Chapter 3

THE IGNORANCE OF POOR LITTLE GIRLS

Let us take great pleasure in instructing to the best of our ability the poor little creatures redeemed by the blood of the Son of God that they may praise Him and glorify Him eternally.

Saint Louise de Marillac

Under the direction of Saint Vincent, Louise understood more and more clearly that charity should be accompanied by instruction. He taught her that as much by his example as by his advice.

She was likewise distressed by the painful realization of prevailing misery. Her director’s admirable activities motivated her to find means to remedy that ignorance which caused “the poor rural population to die of hunger and to damn themselves.”¹ Both were convinced that it was necessary to relieve suffering, but to prevent it became their essential objective. To that end there seemed to be no better means than education. As a result, “Les Petites Ecoles” or little schools were established.

Education in Saint Vincent de Paul’s Time

The pernicious influence of the wars of religion had caused havoc in the area of education as well as in all others. Formerly, elementary education had been widespread. The Venetian ambassador Marino Giustiniano stated that in 1535, “everybody, no matter how poor, learned to read and to write.”² Employers who accepted children for apprenticeship and housewives who employed little girls for domestic service were required to pledge that they would send them to school. However, in consequence of lootings, arsons and destruction caused by the wars, Henry IV had to admit in letters patent of June 1590, that illiteracy was on the increase in the kingdom, owing to the prolongation of the civil wars.

The first half of the seventeenth century witnessed the foundation of
new congregations in the Church whose apostolate was the instruction of young girls. However, these congregations were rather confined to cities and larger towns. In his conference to the Daughters of Charity on August 16, 1641, Saint Vincent remarked, "The city is almost fully supplied with sisters. Hence it is only right that you should go to work in the country." And to Mademoiselle Le Gras he wrote encouraging her to see that the Daughters learned "to read and to do needlework that they might be able to work in the country."

The State took no interest in the instruction of children in the villages and in the country. Moreover, most of the villages and towns were deprived of vigilant and learned pastors who might have attended to the religious education of the children. This had been worrying Saint Vincent for some time. He was all the more upset by the criticism made to him by a heretic that "the Catholics of the rural districts are abandoned to vicious and ignorant pastors who do not instruct them in their duties so that most of the people do not even know in what the Christian religion consists." To alleviate this sad condition, he had sent missionaries to evangelize the poor country people. Now he turned his attention to the children of these poor people and entrusted them to his able co-worker.

Louise de Marillac, Educator—Her Own Formation

While she was still very young, Louise’s gifted mind was cultivated through the study of literature, the arts, the sciences, Latin and even philosophy, which her father taught her, "in order to form her judgment and to prepare her for higher education." He often conversed with her and enjoyed the wisdom of her reflections and the extent of her knowledge. Her first studies had been undertaken at the Royal Monastery of Saint Louis at Poissy, where the personnel and the surroundings breathed the atmosphere of high society as well as that of the Great Century. Undoubtedly frightened by the luxury of an education superior to his fortune, Louise’s father withdrew her from Poissy and had her enrolled in a boarding establishment in Paris, "so that she might learn to do work suitable to her condition." That was a providential change for the one whom God destined to form good village girls. In Paris, her highly-developed education was completed by the kind of pedagogical domestic and professional training which is ordinarily given by one’s mother! Besides these programs, Louise had profited by many lessons learned at
the school of experience. It was there especially that she learned that to
develop a human being it is necessary first of all to know something about
his background and the role he is called to play in life.

Louise is Ready

During her visitations of the Confraternities, Louise established
schools of charity, visited those already in existence, gave them support
and, if needed, reorganized them. That kept her going almost without
respite from one village to another. She had begun her first round of such
visitations on May 6, 1629.

A letter of Saint Vincent dated 1631, mentions the great good which
Mademoiselle Le Gras had accomplished at Montmirail and at Villepreux
with respect to the education of poor girls, and asks “the Reverend Pastor
kindly to notify his parishioners at the Sunday sermon and to urge them
to send their daughters to the living quarters of the said Lady…”10

Louise was not satisfied with personally teaching catechism to the
children of the villages because she was thinking that after her departure
there would be no one to continue the work of education she had begun.
She considered her visit complete only when she had been able to provide
a teacher in the place. Referring to that concern, Gobillon wrote, “If there
was a school teacher in the place, she gave her useful directions; if there
was none, she trained one.”11

The first of those teachers who came to be formed at the school of
Louise de Marillac was Marguerite Naseau, who has remained throughout
the centuries the ideal type of the true Servant of the Poor.12 In speaking
of Marguerite’s previous formation, Vincent attested that she never had
any other “master or mistress than God Himself.” In very simple and
touching words, he continued:

Moved by a powerful inspiration from heaven, she had the
thought of instructing children, bought an alphabet, but not able
to go to school for instruction, she would go to ask the pastor or
the assistant to tell her what the first four letters of the alphabet
were. Another time she would ask what the next four were, and
so on for the rest. Later, while minding her cows, she would study
her lesson. If anyone passed by who seemed to know how to read,
she would ask him, ‘Sir, how does one pronounce that word?’13

That was how Marguerite, in the open air, had learned to read the hard
way. She progressed from one letter of the alphabet to the next and finally,
she was reading one sentence after another. The thought then came to her to instruct other village girls. Before making up her mind, she consulted Monsieur Vincent, telling him how she had taught herself and asking if it would be a good idea to open a small school. “Yes indeed,” he replied, “I advise you to do so.” She rejoiced when she saw that two or three of her first pupils were also devoting themselves to the instruction of children in one village then in another. Enrollment in her classes ever increased. Older girls soon joined the younger ones. For the girls who could not come during the day, she would devote her nights “and all that without motive of vanity or self-interest, without any other design than that of the glory of God.” Trials were not lacking to Marguerite in her life of devotedness, for “the more she worked for the instruction of youth, the more the villagers made fun of her and calumniated her. However, zeal and ardor for her work only increased.”14

It was not always easy to find “good girls” like Marguerite who could be trained as school teachers. The following lines penned in 1632 refer to the difficulties of recruitment:

I really think it would be well to place a school mistress at Villeneuve, but where shall we find her? Germaine would like to go there, as I can tell from a letter written to me by Father Belin. But how can we take her away from Villepreux unless we replace her by another, and that other, where shall we find her? If convenient for you, we shall talk about this some day next week when you are here. Meanwhile you can tell the mothers of your pupils that we hope to send them a teacher as soon as we are able to do so, or that you will go to see them and confer with them about the housing and upkeep of that school mistress.15

It was all settled in such a way that as the Charities continued to be established, clauses were included in the contracts of establishment that stipulated the powers and the duties of the school mistresses. An even more effective solution was incorporated in regulations written by Louise and reviewed by Monsieur Vincent:

The Superioress shall admit into said Confraternity the village girls whom she judges suitable for that office. She shall teach them the manner of assisting the poor sick and the methods for teaching well in the country schools. On their part, the girls will teach the village girls and will try to train some of them to do the same during their absence. They shall do all that for the love of God and without expecting any remuneration.16
A few months later, the first Daughters of Louise left the house where they had been living in community in order to go, at least two together, to the service of the sick poor and the instruction of youth.

Their services were desired in many localities. In 1636, the Duchess of Liancourt asked for them. Two years later the Priests of the Congregation of the Mission, who had just established a Confraternity of Charity at Richelieu, asked for two Daughters to teach school and to help the Ladies in assisting the victims of an epidemic that ravaged the population of that region. Saint Vincent rejoiced that the "two Servants of the Poor whom we sent there are doing marvels, one with the sick, the other in instructing young girls."  

On August 21, 1640, the Marquise de Maignelay wrote to Vincent: "Sometime ago I wrote to Mademoiselle Poulaillon to find out whether or not Mademoiselle Le Gras might be able to send some good school mistress for the girls of this place (Nanteuil). They are anxious that she might be able to teach them a trade because without that, the inhabitants of this place will refuse to withdraw their children from a school master with whom it costs them scarcely anything and where the girls are instructed with boys. As you know, this is a rather dangerous situation." 

The sisters were far less numerous than the requests being submitted and they were, for the most part, uneducated themselves. More than once Vincent suggested to Louise to consider "the means necessary to teach the girls how to become teachers." 

**Louise Trains Her Daughters to Become Good Teachers**

According to the daily schedule drawn up in 1633, a time was set aside after Mass when the Daughters were to read for their own instruction. That exercise was to be repeated in the evening, after which "they were to repeat the principal points of Christian doctrine in the form of a small catechism." One of the first sisters affirmed that Mademoiselle Le Gras "taught the sisters herself how to read and made them repeat their Christian doctrine." 

Saint Vincent lent a helping hand by encouraging the work. "How I wish," he wrote, "that your Daughters might apply themselves to learn how to read and to learn well the catechism which you teach them." However, in speaking to the Daughters he insisted that learning was not to be for their
personal gratification but in order to render themselves capable of instructing little girls in the places where they would be employed.24

Those uneducated girls who were enrolled in Louise's school did not receive an education comparable to hers, for they were destined to teach poor little village girls of seventeenth century France. Their method of training was adapted to their needs. The aim was not to make learned women of them but to inculcate a basic knowledge of religion,25 reading and writing so that they might be able to impart the same to their young pupils. All was to be subordinated to the formation of good Christians. One must remember that in the seventeenth century, the word "instruction" did not have the same meaning as it has today.26 It meant "education" and implied the complete intellectual and moral formation of the child in both supernatural and natural dimensions. The notion of separating religious instruction or Christian formation from the other disciplines that constituted the curriculum would never have occurred to an educator of the time. At the Motherhouse of the period, Saint Louise organized a "Little School" which was destined to serve as a normal school for her Daughters. Once trained themselves, they would set out to win little children for Christ.

First "Little School" Directed by the Daughters of Charity

When Louise arrived in the parish of Saint Laurent, she became interested in providing instruction for the poor little girls of the Faubourg Saint-Denis. With the authorization of the Chancellor of Notre Dame, the person then in supreme authority, she opened for those little girls a free school to be directed by the Daughters of Charity. This tiny mustard seed was to become a huge tree. According to the statistics given in 1849 by the Commission of Education, they had nearly 110,000 children enrolled in the little schools. This total accounted for children in communal schools in France but did not include the little girls in the schools of Paris.27

Saint Laurent was one of the poorest and most extensive parishes of Paris, "where a large segment of the population driven from the extremities of the city because of great misery had sought shelter in the shadow of Saint Laurent’s steeple."28 The request that Louise addressed to the Chancellor Michel le Masle, Director of the Little Schools of Paris and of the suburbs, expressed the aim she had in mind. She wrote to him:
The great number of poor who are in the Faubourg Saint-Denis makes us desire to take charge of their instruction. It is much to be feared that evil will get the upper hand and imperil the salvation of those poor little girls if they remain in their present state of ignorance. On the other hand, I trust that God will be glorified if the poor, even if they are unable to contribute anything, can freely send their children to school, without rich people preventing them from obtaining this good. In fine, those little souls, redeemed by the blood of the Son of God will be obliged to pray for you, Sir, both in time and in eternity.  

Louise did not have to wait long for the solicited authorization, which she received on May 29, 1641:

By reason of our position as Chancellor of the said Church of Paris, the direction and the government of the Little Schools of the Faubourgs and of the suburbs of Paris concern us and belong to us. After having examined the report sent by your pastor, and the testimony submitted by other trustworthy persons, and having obtained knowledge of your life, your moral rectitude and Catholic faith, we find you worthy of administering schools. To that effect we grant you the license and faculty to administer the schools and to conduct them at the location you requested, in the street known as the Saint Lazare Quarter in the Faubourg Saint-Denis, and we grant you the authorization to teach poor little girls only, and no others, and to train them in good living, to educate them in grammar and other pious and worthwhile subjects after having sworn to administer diligently and faithfully the said schools, according to our statutes and ordinances.

According to the custom of the time, Louise must have affixed at the door or at a window of the house, a sign reading:

There exists a “Little School” in this building.

LOUISE DE MARILLAC
school mistress,
teaches young children:
Divine Service, reading, writing, composition, and grammar.

This was the first experience in Paris of a work to which the Company of the Daughters of Charity became more and more devoted.

That first “Little School” in Paris remained the object of Louise’s very particular care and solicitude. Among her writings there is a sketch of
another school under construction, possibly in the year 1655. This one was larger but built in a very simple style. Louise would ever insist upon both simplicity of construction and simplicity of education. In her letters she often recalled to the sisters their obligation of practising this simplicity. “It would be very dangerous for our sisters,” she told them, “to desire to speak in a learned fashion, not only because it might incline us to vanity, but still more for fear of falling into error.” Her advice in this matter became at times very formal:

The manner of instructing at La Fère presents the danger of the sister teaching her own opinions or advancing theories she is unable to explain. Besides, instructing in as public a place as the wards of the hospital might lead people to accuse the Superiors of the Daughters of Charity of permitting their subject to undertake too much.33

By insisting upon a simple and practical instruction, Louise was acting in conformity with the customs of a century during which children received a very limited formal education. Reading and writing were judged quite sufficient as the greater importance was given to the salvation of their souls. Fagniez has shown how the education of women in the first half of the seventeenth century stressed the formation of a good conscience by instruction and religious practices. The general aim of education for women was to form housewives respectful of social customs rather than learned scholars.34 Since that was the case for the bourgeoisie of society, it is not astonishing that Louise was so concerned about the practical element in the education of poor girls in the villages as well as in the cities. She understood that most of those children would live and die at their work on the farm.

However, Saint Vincent authorized the school mistresses to study thoroughly the truths of religion. When Saint Louise asked him whether or not the sisters should be allowed to make use of a catechism whose explanation of doctrine seemed to her elevated, he answered in the affirmative:

It would be good to have it read to our sisters and for you to explain it to them so that they might all learn it and understand it sufficiently to teach it, for in order to be able to instruct others they must have knowledge themselves.35

Saint Vincent expressed much the same thought in one of his Conferences to the Daughters of Charity:

Holy Scripture says that well-regulated charity begins with
oneself and that the soul must be preferred to the body. It is necessary for the Daughters of Charity to teach the poor all that is necessary for their salvation. For that reason, the sisters must first be instructed themselves before being able to teach others.36

For want of a diocesan manual, Louise herself composed a little catechism to help her sisters. It is a model of its kind by the clarity of its explanations, its conciseness and its tone, which is at once cheerful and lively. We find in it the active method so much applauded today as the children are encouraged to dramatize what they learn.

A typical extract from the manuscript, kept in the Archives of the Mother House of the Daughters of Charity, illustrates the simple conversational method developed in family fashion with the children of the villages:

“What does it mean ‘to be damned?’”

“It means one is in hell.”

“What is hell, and what does one do there?”

“It is a place in which one will never see God nor be able to love Him. One suffers dreadful torments there.”

“Does one have to stay a long time in hell?”

“Forever.” The simple dialogue between teacher and pupils continues:

“It is longer than one can say because one never gets out of hell.”

“You say that in hell one cannot love God. Can we love Him in the world?”

“Yes, if we so desire.”37

A word of encouragement would then follow to fill all these little ones with love for God. The teacher might use a story, an example or a comparison that would make her instructions on things pertaining to God more understandable to those poor little girls. The children were frequently reminded to think of God while doing their work and to repeat “God sees me!” Further questioning was then suggested as a means of helping the little ones grasp the meaning of the presence of God.

Louise de Marillac did more than catechize children, she prepared catechism teachers for them.

Louise Follows the Teachers in Their Work

The correspondence of Saint Louise reveals her vigilance. She strove to develop and improve the work of teaching, the importance of which
she was fully aware. "Teach the children the love and fear of God rather than the art of speaking about Him," she advised frequently.

She recommended to Sister Anne Hardemont to be exact in giving instructions in catechism and good morals as well as in similar subjects. At times she asked for more detailed news about Sister Anne at Fontainebleau "particularly concerning the manner in which she instructs the little girls." On other occasions she wanted to know "the number of pupils at Chars," "how many there are at Richelieu" and "whether the big girls go to see you on feast days in order to listen to the readings and instructions you impart to the little ones." To another sister, she gives a word of encouragement and advice "to have great care of the instruction of youth and to maintain good order in your school. . . ."

Louise wrote to the school mistresses at Ussel expressing the wish that "they show poor girls all they could and that they remember that the most essential was what concerned the knowledge of God and His love." To other sisters, she sent the recommendation "to instruct the little girls well not only in their faith, but also in the manner of living as good Christians."

Nothing Escapes Her Solicitude

How astonished Louise was to learn that the Ladies of Charity had not even thought of setting aside a place at Bicêtre for a school for the foundlings. At once she undertook the preparation of classrooms. She assured Vincent that she had seen "a room downstairs quite suited to boys, who must be kept separate from the girls. It looks as if it will only be necessary to put in a door and to enclose the windows. The girls can be taught upstairs."

We have already seen her endeavors to secure a school mistress who might teach the children how to sew and to read, and also her efforts to provide needles, thimbles and books. According to the regulations that were drawn up, as soon as the children had reached their fifth year, they were to be taught their letters and catechism. All were required to learn to read, but the boys were also taught to write. Hours for manual work were also scheduled.

Formation in good morals claimed the greatest attention. For example, Louise encouraged Sister Marie "to welcome her pupils kindly and to teach them to knit stockings, but above all to instruct them in their catechism and in the practice of virtue." She advised Sister Claude
Brigitte to show great kindness when she instructed little girls “but not to let their faults go uncorrected.” Vincent was delighted to hear that one of the Daughters of Charity sent to Liancourt knew how to make lace. He wrote to Louise, “She will be able to teach the poor people to do the same, and by that means she will be able to draw them to spiritual matters.”

The first lesson was to teach the ordinary prayers in use and to have them memorized. Morning and evening prayers were said in common. Two catechism classes were held weekly, one on Thursday evening and the other on Saturday morning. One of the greatest concerns of the teachers was to prepare the children for the reception of the sacraments. Louise wrote encouragingly on that subject:

This Lenten season is a time of real harvest for the little girls at school, for they can be instructed and well prepared to spend this holy time piously. It can serve to dispose them to make their Easter duties worthily, especially those who will be making their First Holy Communion.

Nothing was spared in helping the teachers develop good methods in their vocation as educators. When Louise heard of the good results obtained by the teaching methods used by the Ursulines, she wrote to Vincent: “I would so much like to have some alphabet charts to hang on the walls. This is the method of the Ursulines.”

To prepare the Daughters for their work, Madame de Chaumont offered the services of a young girl who had been a teacher at the Ursulines for six years. Louise rejoiced over the offer, for not only did that young girl “know what those good nuns teach,” but besides, “she does excellent work in tapestry.”

It is quite probable that Louise was familiar with the regulations observed by the Ursulines for the instruction of little girls in the elementary schools. According to Bernoville, her uncle Michel de Marillac had in 1606 taught the future Ursulines of Paris “various intellectual disciplines.” Louise had taken little Madeleine d’Attichy to the Ursuline Convent, where later she entered that Religious Order. In their work of education those religious also stressed the need of spending most of the time teaching little girls “to read, to write and to perform other little tasks suitable to their age and their sex. Nevertheless, they will remember that Christian doctrine is the first and principal thing they must teach them in simple and familiar words.” Their aim was to give a doctrinal and practical formation, an aim which corresponded to the general education for little girls destined to become future mothers of families.
In answer to the suggestion of Vincent that all the school sisters should use the same method, Louise assured one of her Daughters, "As soon as I shall know it entirely I shall not fail to inform you of it."59

A few years later, Vincent rejoiced over the news he had just received from Narbonne: "I was told marvelous things about our sisters. Sister Frances was sent by the Bishop of Narbonne to a city quite a distance from there in order to learn an excellent method for the instruction of youth. She learned it thoroughly and is putting it into practice to the great edification of everybody."60

"It was thus," testified Monsieur Celier, "that the Daughters of Charity began to teach children on a small scale in order to remedy, as much as they could, an evil they perceived. They helped young girls adapt themselves to revolutionary changes in customs, more lasting and more serious than those of political institutions."61

**Instruction of "Poor Little Girls" and of Other Poor**

The work of the "Little Schools," like all the other works of Saint Vincent and Saint Louise, was marked by flexibility and adaptation. If teachers were not available for children of well-to-do families, those children could be admitted in the schools of the Daughters of Charity, but only on condition "that the poor girls be given preference to the rich, and that the latter not look down on the poor." Moreover, the pastor's favorable approval was required before such children were admitted.62

In addition to the regular classes in the schools, the sisters gathered the women and young girls of the environs for religious instruction on Sundays and holydays. Saint Louise was greatly interested in that apostolate for she realized that "the older girls sometimes need instruction more than the little ones."63 Good psychologist that she was she added, "Teach them kindly and gently without making them feel mortified at their ignorance."64 For fear that the word *catechism* might cause them to hesitate, she advised the sisters not to use it with the older girls but to say to them instead, "Today we will read." After a short reading, the sisters were to give them some familiar explanations, "but never anything beyond their level of understanding."65

Saint Louise encouraged the first sisters to undertake teaching the older girls in view of the salvation of their souls. She recommended that the sisters "hold the reading classes on Sundays and holydays in the after-
noon, and that they talk to them about the feast days." They were also to encourage them to visit the sisters. Three months before her death, she wrote to Sister Charlotte Royer at Richelieu to ask her "whether the older girls go to see you on feast days to listen to the reading and to the instruction which you give to the little ones." This was modern religious education in embryonic form.

The interest of Louise was not limited to girls. In all the poor she saw Jesus Christ. Therefore she lost no occasion for evangelizing. She could transform any place into a catechism classroom: the coach in which she traveled, the inn where she stopped, the village church where she prayed, the hospital ward where sweetly she would ask the patient how he intended to make his journey to heaven, the homes of the poor where children were quizzed on their knowledge of the Blessed Trinity, this being done with the intention of reaching the parents through the children.

She wished her Daughters to imitate her, recommending to them that when they traveled they should adore the Blessed Sacrament in the Church of the place where they stopped, go and visit the poor in the hospice, "catechize those they would meet, distributing to them holy pictures, and instructing even the servants of the inn who often stood in need of thinking about their eternal salvation."

Louise’s choice fell on the bashful, the shamefaced and the poor. They were the ones she destined for her Daughters. When the Queen asked for two sisters for the Charity at "Fontaine-belle-eau," Louise hastened to write to the sisters to encourage them and to urge them "to welcome, as much as possible, the poor." On hearing of the visit of the Queen to the establishment, which already numbered seventy little pupils, Louise notified the Sister Servant not to let the respect due to the person of Her Majesty make her fear to approach her, for "her virtue and charity give confidence to the lowliest subjects to expose their needs to her." Louise concluded: "Above all, do not fail to acquaint her with the true needs of the Poor."

This same concern for the Poor inspired her to send her Daughters "into their homes and to the fields" in order to teach the children who were needed to help at home or with the heavy work of the farm. She realized that when classes began at eight-thirty in the morning, children who had to do chores could not arrive on time. Therefore she prescribed that the sisters "welcome at any time little girls who would like to come to learn something. As they may be of all ages, the sisters will tactfully assign a special place for those who are timid, giving them a warm welcome, even
though they should come during the sisters’ meal time or very late. They will urge them to form the habit of praying on their knees morning and evening. They should reward with little prizes those who are assiduous.”

Elsewhere, Louise suggests to a school sister that she maintain, as much as possible, regular hours for teaching, “except in the case of poor little girls who go begging for their bread or those who are hired out to earn their living, which girls must always be preferred to others and must be welcomed whenever they present themselves and be attended to according to their needs.”

When we read these recommendations made in the seventeenth century by Saint Louise de Marillac in order to promote the principles of education for girls, we can only bless the Lord for developing into a mighty oak the humble acorn she planted. In our twentieth century, little girls on the five continents still come by the thousands to Louise’s Daughters to learn the principles of Christian life and the essentials of the knowledge necessary to womanhood. Some points of the “Rules for the school mistresses” may have changed with the centuries, but the essential spirit of those Rules remain. Saint Louise’s wisdom still radiates in these lines imbued with a supernatural spirit:

The School Mistress will often think of the great happiness which is hers, of having been called by God to cooperate with Him in the salvation of poor girls who perhaps some day would have been damned, had they not received the instruction which she gives them... She will take great care to learn well herself what she must teach to others, particularly that which pertains to matters of faith and morals... She will begin instructing them, whether in catechism or morals, only after having previously asked the the assistance of the Holy Spirit... She will do her utmost to train those poor little creatures in good habits and prevent them from contracting bad ones, realizing the great difficulty there is in breaking them if they have already been contracted... She should also be aware that all sorts of girls must not be admitted to her school, but only those who are poor. However, if Divine Providence and obedience call her to a parish where there is no teacher for the instruction of those who are wealthy, and if parents greatly insist upon their being admitted among the
other pupils, in that case, she may receive them with the approval of the Reverend Pastor, but on condition that she will act in such a manner that the poor be always preferred to the rich and that the latter not look down upon the rest...

All things being considered, she must realize that unless God Himself instruct the children entrusted to her care, she will find her efforts and skill to teach them quite useless. This is why she must often recommend them to Our Lord entreating Him to pour His graces and blessings upon the pupils that they may profit from His instructions and upon herself that she may faithfully discharge her duties so that together they may receive the reward promised them in heaven.74