

The Cobbler

Ephesians 6:15

The newsletter of the Christian Montessori Fellowship
July 2002

National Conference July 11 –13th San Antonio, Texas

There is still time to register for the conference. It will be a great time of fellowship, learning and renewal. Prayerfully consider if the extra effort and expense might be a great investment in the stewardship of your ministry.

How Jesus comes to your classroom. Part 6

Jesus comes to our classroom through spontaneity which is the joy that appears with serendipity. Isn't that a mouthful of a sentence? For many of us education (and religion) came as a chore, a duty, a burden. The Montessori classroom allows Jesus to come in the great joy that is present in discovering His creation.

Traditionally, we feel that the responsibility of educating children becomes a driven exterior goal instead of a journey of discovery and that we cannot have both – the joy and the knowledge.

That is where spontaneity comes in. Jesus came teaching a whole new relationship to our heavenly Father. There was far more joy in the relationship that he presented than that of the traditionalists of His time. He didn't undo the law just as we don't undo the learning requirements but he superseded the law by making the relationship far more meaningful. We get this same glimpse of Jesus in the

classroom when we go off on meaningful tangents of discovery, when we allow children to pursue further their interests in a subject. Reading five books about electricity or dinosaurs may not be mandated curriculum but you have to admit that it is probably 4 more books than might have been read otherwise. And children are fairly adept at understanding that they have educational responsibilities (after all aren't we preaching the law to them all the time?). But the joy that they have experienced is the honey that makes the "medicine" go down.

Spontaneity allows us to savor the discoveries we have "chanced" upon. We often discover new spiritual truths in our own lives by "chance" reading or taking our own tangent from a sermon.

Jesus is present in the spontaneity because He is the joy hidden in His creation. And allowing the children to discover this Jesus, this joy is truly another way that He does come to our classroom.

A Baker's Dozen of Montessori benefits for the children Number five

A Montessori child benefits greatly from the group work interactions that are part of a functioning environment.

Traditionalists tell you because Montessori is such an individualistic system children don't get any group interaction. My reply has always been – How much interaction do you get sitting

looking at the back of the head of the student in front of you? Learning to work together appropriately is a major accomplishment in life. And this is accomplished, ironically, far more readily in the “individualistic” atmosphere of a Montessori environment than a traditional classroom.

Three of the greatest things in life – to be needed, to help others and to be recognized – are readily accomplished in a Montessori environment.

The simple phrase “Johnny, I need you to help Billy with his math.” Is a major life- changing event. First, It recognizes that you have mastered something. There is nothing more flattering or ego satisfying (in its good sense) than to be asked to demonstrate your competence. Second, to be needed meets a personal God given need. And third, to help others is truly an outworking of Christ within us – being concerned about others.

Put this in contradistinction to a traditional classroom where Billy asks Johnny for help and both of them get in trouble. And for Johnny the natural urge to help others is met with condemnation instead of encouragement.

The advantages of a Montessori environment have to be shared continually with parents, most of whom have been raised in traditional classrooms, in order for them to understand the value of what their children are receiving and the value of what they are paying for.

Communications

We certainly would like to hear from you to know if what we are sharing with you is of value and significance.

E-Mail

For those of you who have e-mail we do need your addresses.

Fidellow@swbell.net

The 8 P's of Ministry

When we began preparing materials to encourage people in ministry we began to focus on three topics which all happened to start with p – people, problems and purpose.

When I shared this with my oldest daughter she asked whether people and problems might not be the same. Sometimes yes. There are problems that are not directly people oriented. And there are people issues that are not problems.

The more we began to pray and meditate on how we could encourage teachers and headmasters/mistresses the list began to grow – to 5 p's, then to 7 and now to 8.

Our list now looks like this:

1. Purpose
2. Passion
3. People
4. Problems
5. Pressure
6. Pain
7. Possibilities
8. Perseverance

And I am sure that in the course of study and sharing we might find others. Or you might even suggest some in the course of our discussions in coming months.

Christian Montessori Conference Topics

1. **Contemporary Montessori History:** Focusing on the best contemporary applications and current philosophical usage.
2. **Physical Transformation:** An overview of children's physical development and how it is enhanced by Montessori classroom activities.
3. **Emotional Transformation:** A discussion of healthy emotional development as processed through the benefits of a prepared Montessori environment.
4. **Spiritual Life in the classroom:** A multi faceted approach to the development of children's spiritual life through the use of varied media and approaches.
5. **Intellectual Transformation:** A look at the chronological development of the child's intellect as enhanced by the multi-sensory materials and philosophy of the Montessori classroom.
6. **Music, Praise and Worship:** An exploration of practical approaches using music, words and actions to enhance the child's spiritual development.
7. **The Prepared Environment:** A look at one of the essential Montessori tenets. The prepared environment is an enhanced teaching tool in its own right and its continued development and refinement is an on going goal.
8. **The Good Shepherd:** A presentation of hands on Bible materials with age appropriate demonstrations.
9. **Spiritual Transformation:** A look at the underlying philosophical approach to the growing spiritual awareness of the child and our part in its development and enhancement.
10. **Science:** A presentation of hands on practical ideas from the fascinating world of science.
11. **Hands on Bible:** A Montessori approach with hands on materials to teach the stories and lessons of the Bible.
12. **The Teacher:** A look at the non-traditional teacher/guide and an exploration of the philosophy of the guide's role in the prepared environment.
13. **Parent Education:** This is a must – to teach the most important person in the environment (who isn't even there). Successfully educating parents continues and enhances the classroom nurture.
14. **Practical Life:** The foundation of all intellectual, spiritual, emotional and physical development.
15. **Contemporary Questions in Montessori:** A look at contemporary questions facing Montessori teachers.

Christian Montessori Fellowship Conference 2002
July 11th –13th, 2002
San Antonio, Texas

“Christian Montessori and the transformation of the whole child.”

The conference will be held at the historic Crockett Hotel across from the Alamo. Lodging costs are \$92.23 (tax included) for either single or double occupancy. Please call the hotel (800-292-1050) to make your reservations. Conference registration will include 2 continental breakfasts, 2 lunches, morning and afternoon breaks and Saturday evening banquet. Cost of the conference will be \$300.

Christian Montessori Fellowship
22630 East Range
San Antonio, Texas 78255

2002 Christian Montessori Fellowship Conference Registration

Please register me for the conference

Name _____
Address _____
City, St. Zip _____
Phone _____
E-mail _____