

Chapter III

Christian Lady and Gentleman

It has been asked: Is a Christian expected to be a "Lady" or a "Gentleman" in his behavior with others? And also, what makes a person a "Lady" or a "Gentleman"? The words of the famous John Henry Cardinal Newman of the Birmingham Oratory help in answering these questions.

It will be asked, "what have gentlemanlike [ladylike] manners and refined feelings to do with religion?" How is one raised by bringing "him in contact with what sometimes is merely superficial, and at best is not more than a moral excellence?"

Cardinal Newman responds by saying that he is "not contemplating refinement of the mind by itself, but as superadded to a high religious perfection." Using the first Fathers of the Oratory as an example, he says that they are not only saints, but "in addition . . . they are gentlemen besides . . . "

"True refinement of thought, word, and manners is the natural result of Christian holiness, and the necessary result when it is carried out into its full and ultimate effect . . . Hence, it is that mere secular training, gentle nurture, good society, classical education, are of special benefit to the Christian, first as at least excluding their contraries, habits of rusticity or oddness or affectation and thus protecting and giving room for the unimpeded development of the saintly character in all its parts, as concurring in that development, encouraging and completing it, and lastly, when there is, after all, from some fault or other, a deficient development, at least simulating it, and supplying from inferior principles and by secular instruments that refinement which ought to follow, and often does follow even in the humblest and least educated, from Christian faith and love."(*Newman the Oratorian*, "Newman's Oratory Papers, No. 5," by Placid Murry, O.S.B., Fowler Wright Books Ltd., Leominster, Herefordshire: 1980, p.190.)

Fundamentals of Good Manners

1. General Principles

1.1 To know, love and serve God: But why should we be at all concerned about being a gentleman or a lady? Simply because it serves our reason for existing. We, as Christians, believe that we were created to know, love and serve God Who Himself has revealed to us how we are to do this: "You shall love the Lord your God with your whole heart, with your whole mind, with your whole soul, and with all your strength"; and "you shall love your neighbor as yourself" (*Deuteronomy 6:4-5; Mark 12:29-31*). Jesus, God's only Son, tells us specifically how we are supposed to love our neighbor: "Love one another even as I have loved you" (*John 13:34*). Our attitude toward others is determined by *God's authority* and the way we love God and neighbor is taught to us by *Jesus His Son*. If this end is served by being a lady or gentleman, by all means, then, should a Christian be one.

1.2 Virtuous life: Jesus came to teach us how to live. When we work to imitate Him, we try to develop habits that will make our lives conform to His life. These habits are called virtues. Hence, the Pharr Oratory of St. Philip Neri School System strives to teach its students the virtuous life. It does this, *first*, by presenting them with the content of revealed truths given to Christ's Church. Second, it assists them in the formation of a healthy conscience. And, third, it teaches them asceticism, showing them channels of grace with which they can develop Christian virtue.

Virtue can be defined as "the *habit* of doing good." A habit, in turn, is the *facility* of doing something. A virtue is specifically Christian when a baptized person has the facility in doing good as that goodness is taught to us by Jesus Christ.

Christian ladies and gentlemen *are those Christians whose lives habitually demonstrate a "cultivated refinement" in their dealings with others so as to make attractive both Christ and a life of Christian virtue.* It is the phrase "cultivated refinement" which makes the Christian lady or gentlemen different from Christians in general.

With this in mind, the Oratory Schools set out to help its students develop (1) a well-formed Christian conscience and (2) a life characterized by Christian virtue to which, God willing, are added the "cultivated refinement" which will set them apart as Christian ladies and gentlemen.

2. Qualities that Build Character

2.1 Be humble: The Christian lady or gentleman always practices self-denial and defers to others: others first; yourself last. Upon entering a room, before passing through the doorway, instinctively you should say, "After you," "You first, please," "Do me the honor of going first," or something equally courteous. Whenever people are about to take something (e.g., food at a buffet) and you and another arrive about the same time, the same rule applies. Self-denial and deference to others are the cornerstone to good manners; acting selfish and arrogant is not. "Defer to one another out of reverence to Christ (*Ephesians 5:21*). "Do not act for selfish ends or from vanity, but modestly treat one another as your superiors" (*Philippians 2:3*). "The first shall be last and the last shall be first" (*Matthew 20:16*).

2.2 Be modest: Never be haughty. If you do some splendid thing for which you are congratulated, you could rightly say, "Thank you very much. I am grateful to God for giving me the gifts for His honor and glory." Practice modesty in all situations. "Your love must be genuine. Hate what is wrong, and hold to what is right. Be affectionate in your love for the brotherhood, eager to show one another honor" (*Romans 12:9-11*). "Women . . . are to dress modestly and sensibly in proper clothes, . . . not [in] expensive clothing, but, as is appropriate for women who profess to be religious, and with good actions" (*I Timothy 2:9,10*).

Modesty is a virtue. You are modest when you exercise restraint in your behavior, i.e., in your external actions, dress and conversation. The sins against modesty are lewdness, coarseness, and boorishness, on the one hand; and excessive refinement, and delicacy on the other. Modesty promotes agreeable manners and harmonious relations.

Modesty is decency. It inspires one's choice of clothing. It keeps silence or reserve where there is even a risk of unhealthy curiosity. It is discreet.

2.3 Be a person of integrity: Be honest, truthful and pure: Integrity means complete, integral, having all parts of the personality properly fitted together. The desire for personal integrity is essential to being a Christian, for he cannot rest if there exist within his moral life inner contradictions. He must be consistent. If, for example, he desires to love all men, he cannot have a preference for the rich and powerful, but must strive to love the poor and weak equally. He, moreover, must be true to his word in everything and with everybody.

"Better the poor man, who walks in his integrity, than one who is crooked in his ways although he be rich" (*Proverbs 19:1*). "Love uprightness, you who judge the land; think of the Lord with goodness, and seek him with sincerity of heart (*Wisdom 1:1*). "Can the unclean produce the clean? Can the liar ever speak the truth" (*Sirach 34:4*)? "But you, man of God, . . . must strive for uprightness, faith, love, steadfastness, gentleness" (*I Timothy 6:11*). "If we say we have never sinned, we make Him a liar and His word finds no place in us" (*1 John 1:10*).

"The man who stole must not steal any more; he must work with his hands at honest toil instead (*Ephesians 4:28*). "The truthful lip will endure forever; but the lying tongue is only for the moment" (*Proverbs 12:19*). "A truthful witness saves lives; but he who utters lies destroys them" (*Proverbs 14:25*).

"We speak in Christ's name, pure in motivation, conscious of having been sent by God and of standing in his presence" (*2 Corinthians 2:17*). "Finally, my brothers, your thoughts should be wholly directed to all that is true, all that deserves respect, all that is honest, pure, admirable, decent, virtuous, or worthy of praise" (*Philippians 4:8*). "Keep yourself pure" (*I Timothy 5:22*). "Everyone who possesses this hope based on Him keeps himself pure, as He is pure" (*I John 3:3*).

2.4 Behave yourself, avoid bad language and bad company: "Do not behave like the hypocrites" (*Matthew 6:5*). "Never let evil talk pass your lips; say only the good things men need to hear, things that will really help them (*Ephesians 4:29*). "Bless your persecutors; bless and do not curse them. . . . Never repay injury with injury. . . do not avenge yourselves; leave that to God's wrath" (*Romans 12:14-19*). "Walk with the wise and you will become wise, but the companion of fools will fare badly (*Proverbs 13:20*). "You will pity a man who approaches a sinner and mingles with his sins: he will stay with you for a while, but if you fall, he will not hold out. An enemy will speak sweetly with his lips, but in his heart he will plan to throw you into a pit; an enemy will shed tears with his eyes, but if he gets a chance, he cannot get blood enough . . . the man who touches pitch will get his hands dirty, and the man who associates with a proud person will become like him" (*Sirach 12:14-13:1*).

2.5 Be disciplined: The Bible makes it clear that for healthy growth in the exercise of wisdom and charity discipline is necessary: Life teaches that it is not always to one's advantage to have one's immediate wishes fulfilled, and that one must learn to delay one's immediate satisfaction for later more noble and important long-range goals. Our will--because of our fallen human nature--screams "immediate urgency," demanding here-and-now attention. Discipline and self-control are, therefore, necessary to know God's will and, thus, be able to look at others unselfishly. Since virtue is the habit of doing good, "graced" discipline slows us down, gives us time to refocus, and allows us consciously to make God's will the object of our behavior. It does not come automatically. It is the result of much practice: discipline.

Virtue, then, requires the development of will power and constancy. The virtuous life, for the student, not only promotes healthy study habits but also fosters patience and insight into the dynamics of his relationship with others. The habit of such "detained deliberation" diminishes *blind impulsive reactions* and facilitates *inspired deliberated action* within which charity and, therefore, good manners thrive. It does not, to repeat, come automatically but is the result of discipline. The Bible is replete with admonitions for the development of this virtue.

"The discipline of the Lord, my son, disdain not; spurn not his reproof; for whom the Lord loves he reproves, and he chastises the son he favors" (*Proverbs 3:11-12*). "Observe, my son, your father's bidding and your mother's teaching, . . . for the bidding is a lamp and the teaching a light, and a way to life are the reproofs of discipline" (*Proverbs 5:20-22*). "For the holy spirit of discipline flees deceit and withdraws from senseless counsels; and when injustice occurs it is rebuked" (*Wisdom 1:5*). "The first step toward discipline is a very earnest desire for her [wisdom]; . . . care for discipline is love of her" (*Wisdom 6:17*). "My son, from your youth embrace discipline; thus you will find wisdom with graying hair" (*Sirach 6:18*). "Like a song in time of mourning is inopportune talk, but lashes and discipline are at all times wisdom" (*Sirach 22:6*). "Who will apply the lash to my thoughts; to my mind, the rod of discipline" (*Sirach 23:2*). "He who would find God must accept discipline; he who seeks him obtains his request" (*Sirach 32:14*). "What I [Paul] do is discipline my own body and master it, for fear that after having preached to others, I myself should be rejected" (*I Corinthians 9:27*). "While physical training is to some extent valuable, the discipline of religion is incalculably more so, with its promise of life here and hereafter" (*I Timothy 4:8*). "Endure your trials as the discipline of God, who deals with you as sons" (*Hebrews 12:7*).

2.6 Think before talking: Know the consequences that might result from what you say.

2.7 Do not let yourself be carried away by a need to speak: Sometimes we speak only to look good in the eyes of others. Seldom is such compulsive behavior, in any way, fruitful.

2.8 Be tidy: Be organized in your hygiene, in your spiritual life, in your dress and in your study habits. Make sure you are well-groomed. Make sure you say your prayers. Make sure your clothes are clean and not bizarre--avoid fadism, for weak-minded people allow themselves to be carried away by fads. Make sure your books, materials, and study time are well organized.

3. Dealing with People in General

3.1 Be kind, courteous and friendly: Go out of your way to be helpful and kind with everyone you encounter. Put your friendliest foot forward, whether you have been properly introduced or even if you do not know the person. Be sociable and neighborly. "When I was hungry, you gave me food when I was thirsty, you gave me drink; when I was a stranger, you welcomed me into your home; when I had no clothes, you gave me clothes; when I was sick, you looked after me" (*Matthew 25:35-36*). Remember the *Golden Rule*: "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you" and "Love thy neighbor as thyself" (*Matthew 7:12; 22:34-40*). "Love is patient, love is kind" (*I Corinthians 13:4*). "It was very kind of you to share my difficulties" (*Philippians 14:4*). "The Spirit produces love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control" (*Galatians 5:22-23*).

3.2 Say “please,” “I beg your pardon,” and other nice things: Always say please when making a request, no matter how trivial it may seem; e.g., “Please, pass the salt.” “May I, please, be excused.” If you do not understand, what someone has just said do not say “What?” but rather, “I beg your pardon?”

“Remind men to obey the constituted authorities, to be ready for any useful service, to abuse nobody, to be peaceable and reasonable, showing perfect gentleness to everyone (*Titus 3:1-2*).

3.3 Never say “You said”: When you are attempting to quote someone, never say “*You said that . . .*” But, rather, “*I understood you to say . . .*” You are not Almighty God who always knows things as they are. You might have misunderstood the person—unless, of course, you are quoting directly from a book he wrote. So, the right way to go is “*I understood you to say . . .*” If you are wrong, the person will correct you.

If, on the other hand, someone misquotes you, do not brashly say, “*I did not say that,*” but—whether they heard you correctly or not—say, “*I guess I did not express myself well. What I really wanted to say was . . .*”

3.4 Always ask with courtesy and respect: Never curtly say, “*Give me that,*” “*Take me there,*” “*Who was that?*” etc., but, rather, “*Be so kind as to give me that book, please*” or “*Would you do me the favor of taking me to church Sunday?*” or “*Could you please tell me who that was?*”

“You must all be harmonious, sympathizing, loving, tender-hearted, modest, not returning evil for evil, or abuse for abuse” (*I Peter 3:8-9*).

3.5 Say “thank you” without fail: Upon being granted a request—be it a personal favor or impersonal transaction—always look the other party in the eye, give them a grateful smile and cheerily say, “*Thank you!*” To show them you are really grateful you might want to dress it up with “*Thank you kindly,*” “*It was so kind of you, thank you,*” “*I truly appreciate it,*” or something as gracious. The goodness we see in others is a reflection of God’s goodness: “I give thanks to my God every time I think of you (*Philippians 1:3*).

3.6 Greet people with Christian sincerity: Take the initiative and go out of your way to greet people. Do not wait for them to make the first move. Act like a true lady or gentleman secure in his or her Christian identity and purpose. “Whoever welcomes a child such as this for my sake is welcoming me” (*Mark 9:37*). When you greet people, give them a firm handshake, look them in the eye, and, with a smile, let them know you are happy to meet them or to see them again. “Give my greetings in Christ Jesus to every member” (*Philippians 4:21*). “The Lord loves a cheerful giver (*2 Corinthians 9:7*). “Cheer the fainthearted” (*I Thessalonians 5:14*).

3.7 Do not let people dump on you: If someone starts to complain about another, do not listen. Ask him straightaway, “Why are you telling me? Tell him.” If you just listen, you allow the complainer to feel justified in his “morbid dumping.” Keep in mind, moreover, that your attention can be interpreted as consent and, unknowingly, you just might find yourself involved in something very unpleasant.

3.8 Do not undermine authority: Do not participate in conversations that undermine the policy and authority of the school. If there is a legitimate complaint, *put it into writing, sign your name,* and give it to the proper school authority. If it is

reasonable, it will be given serious consideration. Remember, undermining school policy and authority are grounds for expulsion or for the exercise of the Oratory Schools' rights to refuse service to the student for the next semester.

3.9 Always mind your own business: Avoid gossip. It hurts people and causes unwarranted suspicions in the Oratory family, making spontaneous communication more difficult.

3.10 Do not promote factions: Factions divide the Church family. If you see that people are talking unkindly about others behind their back, make it clear that you do not want to participate. Tell them directly, "If you have a real problem with him, tell him, not me." Cowards, instead of confronting a person, very often dump on "dumbbells" like you and me; they end up justifying their morbid behavior simply because a dumbbell has given their garbage dignity by listening to it.

3.11 Do not interrupt when a person is talking: Respectfully pay attention to what a person is saying and try to keep your mind from wandering; then, you can accurately direct yourself to what was said--if, indeed, you need speak at all.

3.12 Before entering a room, knock on the door: Never just walk right in. Prepare others for your coming. The teacher, or a student, might be in the middle of something very important which should be concluded before you enter. Keep in mind that your entering during class time will be an intrusion for which you should apologize to both class and teacher.

3.13 Give up your seat to adults and strangers: If there are not enough seats in church, in an assembly hall, in a bus, etc., always offer your seat to an adult, stranger, visitor, etc.--especially to ladies, the elderly, the infirm, etc.

3.14 Do not make fun of people with unusual body parts or physical defects: Not only is it uncharitable to make sport of people with physical defects; it is downright cruel and sick.

3.15 Do not annoy people by loitering where you have no business hanging around: Do not stand around and disturb by your presence those who are teaching, learning, or carrying on any serious business. Respect others in what they consider important. Avoid causing them problems.

3.16 Men and boys, if wearing a hat, must take it off immediately upon entering a house or public building meriting special respect, e.g., church, opera hall, church building, Oratory Schools, public library, etc.

3.17 Open or hold the door open for others: If you are entering through a door, and others are following, hold the door open for them. If you both arrive at the door at the same time, open the door and say, "Do me the honor of going first."

4. Dealings with Adults

4.1 Respect your parents and do your best to please them: "Revere your father and your mother (*Leviticus 19:3*). "He who honors his father . . . is heard when he prays; . . . he who obeys the Lord brings comfort to his mother; he who fears the Lord honors his father, and serves his parents as rulers" (*Sirach 3:5-7*). "He who defrauds father or mother and calls it no sin, is companion to him who destroys"

(*Proverbs 28:24*). "Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for that is what is expected of you (*Ephesians 6:1*). "You children, obey your parents in everything as the acceptable way in the Lord" (*Colossians 3:20*).

Filial respect is shown by true docility and obedience. "My son, keep your father's commandment, and forsake not your mother's teaching . . . When you walk, they will lead you; when you lie down, they will watch over you; and when you awake, they will talk with you" (*Proverbs 6:20-22*).

"As long as a child lives at home with his parents, the child should obey his parents in all that they ask of him when it is for his good or that of the family" (*Catechism of the Catholic Church, No. 2217*).

4.2 Respect your Teachers: Teachers have your parents' delegated authority at school. Help them as much as you can. They work hard to help you. "It is He who gave apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers in the roles of service to the faithful to build up the body of Christ" (*Ephesians 4:11-12*). "Children should obey the reasonable directions of their teachers and all to whom their parents have entrusted them" (*Catechism of the Catholic Church, no. 2217*).

4.3 Say "Ma'am," "Sir," or other formal titles of address: If any adult your senior or any legitimate authority addresses you (or vice versa), automatically attach the appropriate title to your response: e.g., "Yes, Ma'am," "No, Sir," "I don't know, Father," "It might be, Sister," and the like. Never give back a rude, sterile "Yes," "No"--or even worse--"Yeah," "Yep," "Guess so," "Naw," "Who knows?" etc. "You younger men must show deference to the elders, and you must all clothe yourselves in humility toward one another, for God opposes the proud, but shows mercy to the humble" (*1 Peter 5:5*).

4.4 Apologize for your condition or dress: If you are not well-dressed (i.e., about to do manual labor, to work in the garden, etc.) and if you meet someone for the first time or if you unexpectedly come across someone with whom you are still on formal terms, always apologize for your dress: e.g., "Please excuse my appearance, for I have just returned from playing volleyball, running, etc.," Any educated person, if they catch you unprepared will feel equally--if not more--uncomfortable. So, it is good manners to take the initiative and apologize--even though you really do not have anything to apologize for. It is a thoughtful act that will clear the air and make communication much easier.

4.5 Always refer to those of the female gender as ladies: In the South, at least, the descriptive *woman* is usually reserved for females of questionable respect. If you are a gentleman, then, you will treat all ladies with the courtesy, deference and respect you would give the Queen of England and all the members of the royal family. It does not matter what is happening in other places on the planet, in our school and church, it is an immutable rule of order, in English, to refer to persons of the female gender as "ladies." Catholics refer to Mary, the Mother of God, as *Our Lady, Notre Dame, Nuestra Señora*, etc. The Bible gives us reason to give special respect to womanhood. "Can a mother forget her infant the child at the breast, so as not to have pity on the son of her womb" (*Isaiah 49:15*). "Like one whom his mother comforts, so I will comfort you" (*Isaiah 66:13*). "Happy the man who has a good wife! The number of his days is doubled. A noble wife gladdens her husband, and he lives out his years in peace" (*Sirach 26:1-3*).

4.6 Boys, in passing a known adult in the street, corridor, etc., greet him/her with a slight bow and, if you are wearing a hat, tip it: Stop, bow your head just slightly, tip your hat--if you have one on--and say, "Good morning, Ma'am," "Good afternoon, Sir," etc. If you have conversation with the person, keep your hat off until you leave him/her. Keep your hat on if the weather is inclement. Adult gentleman always greet ladies in this manner.

5. Dealing with Peers

5.1. Never let anyone be punished for what you have done: this is not only uncharitable and sinful; it is downright sick and cowardly.

5.2. Do not bully others: Only cowards harass others.

5.3 Do not jeer at or call your classmates names: Only spiritually sick people get satisfaction out of hurting others.

5.4 Do not cheat at games: Christians are honest. They want to see the best man win. Although it is good to work hard and want to win, if we lose, we should be happy for the winner. On such occasions, a Christian does not allow himself to indulge in sadness, jealousy or envy--even though these feelings might suddenly and unwillingly be experienced--but always rejoice in the good that comes to others.

6. Classroom Etiquette

6.1 Good manners in the classroom: The classroom, too, has its rules of etiquette, which facilitate the learning process. If these rules are not kept, the teaching/learning process suffers.

6.2 Be punctual: Be on time for everything. It is a way of respecting others.

6.3 Be at your post: Be in your seat at the time class begins.

6.4 Be ready to work: Have materials for class (textbook, notebook for taking notes, pen, prayers, etc.) ready at your place before class begins--everything else should have been put away.

6.5 Pay attention: Listen carefully to the teacher's prepared class, writing in your notebook all important information and "everything" written on the board.

6.6 Be inquisitive, not contentious: Ask questions but do not contentiously challenge the teacher on points that touch upon fundamental Catholic teachings, homework assignments, style in which he/she is conducting the class--questions which honestly look for truth will always be honored; contentiously political questions will carry sanctions.

6.7 Get permission to speak: Do not speak without first raising your hand and getting permission; the same rule applies for class movies or other activities.

6.8 Get permission to leave your seat: Do not get out of your seat without first getting permission--and only for serious reasons.

6.9 Maintain respectful silence: Do not talk to fellow students during class time without first getting permission. The classroom is a holy place. It is where truth is taught. God is truth.

6.10 Necessary talk requires permission: The teacher must maintain control of his class. He alone has the right to talk as he teaches. You must always ask permission. Do not communicate, verbally or otherwise, with others without first getting permission.

6.11 Be honest: Do not copy or cheat in any way.

6.12 Keep the room clean: See to it that the area around your desk is clean--do not throw things on the floor. If you see something on the floor that needs to be put in the wastepaper basket, do it--your reward will be great in heaven.

6.13 Write legibly: In all assignments and examinations, write clearly, legibly and with ink--if the teacher has difficulty in deciphering the writing, it will be considered an incorrect or incomplete answer, as the case may be.

6.14 Apologize for tardiness: If you enter the classroom late, apologize to both the class and the teacher. Make sure you bring a tardy slip from the office.

6.15 Do not eat food or chew gum: The classroom is a holy place. In holy places we neither eat food nor chew gum. Ladies and gentlemen do not chew gum publicly. In public places (e.g., in church, in school or church offices, libraries, concert halls, etc.) ladies and gentlemen do not chew gum. At times it might be necessary to chew some gum--e.g., to clean your teeth, to freshen your breath, to take certain medicines, etc. At such times it should be done in a discreet way, not like a cow chewing her cud. By all means, do not make it snap in your mouth.

6.16. Do not play or roughhouse in the classroom: Jesus said, I am the way, the truth and the life" (*John 14:16*). The classroom is where truth is taught. Besides, a classroom is not a place for playing. Someone could get hurt. So, do not run or roughhouse in classrooms before or after class.

6.17 Report damaged church property: If you, or anyone else, damage Church property, report it to the Pharr Oratory of St. Philip Neri School System office.

6.18 Pray to begin and to end each class: Every class begins when the teacher begins the prayer--each student should be at his desk; every class ends when the teacher officially says, "Class dismissed"--students do not begin to put away class materials until they hear the *official dismissal*.

6.19 Do not do other work during a class period: Do not write personal notes or do other work during class lectures or during other activities (movies, videos, group assignments, etc.) of that class.

6.20 Do not respond to the misbehavior of others during class: Do not encourage or cooperate with others misbehaving in class.

6.21 Do not copy homework: Do not let anyone copy your homework. You are hurting them if you do. You are letting them use you unjustly. It is a sin against charity and justice. Do not copy someone else's homework.

6.22 Do not touch the room thermostat or phone. Only teachers, aides etc. are permitted to control the temperature of the room or answer the phone.

6.23 If an adult enters the classroom, stand and greet him/her: Stand up and say, for example, "Good afternoon, Mrs. Smith." If you do not know the name, use "Ma'am", "Sir," e.g., "Good afternoon, Ma'am," "Sir," "Father," etc.

7. Qualities Promoting Safety

7.1 Do not run in rooms, building or cloisters: If you must rush, walk fast but carefully.

7.2 Do not push, shove or run against people: By pushing and shoving you can hurt yourself and others.

7.3 Report weapons immediately: If you see, or seriously suspect, that, on campus, there are guns, knives, or any instrument that might be considered a dangerous weapon, report it immediately to the Pharr Oratory of St. Philip Neri School System office. The entire school community could be in grave danger--which the school authorities alone can decide.

7.4 Report drugs, cigarettes, alcohol, etc., immediately: If you see, or seriously suspect, that there are illegal drugs on campus or other substances used in an illegal or harmful way (e.g., capsules, pills, powders, glue, paint, etc.), report it immediately to the office. Failure to report an illegal activity could make you an accomplice to this act.

8. Respect for Church Property

8.1. Do not destroy or deface Church property: The Pharr Oratory of St. Philip Neri School System property belongs to the Church. Report the destruction of school property immediately. It is God's property and our school. You have a right to feel offended. Reporting the offender is not being a tattletale but a mature, responsible Christian student. If you do not report the offender, he will do it again and you will share part of the blame for permitting it to happen.

8.2 Help keep the restrooms clean: When you use the bathrooms, clean up after yourself. You are not a pig in a pigsty, but a Christian gentleman or lady who loves and respects his neighbor. No one likes to use a bathroom made dirty for lack of consideration of others.

8.3 Do not put graffiti on walls, doors, gates, etc.: Catholic school property is God's property. It is a sin to deface other people's property; it is, indeed, a much more serious sin (sacrilege) to deface property that belongs to God's Church.

9. Respect for Things Godly

9.1 Boys tip their hats: A boy should tip his hat upon passing in the front of a Catholic or Orthodox Church. He does this by ever so slightly lifting it from his head or by simply touching the brim. This custom acknowledges that Christ is truly present in the tabernacle of that church. If the boy is not wearing a hat, he should make the sign of the cross.

9.2 Girls in passing in front of a Catholic or Orthodox church should make the sign of the cross: Christ is present in the tabernacle of that church.

9.3 At the name of Jesus you should always bow your head: "At the name of Jesus every knee must bend in the heavens, on the earth, and under the earth, and every tongue proclaim to the glory of the Father, Jesus Christ is Lord" (*Philippians 2:10-11; Romans 14:11*).

9.4 It is proper that a lady wear a hat or veil in Church: Catholic Church tradition for the laity, in conformity with biblical teachings, has required that a lady wear a veil or a hat in Church. This tradition has not been abrogated; the Church, in her wisdom, however, has encouraged the faithful to make frequent visits to Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament and, thus, has encouraged women to make these visits even if they have nothing to cover their heads. All things being equal, the Church would not want a lady to miss Mass simply because she did not have a hat or veil. So, the time-honored biblical tradition of the Church still stands; only for the "unintentional lack of head covering" should a lady enter a Catholic church bareheaded. A man, on the other hand, must enter a church bareheaded.

"Any man who offers prayer or explains the will of God with anything on his head disgraces his head, and any woman who offers prayers or explains the will of God bareheaded disgraces her head, for it is just as though she had her head shaved. For if a woman will not wear a veil, let her cut off her hair, too. But if it is a disgrace for a woman to have her hair cut off or her head shaved, let her wear a veil" (*I Corinthians 11:4-7*).

9.5 Boys should not wear a head covering in church: "Any man who offers prayer or explains the will of God with anything on his head disgraces his head" (*I Corinthians 11:4*).

9.6 Be quiet in church: Maintain respectful silence at Mass, at liturgical celebrations and at spiritual exercises. There should be no unnecessary talking during those times.

9.7 Participate fully in the action of the Mass: For the spiritual benefit of both individual and community, each member should participate fully in all prayers, hymns, etc., of Mass and any other church religious exercise.

10. Table Manners

10.1 Wash your hands before eating.

10.2 Do not put a knife in your mouth.

10.3 Do not drink with a spoon in your glass.

10.4 Men should never sit at table with their hat on.

10.5 Do not pick your teeth at table: At times food lodged between teeth can be very annoying; if you must remove it, put your napkin before your mouth and, from behind the napkin, remove the particle, preferably with a toothpick--never use your fingernail.

10.6 Do not slurp: If you are using a straw, do not make a slurping noise as your drink reaches the bottom of the glass, sucking like a vacuum cleaner.

10.7 Do not slurp your soup from the spoon: Sip gently and quietly from the side of the soup spoon; or, also at the side of the spoon, put your upper lip over the soup or consommé, bring the soup in, and swallow. Your face should not be close to your bowl.

10.8 Cut your food into little bits before picking it up with a fork: Do not cut you food up all at once, but cut it as you eat. Make sure the portions do not make your cheeks bulge.

10.9 Put your napkin on your lap before you start eating: Do not tuck your napkin into your shirt collar, between the buttons, etc., but spread it gently over your lap.

10.10 Do not butter your bread or roll all at once: Break a piece of bread from the roll, slice, etc., butter the portion you are about to eat, and then consume it.

10.11 Do not take a piece of bread and wipe the plate with it: If the sauce is exceptionally expensive and good, you may take a small piece of bread, put it in your plate, and, with your knife and fork, soak up the juice or sauce.

10.12 Do not make sounds with your mouth when you chew: Chew with your lips together and quietly. Do not smack your lips.

10.13 Do not make a sound by allowing your fork or spoon to hit your teeth: It is distracting and draws attention to yourself.

10.14 Do not talk with food in your mouth; swallow first: First, if you talk with your mouth full, it is difficult to understand you; second, there is danger that your listener will be splattered with food from your mouth.

10.15 Before starting to eat, look around to see that everyone has what they need: Do not be greedy. If there is somebody lacking something, try to help, and, then, begin eating yourself. "When you assemble it is not to eat the Lord's Supper, for everyone is in haste to eat his own supper. One person goes hungry while another gets drunk. Would you show contempt for the Church of God, and embarrass those that have nothing? What can I say to you? Shall I praise you? Certainly not in this matter!" (*I Corinthians 11:20-22*).

10.16 If you are going to sneeze or cough, protect those around you: If you feel a sneeze or cough coming on, get up quickly, put your hand over your mouth and sneeze or cough with your head turned away from others. Quickly put your hand up to your face to catch the blast of air, preferably with a handkerchief--if you have time to get it out. Studies have shown that an unmanaged sneeze can spread germs over a large area and contaminate people and surfaces.

10.17 Take care when you blow your nose in public: If you absolutely have to blow your nose while eating (1) get up from the table, (2) take out your handkerchief or tissue, unfold it--not completely--till you have enough area--make sure you have a clean one every day, (3) turn your head away from the people and table, and (4) blow your nose quietly--do not honk.

10.18 Never pick your nose publicly--especially at table: If it is necessary to remove something annoying from your nose and you cannot remove it by easily and quietly blowing it into your handkerchief, ask to be excused and tend to it outside or in the lavatory.

10.19 Do not eat with your elbows on the table: Putting one's elbows on the table is only permitted (1) in between the various courses that are served and (2) during the delightful conversation that usually takes place when the dessert, coffee and liqueur are served.

10.20 Never comment that you do not like the food: You should never (1) say that you do not like the food nor (2) express very offensive not only to those who did their best to prepare the food, but to those who find it very enjoyable.

10.21 Do not eat until most have been served: Do not begin eating until most of the guests have been served. Eat to live; do not live to eat. Show that you are a disciplined, self-controlled person. Work on strengthening your will. If you cannot control yourself at table, you will most likely not be able to control yourself at other times, e.g., holding your tongue when you are angry, resisting temptations when they come your way, etc.

10.22 Introduce only pleasant conversation at table: Good digestion requires that we eat slowing and calmly. At table, you should not talk about matters that are either vulgar or controversial.

10.23 Christian etiquette: For a complete treatment of Christian etiquette, see the Athenæum publication *The Christian Lady and Gentleman*.