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MONTESSORI CURRICULUM OVERVIEW

Children in the primary program possess what Dr. Montessori called the absorbent mind, the ability to absorb all aspects of one's culture and environment without effort or fatigue. As an aid to this period of the child's self construction, individual work is encouraged. The following areas of activity cultivate the children's adaptation and ability to express and think with clarity.

Practical Life Exercises instill care for self, for others, and for the environment. Activities include many of the tasks children see as part of the daily routine in their home, such as preparing food and washing dishes, along with exercises of grace and courtesy. Through these tasks, children develop muscular coordination, enabling movement and the exploration of their surroundings. They learn to work at a task from beginning to end, and develop their powers of control and concentrations.

Sensorial Materials serve as tools for development. Children build cognitive skills, and learn to order and classify impressions by touching, seeing, smelling, tasting, listening, and exploring the physical properties of their environment.

Mathematics activities help children learn and understand the concepts of math by manipulating concrete materials. This work gives children a solid understanding of basic mathematical principles, prepares them for later abstract reasoning, and helps to develop problem solving capabilities.

Language Development is vital to human development. The Montessori environment is rich in oral language opportunities, allowing the child to experience conversations, stories and poetry. The sandpaper letters help children link sound and symbol effortlessly, encouraging the development of written expression and reading skills. To further reading development, children are exposed to the study of grammar.

Culture Geography, Biology, Botany, Zoology, Art and Music are presented as extensions of the sensorial and language activities. Children learn about people and cultures in other countries with an attitude of respect and admiration. Through familiarity, children come to feel connected to the global human family. Lessons and experiences with nature inspire a reverence for all life. The

comprehensive art and music programs give children every opportunity to enjoy a variety of creative activities, as well as gain knowledge of the great masters.

Catechesis of the Good Shepherd - In addition to the four typical Montessori areas, our classroom also has an “Atrium” where children experience the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd. The Atrium is a prepared environment that allows the child to explore and experience the spiritual life in the tradition of the Catholic faith. The Atrium presentations follow the Montessori principles and are Biblically based.

The Atrium allows the child to experience God's presence, offering opportunities for prayer, inviting the child to participate in the practical life of the Catholic Church, and giving meaning to Bible stories by reading scripture and wondering their meaning using materials designed for that purpose. The Atrium presentations are given individually and accordingly to the interest of the child. Once a presentation has been given, the child is free to work with the materials at any time he/she desires, throughout the course of the workday. No lessons are forced or required to complete the Montessori curriculum, but children are encouraged to enrich their experience of God and to listen to His Word.

Atrium Presentations

Prayer

Introduction to the Atrium and the Prayer Corner
The Bible in the Prayer Corner

Adoration of the Magi (Mt.2:1-12)
The Presentation in the Temple (Lk. 2:21-33, 36-39)

Biblical Geography

Globe
Raised Surface Map of Israel
Puzzle Map of Israel (Regions and Waterways)

Parables of the Kingdom of God

The Mustard Seed (Mk. 4:30-32)
The Pearl of Great Value (Mt. 13:45-46)
The Leaven (Mt. 13:33)
The Hidden Treasure (Mt. 13:44)
The Growing Seed (Mk. 4:26-29)

Messianic Prophecies

The Prophecy of the Light (Is. 9:1)
The Prophecy of the Name (Is. 9:5)
The Prophecy of the Mother (Is. 7:14)
The Prophecy of Bethlehem (Mic. 5:1)
The Prophecy of the Star and the Scepter (Num. 24:17)

The Good Shepherd

The Good Shepherd (Jn. 10:3-5, 11-16)
The Found Sheep (Lk. 15:4-6)
Psalm 23

Infancy Narratives

The Annunciation (Lk. 1:36-38)
The Visitation (Lk. 1:39-49, 56)
The Birth of Jesus and the Adoration of the Shepherds (Lk. 2:1-20)

The Paschal Mystery

The Grain of Wheat (Jn. 12:24-26)
The Last Supper (Lk. 22:7-13, 17-20)
The City of Jerusalem
The Empty Tomb (Mt. 28:1-8)
Pentecost (Acts 2:1-11)