

The No. 1. Method of  
Putting The Stuff Across.



The essential problem of every teacher is to sell his doctrine so convincingly that his students not only grasp the truth mentally but also make it a part of themselves, incorporate it into the very substance, the soul and body, the flesh and blood of their daily lives.

The mere knowledge of Christian doctrine may be a dangerous thing. In the lives of young men and women who do not reduce it to action, it may be only an added handicap, because they incur a grave responsibility which they fail to meet.

Knowledge of Our Lord and His doctrine necessarily demands love for Him and that doctrine; love at any price, even at the heroic price of Christian Martyrdom!

Religion means nothing....on paper. In fact, it is far less admirable than atheism-in-action, for at least militant atheists are doing something. They are soldiers. They fight for a Cause.

Religion is nothing....if it is sterilized in the stuffy theology text of a priest or in the note-books of young Christian students. For, if it is sterilized it will never germinate; it will never produce.

Religion is nothing (granting its doctrine is transplanted by teacher from text to heads)....in the minds of Catholics if these minds are as fallow fields. Those minds must be broad, fertile acres sown by Christ and watered by grace and cultivated by prayer. Only then will they produce fruit thirty, sixty or a hundred-fold.

One point above all teachers must know. The No. 1. method of putting the stuff across, of producing in the lives of their students the fruits and flowers of Christian love and sanctity is the dynamic force of example.

Actions speak louder than words. Our Lord Himself began "to do and to teach." He taught by doing. And His original band of disciples learned by doing what He did. The early Christians taught and disciplined the pagans they lived with not principally by their preaching. They could have mounted Athenian soap-boxes from dawn till dusk fruitlessly. They taught charity by loving. "See how they love one another!" That is what impressed the Gentiles. Teaching by doing will impress them today.

Two domestic and current examples will help. Suppose the lesson is evangelical poverty. From whom will the people learn more? Who will actually Christianize them? Some fashionable catechist who knows the doctrine of poverty backwards and says it is admirable, or Dorothy Day who not only knows and admires it but embraces and loves it; who prefers, in imitating the Christ of Bethlehem, Nazareth and Calvary, the biting cold of an unheated New York tenement, the homely food of a soup-kitchen, the nakedness of an empty boudoir?

Suppose the lesson is love for the Negro. Who will teach the religion of Our Saviour more effectively: the erudite college professor who can quote the words of St. Paul about one Mystical Body and no distinction of Christian or Greek or Scythian or Jew, or the Baronesse Catherine de Hueck who kisses the little black babies of Harlem, binds up their sores and, in the name of Jesus, gladdens their hearts with bed-time stories?

The worst brand of apologetics and propaganda is: "Do what I say, not what I do."