God (Db 238, GA 417, PA 462).

In Db 241, we find some more precise information on “To educate (élever) in the fear of God”: “to instruct them, to correct them, to make good Christians out of them”. Thus, “to educate in the fear of God and the love of God”, is perhaps to teach the child to position himself before God.

This can be done if he realises who God is and who is Man; by experiencing this radical difference between God and man simultaneously, the immensity of the love of God to whom man owes his existence. This love is God's own greatness.

"To educate" (*élever*) is also to promote life. And the child will feel the first elements of the Christian life in his contact with his parents.

Instructions and Prayers 224 also associate the fear of God and the role of the parents, in relation to the examination of conscience: to bring up in the fear of God will therefore mean to make them pray, to make them learn the catechism, to correct them.

In MF 155.1 St. Cassian, to educate is linked up with piety, with instruction and also with learning to read and write.

R. 75 and RC 4.9, place on the same level the instruction of children and bringing them up in the fear of God.

3.2.3. To educate (*élever*) in a Christian way, in the spirit of Christianity

To bring up somebody in a Christian way, in the Spirit of Christ, in a genuine Christian spirit, a spirit of religion, in the faith and the practices of Christianity... all these expressions occur 17 times in St. La Salle's writings.

Da 384 associates "to feed" with "to bring up a child in a Christian manner". Here we come across the Dictionary definition. La Salle seems to make a distinction between to nourish and to bring up, because he thought this last expression had more to do with the forming moral habits, or even instruction. The word "religion" "to bring up in the practice of religion" is related to "Christianity" "Christian" with its faith and practices, with Christianity or the Christian spirit. As for "religion", this is connected no doubt with "morals", the way we live.

To Educate (*élever*) in a Christian manner is, basically, to lead to God (MD 57.3, MR 193.2, RC 87.1), trying to make saints of these children (MF 131. St. Germanus). For that reason, Christ must be fashioned in the hearts of these children, God's spirit must take hold of them. (MF 80.2 St. Nicholas). The way to do this: "spread the Good News, instruct, bring up in a truly Christian spirit,

according to the rules and the maxims of the Gospel (MR 193.2, 201.1, R. 75, RC 5.10, 87.1). The comparison with the Gospel as a guide in the upbringing of children broadens the apostolate of parents, pastors, Brothers and teachers. That is how the children receive "God's wisdom" (MR 194.2), which is clean contrary to that of the world (I 224. MR 194.2).

The children learn their religion, acquire a better knowledge of God and his mysteries (MR 193.2). A solid religious foundation is laid (MR 193.2). The children discover God through leading a Christian life, all the more so when they come in contact with the God who saves, rather than by storing up religious information.

Hence, in this sense, the importance of prayer: love of this exercise (MF 122.1 St. Monica), attitudes concerning the intimate discovery of God; modesty (MF 12.1); piety (R. 75, RC 5.10, MR 193.2). All of this passes through the heart (MR 193.2), to bring up in a Christian manner affects all our behaviour, our life. It is the Gospel practised in daily life by the children, the teachers and the parents.

The upbringing of children is in the main a parents' duty. It is one of their marriage obligations. (Da 384. Db 241. MR 193.2) However, in point of fact, it is the Brothers who shoulder that burden.

This mission is a gift that God makes to them (MR 201.1). They carry out one of "the principal missions of the apostles" (MF 102.1 St. Ignatius). It is God's work and it requires "an ardent zeal for the salvation of the children" (MR 201.1), as a result the Brother "becomes a saint" to make the children saints" (MF 131.1. St. Germanus). To attain this Divine plan, the Brother prays: "he must pray much for them" (MF 122.1), pray very assiduously (MF 80.2 St. Nicholas). Also in R. 75, RC 5.10, RC 87.1, where the Rule specifies the communions the Brothers are to make for the children who attend the schools.

What the Brother asks for in his prayers is first of all to be granted the graces he needs to bring up the children in a Christian manner, to draw on himself the light required to enlighten them (MF 80.2 St. Nicholas. RC 87.1). And he also asks particularly for the children the gift of piety (MF 122.1 St. Monica).

In order to “bring up in a Christian manner”, to train the children in Christian morals, the Brother (the Teacher) serves as a model by his behaviour: obedience (MD 57.3), “a simple and serious bearing” (MD 69.3); he “behaves properly in school” (R. 75 RC 5.10). He strives to acquire the virtues necessary in his profession (MF 131.1 St. Germanus) because he is in duty bound to bring up the children in the Christian spirit (MF 80.2 St. Nicholas). And to all these qualities which pertain to the teacher, must be added the invigilation over the conduct of the pupils (R 75, RC 5.10).

3.2.4. Education (élever) and the Gospel

On four occasions, we find the word “élever” associated with the Gospel in the writings of the Founder. Once, (MD 37.2), “Elever” is directly related to the Gospel: “That you bring them up according to the Gospel” In the other cases, La Salle expatiates on the content of the word “to bring up” and refers on that occasion to the Gospel: “to instruct the children, to announce to them the Gospel, to bring them up in a religious spirit (MR 201.1)... to bring them up in piety and a true Christian spirit, that is according to the rules and the maxims of the Gospel” (R. 75, RC 5.10). Under La Salle’s pen, these expressions seem synonymous, nay interchangeable.

The Gospel is held out as a rule of life to the children, as it is for every Christian, for every disciple of Jesus Christ. For La Salle, the practice of the Gospel is not reserved to a group of specialists. He is convinced of the nobility, the dignity and the capacity of the children to get to know Christ well and to attain to the fullness of the Christian life, i.e. sanctity.

This encounter with and practice of the Gospel aims at the essentials: the spirit of Christianity (MD 37.2). That provides a “true Christian spirit” (R. 75, RC 5.10), helps one to live one’s baptism as a true disciple of Jesus Christ. The spirit of Religion, piety (MR 201.1, R. 75., RC 5.10) mean, using the vocabulary of the time, that what matters more is living with God, having a supernatural experience, rather than acquiring much knowledge. Even though, “speculative truths” have to be taught to the children (MR 201.1).

To live the Gospel, to bring up children ac-

ording to the Gospel, is to ensure their salvation, to provide them with realistic and concrete means to answer their calling to sainthood, acknowledging in God their Creator, who loves them and calls them to find in him the fullness of life.

3.2.5. To bring up (élever) and salvation.

On four occasions we find in the Lasallian writings, the word “TO BRING UP” associated the word “SALVATION”.

In MD 57.3, La Salle says “to lead to God and bring up in a Christian manner”; in MR 201.2 with St. Paul whom he quotes: “let them be ready to appear one day before Jesus Christ full of glory...” and further on “to bring them up to be one day heirs of the Kingdom of Jesus Christ Our Lord”. It is only in the texts of R 75 and RC 5.10 that the expression “to procure the salvation of the children” is explicit.

In MR 201.2, this notion is extended to a people, to a Kingdom, to the Church: “Make them enter fully in the structure of the edifice”. To bring up is to build the Church and that signifies that one cannot save oneself alone.

Salvation happens through the love of Jesus Christ manifested in his preoccupation concerning the salvation of the children: “love those whom God entrusted to you, just as Jesus Christ loved the Church”. This zeal will manifest itself tangibly in marks of love: to instruct, to bring up, encouraging the pupils to show their Christian spirit, to reveal to them the richness of grace, make them become heirs of the Kingdom.

In R 75 and RC 5.10, it is “the Brothers of the Society” that help to save the children. The Brothers’ society, not individuals.

Instruction, vigilance, good example, training in the practice of piety, in a true Christian spirit, explain in what context the rules and maxims of the Gospels are to be understood. All this “leads to the salvation of the children”. And this saving love which the Brothers manifest towards their charges is translated into concrete attitudes, and manifests itself through “tangible signs” of an affection which draws the youngsters and the Brothers, towards God the Saviour, “towards the Kingdom of God and of Jesus Christ Our Lord”.

3.2.6. Upbringing (élever) and piety

Upbringing and piety are mentioned together in seven Lasallian passages. Piety shows that the school is Christian, that the child lives the spirit of Christianity, that his relationship with God is active, alive. “Science and piety can be taught” (MF 111.3 St. Benedict) and the children formed to piety, whilst they learn to read and write (MF 155.1). To train a child to be pious, is also to impart to him a true Christian spirit and to make him live according to the Gospel (R 75.5, C 5.10). “Training in piety” will lead them to salvation (MF 148.3 St. Ignatius). Some of them may “possess a penchant towards piety” (MH 7).

Whilst he trains children to become pious, the Brother fulfils his vocation, he realizes the plans God has for these children; he renders possible their access to God, a life of a genuine, profound and durable relationship with God. To help them to acquire piety is the aim of the Institute, the principal objective of your employment (MF 148.3 St. Ignatius, MF 186.1 St. Marcellus).

3.2.7. Upbringing (élever) and instruction

To educate and to instruct (or instruction) are mentioned together on 11 occasions in the writings of the Founder.

The connection between these two words denotes a formation to a Christian way of life, a life lived according to the Gospel and encompassing the heart as well as the mind. To know the Gospel

and to practise it (cf Instruction/to instruct No. 74).

3.2.8. To bring up, (élever) to lead, to be responsible for, to take care of...

It is the Brother, it is the Parents who take care, who lead. To educate is not done haphazardly. In order to impress a child, a model is necessary. In this way, there is coherence in the whole educational process.

To bring up and to lead (to steer) are mentioned together three times and to bring up and take care of ten times.

3.2.9. To bring up, (élever) the poor. Tenderness.

These three words are mentioned together only once in MF 101.3 St. Francis de Sales: “Have you similarly sentiments of charity and tenderness towards these poor children whom you have to instruct?” Tenderness comes up further on: “You should also show them the tenderness of a mother”.

When he refers to the poor, La Salle speaks of “tenderness” and this is worth pointing out. Tenderness goes with charity: it is a theological virtue prior even to being a sentiment. “Tenderness” is once more associated with “the affection they show towards you” affection which makes it possible for them to discover through you God’s tenderness for them.

To bring up the poor with tenderness, to reveal to them God’s tenderness: this is how highly La Salle appraises the ministry of the Brother when the latter brings up, educates, the children of the poor and all those whom God sends him.

Complementary Themes:

Disciple, School, Child, Brother, to instruct, Teacher, Ministry, Parents, Zeal.

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