

The Cobbler

Ephesians 6:15

The Newsletter of the Christian Montessori Fellowship
May – June 2007

National Conference
July 26-28, 2007
San Antonio, Texas
“Celebrate the Inspiration
Continue the commitment”
100th
Anniversary of Montessori
25th Anniversary of the
Christian Montessori Fellowship

Conference Agenda
(Still growing)
Thursday

10:00 A.M. Contemporary Montessori
History
Group Introduction
12:00 P.M. Lunch
1:00 P.M. Follow the Child to
“World Peace”
Edward Fidellow
2:00 P.M. Self-esteem: Help or
Hindrance
Betty Golightly
3:00 P.M. Break
3:30 P.M. Zoo Phonics
Betta Kym
4:30 P.M. Toddler Bible
Carolyn Ely
4:30 P.M. The Five Great Lessons
Don Barber
5:30 P.M. Break
6:00 P.M. Dutch Treat Dinner

Friday

8:30 A.M. Opening

8:45 A.M. Teaching the Heart of the
Child
Betty Golightly
9:45 A.M. I’ll Walk the Line
Barbara Fidellow
10:45 A.M. Break
11:00 A.M. Words at Work in the
classroom
Joshua Thompson Ph.D.
12:00 P.M. Lunch
1:00 P.M. All Day Montessori
Sherry O’Donnell
2:00 P.M. Listening to God’s Stories
Betta Kym
3:00 P.M. Afternoon break for the
day

Saturday

8:30 A.M. Opening
8:45 A.M. God’s Purpose in
Education
Edward Fidellow
9:45 A.M. Selective Mutism
Carolyn Ely
9:45 A.M. Scroll of Virtues
Binky Stephenson
10:45 A.M. Break
11:00 A.M. Listening to God’s Stories
Betta Kym
12:00 P.M. Lunch
1:00 P.M. Care of Our Temple
Patricia Wong
2:00 P.M. Observation
Joshua Thompson Ph.D.
3:00 P.M. Break
3:30 P.M. How Jesus Comes to the
Classroom
Barbara Fidellow
4:30 P.M. Lessons We’ve Learned
Panel
6:30 P.M. Dinner

Conference cost: \$350

An additional \$25 discount for CMF members.

Conference includes 3 lunches, morning and afternoon breaks and Saturday dinner.

Conference Location:

Menger Hotel

1-800-345-9285

www.historicmenger.com

Lodging costs \$127.26 (tax included) per night Double or Single rates good if you register by June 26th.

You should attend!

Montessori is a spiritual journey with an educational component. Having your spirit rejuvenated is essential to meeting the needs of your educational commitment. Your children need you to attend.

Montessori Training

We have undertaken the creation of a decidedly Christian Montessori training program. While there is no Christian way of doing red rods, there is an approach to the philosophy - original intent – that speaks to the Christian spiritual foundation of the method.

There is a matrix in Montessori that when you lay the scriptures over the philosophy you get a new bold relief of understanding and insight.

A matrix is “something within or from which something else originates, develops or takes form.” And “a mold

from which a relief surface is made.”

And relief is defined as “a mode of sculpture in which forms and figures are distinguished from a surrounding plain surface.”

You can certainly teach Montessori philosophy without the scriptural base (that is how most of us learned it) but once you acknowledge its scriptural design it begins to unfold with ever greater insights and understanding.

This training program needs to involve the whole community. Your experience, knowledge and insights need to be passed on to the new generations who will follow in teaching.

Therefore, we are going to establish a consortium of Montessorians. If you are interested in being part of this volunteer effort let us know.

We will look for input on fine-tuning the development of the Christian philosophy, the basic outlines of training, classroom management, and the development of mentors and tutors. Our purpose in creating this training is to encourage and enable the Christian community to start and transform Christian schools.

The Foundation of Montessori part 2 Observation

Long before we get to red rods or pink towers, we create the Montessori “environment” by who we are. The spiritual preparation of the teacher is the essence of a successful guide. In Montessori it can never be just the

academics because it is a matter of nurturing the whole child – intellectually, physically, emotionally and spiritually. Anything else is just a partial success. You start the process by being Christ-centered (otherwise it is just about me). Second, we are dealing with a question of stewardship. That is why we are here – to find out the gifts, talents and opportunities that God has set out for us. Again, the stewardship question is not just about us but also about the children put into our care. Montessori believed that the work of the child is to form the adult. And just as we create a physical environment to facilitate discovery of the physical world, we also create an emotional environment for the child to discover the sensate world. And further we create a spiritual environment for the child to discover the spiritual world.

The ultimate question of life is who did God make me to be? It is a multi-faceted question involving physical, emotional, intellectual, social and spiritual components. And if we are successful in discovering the answer then that part of the Lord's Prayer is fulfilled, "Thy will be done (in me) on earth as it is in heaven (the image and purpose and plan God had for me before time began).

Our stewardship is to fulfill that plan in our own life and to aid our children to discover their path and their plan. That is why the foundational elements of Montessori must start with being Christ-centered, stewardship and respect – "Thy will be done".

I am not the molder of the child. I am the midwife of life that is being born. Psalm 139:15 "My frame was not hidden from you when I was made in the secret place. When I was woven together in the

depths of the earth, your eyes saw my unformed body. All the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be."

And we are a midwife to the birth, formation and revelation of the personality. That personality is already written in God's book. And so how do we cooperate with God to help the child discover his destiny? **Observation!**

There is no other educational methodology that posits observation as a key tenet of teaching. Traditional education attempts to fill a bucket of learning, assuming that the child is a "blank slate". Again, Psalm 139 verse 14, "I am fearfully and wonderfully made". Who taught Michelangelo to sculpt, da Vinci to paint, Mozart to compose, Chopin to play, Shakespeare to write, Einstein math? Gifts of God! And each child possesses a unique personality gift waiting to be discovered, unearthed and life breathed into it.

People who misunderstand Montessori – "kids can do anything they want" – miss a significant word in the Montessori lexicon. The word is "training". Montessori uses the word over and over again. Training does not denote doing anything you want. Training calls for focused action to achieve a goal. Michelangelo's gift still needed training to bring it to fruition. Our students still need training. But you don't shoot baskets to be a better hockey player.

We have to be careful that we don't miss the word "training". Again, training is focused action. But what are the actions we need to focus on? And how do we determine them? The only way to know if we are aiming at the right target with a child is to look at the child. I don't know if it is traditional education

or just life that makes us anxious to act rather than reflect. The entrepreneur's motto of "Ready, fire, aim" seems to fit much of what passes for modern education. What makes Montessori so revolutionary is the spiritual base from which it grew – Christianity. Christianity is revolutionary because it is not based on doing but on relationship. (The doing comes as a result of the relationship.) Montessori is based on relationship – spending time to get to know the child. Yogi Berra is reported to have said, "You can see a lot if you just look." Our problem is – we just don't look. Looking (observing) seems too passive. There is not enough action. And yet if we become good observers we can accomplish more with less because we know where to focus.

If a teacher of history studies history in order to teach, what should a teacher of children study? It is imperative that we know our subject. God is a God of personality and we are made in His image. Each of our personalities reflects a facet of God – art and music, cooking and caring, laughter and joy. How do we know what to encourage, what to train? Observation!

To be able to know our children, we need to know ourselves. There are a number of personality scales, tests and systems that help give you an idea of why you are like you are – and why everybody else is like they are. The Meyers-Briggs test is a fairly comprehensive analysis of personalities. There is also the DISC. Then there is the study of enneagrams. Books to add to your reading list (and library) include:

1. "Please Understand Me" David Keirse and Marilyn Bates, Prometheus Nemesis Book Co. isbn 0-9606954-0-0,

2. "Positive Personality Insights" Robert Rohm www.personalityinsights.com,
3. "Two sides of Love" Gary Smalley and John Trent.
4. "Personality Types" Don Richard Riso, Houghton Mifflin, isbn 0-395-44484-5
5. "The Five Love Languages" Gary Chapman Northfield Publishing isbn 1-881273-15-6
6. "The Five Love Languages of Children" Gary Chapman and Ross Campbell Northfield Publishing isbn 1-881273-65-2

(Does anyone have any other books or information on the subject to share?)

The September 2006 Cobbler has another article on observation that is helpful to our discussion.

The significance of observation is not the imparting of information (which is a traditional educational objective) but the facilitating of discovery, helping the child to explore and to learn. We learn, we teach, we live effectively out of who we are. Who we are propels us in life. It is the nature of birds to fly, of fish to swim and each of us is graced with a personality destiny that we must discover. And that is where we as guides, helpers, facilitators, parents, and teachers best serve our children – helping them to discover who God made them to be.

Observation is the key to help aid their discovery. We need to train ourselves to see.

Opportunities

Providence Montessori School
Portland, Oregon

Managing Director Opportunity
Available. The Sisters of Providence

opened the doors for students over 40 years ago establishing the first Montessori School in the Pacific Northwest. Requirements include a bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university with a major in early childhood education or closely related field and hold a Montessori teaching credential in a nationally recognized Montessori teacher-training program. Two years of teaching classroom experience preferably in preschool or K-3, with a minimum of two years successful management experience with proven ability to organize and direct educational programs and activities.

For more information, please email Fiona.Gladden@Providence.org, call 503-215-4163 (toll free: 877-JOIN PHS), or apply online at www.providence.org/careers (job #8440)

Elementary Teacher for fall of 2008
Cross of Life Christian Montessori School, Roswell, GA contact Kim Coleburn director@colmontessori.com

The Christian life lived in a Montessori environment

As I read the scriptures, I hear echoes from Montessori's writings. As I read the Montessori literature I see scriptural footprints. Montessori's inspiration was God breathed. Christianity is a radical religion – an “other worldly” set of beliefs that not only calls on us to love our enemies but to have a relationship with our Creator. And that relationship provides for power, faith, trust, discovery, adventure and love.

How then should a Christian live? Like the ideal guide! The major difference between a Christian Montessori orientation and a non-parochial approach is that power is promised – promised above what we are able to produce; promised and delivered because we are not operating by our own efforts but put ourselves at the service of God. Our motivation is not “me” directed but directed at pleasing our Savior, by being the best stewards of our talents, opportunities and the young tender lives that are entrusted to us.

Is this too idealistic? Of course it is! And that is why you need God's power to successfully navigate each day. But if we don't aim for the ideal we never land among the stars.

I keep finding “Montessori” chapters in the Bible. Montessori's insights are breathed by that same Holy Spirit that inspired the scriptures. Philippians 4:4, “Rejoice in the Lord always.” When we are rejoicing we are happy people to be around. Verse 5, “Let your gentleness be evident to all.” Is there any greater Montessori commandment to a guide? Verse 6, “Do not be anxious for anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.” How do we help heal the hurt and hurting children of our world – but through prayer? Verse 7, “And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.” The guide's heart (and mind) needs this very special transcendence, this very special peace. If the guide doesn't have the peace how will the environment reflect peace?

The environment is a holy place – because God is present; His Spirit is present, His angels are present. Matthew

18:10 “See that you do not look down on one of these little ones. For I tell you that their angels in heaven always see the face of my Father in heaven.” Now, you’ve got a new pressure to worry about – the angels are going to tell on you!

Verse 8, “Finally, brothers whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable – if anything is excellent or praiseworthy – think about such things.” Is this not a list for creating a prepared environment both physically and emotionally - and spiritually?

Verse 9, “Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me – put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you.” It is almost a three period lesson with a bonus. Whatever you have learned, received or heard – and then the Montessori kicker – “or seen in me”. Modeling – far beyond words!

It is not just the children who are transformed (or normalized) by being in the environment.

Cross Mountain Forum

We invite you to visit our website www.crossmountainforum.com to learn about our Montessori seminar for school heads. It is a unique three days of exploring the myriad components that go into running a school. We are offering two special forums one before the conference and one right after to allow for the best use of travel time and dollars. It is also a great seminar if you

are wanting to start a Christian Montessori school.

Summer Special

For the next two weeks we will be selling our 100th anniversary sweat shirts for \$18 each (L and XL) (a savings of \$7) and our T-shirts for \$15 each. Visit the website

www.crossmountainpress.com

“Getting Your Money’s Worth”

The booklet “Getting your money’s worth” is a great education tool for parents and a great retention tool for enrollment. Review the table of contents and read sample chapters at

www.crossmountainpress.com

Regional Seminars

We are in the process of setting up regional one day Saturday seminars for the fall and spring. If you have an interest in hosting a meeting contact Edward Fidellow 210-698-1911. Seminar agendas are listed on the fellowship website. A further advantage of hosting a regional seminar is the opportunity of providing an opportunity for your parents to attend a parent meeting specifically designed for them.

New Schools

We continue to find new schools around the country and the world. We’ve added two schools in South Africa and two in Canada.

Membership

We need your support. Please join the fellowship.

Christian Montessori Fellowship

Membership Application

Name _____

Address _____

Email _____

Telephone _____

How long have you taught? _____

School _____

Level you teach: _____

(Mark all that apply.)

Are you a: teacher _____

administrator _____

owner _____

other _____

What is your church affiliation?

Interests

What is your interest in Christian Montessori?

To teach in a Christian Montessori school _____

To start a Christian Montessori school _____

To transform an existing school _____

To be a better teacher where you are now _____

Not sure at this time _____

Are you familiar with hands on Bible curriculums (Godly play, Catechesis of the Good Shepherd)? Yes ___ No ___

Do you have an interest in being a regional representative for CMF? _____

Are you in a position to host or help host a regional CMF seminar?

Host _____ Help _____

Membership Benefits

1. Discounts at conferences, seminars and forums.
 2. Membership certificate
 3. Free advertising in the Cobbler
 4. Discounts from selected vendors
 5. A nice warm feeling knowing you are not alone and are not the only one seeking to return to the true spiritual roots of this unique education.
 6. Your membership will help you, and many others, to serve your children better in Christ's name by providing opportunities for fellowship, learning and encouragement.
 7. We have found a "pearl of great price" and your support of the Christian Montessori Fellowship will help spread this "good news" so many more children might truly be nurtured intellectually, physically, emotionally and spiritually and come to know the Good Shepherd personally.
- Join and support the fellowship by making your check for \$25 payable to: The Christian Montessori Fellowship or use your Visa, Master Card, American Express, or Discover.

Credit card number _____

Exp. Date _____

Signature _____

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