

The Cobbler

Ephesians 6:15

The Newsletter of the Christian Montessori Fellowship
January 2008

National Conference

San Antonio

July 31st – August 2nd

Looking Back

Looking Forward

Looking to Eternity

Thank You for your prayers!

Earlier this month we asked for your prayers as we were starting to video the Christian Montessori training videos. I shared with Barbara the night before that the next day was the culmination of 25 years of people sharing that we should do Christian Montessori training. And in the morning we would begin that long held vision. You sometimes wonder why God (?) takes so long to get us where He wants us to be. He is patient with us – which is a great example for us with our children.

As we were setting up in the studio that morning, the business manager of the studio walked through and asked Barbara what we were videoing. Barbara shared with him. He was thrilled and before he left, he asked if he could pray with us. We held hands and prayed. God so sweetly sent someone to be a physical presence for your prayers. Please continue to pray as we go back to the studio each week.

Financial Support

For the last year we have been looking for foundation support for this project and it has not yet been available. One of our members suggested that we come to the Christian Montessori community for support. We need \$75,000 initially to fund the project. It was suggested that if we could get 100 schools to donate \$750 we could achieve this goal. This was suggested almost two years ago. But frankly, having run a school, I know how tight budgets are. Now, that we have started, the possibilities that this training holds impels me to ask you to share in this vision.

There are people all over the world who are asking for Christian Montessori training. Albert Omari in Kenya is starting a Christian Montessori school for Aids orphans. Rev. Christine Miller in Liberia wants to start a Christian Montessori school as does Kristina Vecpuise in Latvia. Sarolta Visky in Romania needs help training staff for her Christian Montessori school and the list goes on of those who need training.

We are blessed with so many resources in our country for training and

yet the resources for training omit the foundation stone. Montessorians as a group of people truly seek the welfare of children and society. Peace Curriculums are wonderful but if not based on the Prince of Peace lack the essential motivation and power to bring that peace about. And failure to base training on the same spiritual principles that Montessori advocated – “The teacher must see the child as Jesus saw him.” and “the method was given ... for the advancement of the Kingdom of God” (from the introduction of *The Child in the Church*.) leaves something to be desired for people who want to follow God using this tremendous way of living and teaching.

Christian spiritual teaching is not a nice “add-on” for Montessori education – it is an essential ingredient. A director shared with me this week that they had a well-known and respected trainer from one of the major Montessori societies observe one of their trainees in their classroom. The trainee prayed with a child. The trainer told the trainee we don’t do that in XXX (nameless Montessori society). That is not part of our training. We need to be open to everyone. The trainee replied, “We are in a Christian school. This is what we tell our parents we do.”

I am not against the major Montessori societies. They have done a wonderful job of keeping Montessori going. However, I am for Jesus and the amazing inspiration He gave to Dr. Montessori. I want that inspiration – and the Gospel – to be available to every child, in every school around the world. And with your help we can do it.

That is why I invite you to share in this vision. The first and great step is that each of our schools be the best that

they can be. If someone in your community or neighborhood is going to get a glimpse of what Montessori is and want to be a part of it, it will be because of the excellence of YOUR program.

The second step is in your support of the Christian Montessori Fellowship. Your \$25 membership helps fund the ongoing work.

The third step is to support the regional conferences and the national conference. What you get from each of these conferences is encouragement, teaching and fellowship. You get to meet and know other Montessorians who share your passion. We are not alone and we are not isolated.

The fourth step is to support this initiative for training. Your donation (in any amount) will fund this project. If you like your donation can be credited towards sending staff for training. I prayerfully ask you to consider taking a part in this world wide effort to share the Gospel through Montessori education.

The full outline and costs of the training program can be found on our web site www.christianmontessorifellowship.com

First Training Class

First class training

Our first training group will be held in San Antonio starting mid to late June. Final details are being worked out for accommodations etc. This is a great opportunity. Again please visit the website for details.

Quote

What the teacher is, is more important than what he teaches.

Karl Menninger

**Function of Words
and the Word of God**
**Applications for the elementary
classroom**
By Don Barber
Newfields, NH

In the first part of this series we considered how it comes as no surprise that language is a gift from God. Therefore, when you look closely at the different parts of speech, aspects of God's handiwork are apparent. Likewise, the lessons Montessori developed to introduce elementary children to the parts of speech can lead us directly to understanding qualities of God.

In the first part we focused on the introduction to the noun lesson. In this section we will complete the noun family by considering both the article and the adjective presentations.

The Article

This lesson introduces students to the notion that a small word is very important. Students discover, first hand, that if a person misuses even one little word in an instruction then it can be tricky to know what a person means. In this lesson, the misused word is "the." The teacher asks for "the pencil" when there are many similar ones a student could choose. As students come back with pencils and the teacher declares, "this is not the one I was hoping for," the impression this misuse of the language leaves with the student is that language can be confusing - - leading to giggles, tears, or anything in between. Choose students carefully before sending them on searches for "the pencil" to avoid the tearful response!

This situation is an opportunity to let children know that people can, and frequently do, make mistakes in their communication with each other because language only works in a very particular way. The teacher then is able to model what to do when communication does not work - realize what is confusing and correct it. In this case, the teacher apologizes for the mistake and lets the student know that a wrong word was being used by saying, "Please forgive me. Would it be easier if I asked you to get 'a' pencil?" Now, and usually with a sense of relief (that the crazy adult finally gets it right), the child can easily follow the direction.

This lesson is a reminder that we should consider it a miracle from God when a communication is successful! God has given us the good gift of language. Just as the teacher and student are relieved and happy when the communication finally works, how much more is God pleased when people communicate with and understand Him! (Lk. 11:13)

Other Biblical applications come to mind from this lesson. First, that something little is of great importance. This relates to the story of David and Goliath (1 Sam. 17) in one sense, and to the story of having faith like a mustard seed (Lk. 17:6 & Matt. 17:20) in another.

Finally, by the end of the study of articles, the student is given the notion that the article is always the sign that a noun is coming; if there is an article, there is always a noun soon to follow. This would be a fine time to turn to the story of John the Baptist in the Bible (Is. 40:3-5, Mrk 1:7) Just as the article announces the approach of a noun, so to does John announce the coming of Jesus.

The Adjective

This lesson also emphasizes the need to use language precisely. In this case, rather than misusing a word, the teacher is not using the full extent of the language. This time the teacher is using the correct article, but is not including enough detail for the student to carry out an instruction. After having experienced the article lesson, students usually figure out that there is a communication problem, (and that it is the teacher's doing!). Usually they get the solution to the dilemma by asking the teacher "Which one do you want?" The teacher now admits being the cause of the problem and provides students with an adjective or two to describe the noun they want the student to bring to the lesson.

Once again students are shown just how easy communication can be misunderstood, and what a relief it is when communication works. This time, students can be reminded of the tower of Babel (Gen. 11), which shows us that miscommunication can bring any project or friendship to a quick end. Conversely, successful communication must occur for the success of any project or friendship.

This time around, students could also be reminded that God understands us perfectly (even if we use the wrong words), and that He has left His perfect Word so that our imperfect minds might come to understand Him (Matt. 4:48, 1John 3:3).

As students move through the adjective presentations, they discover all the ways to describe even a single noun, as well as all the subtle differences between things that are similar. Adjectives allow us to describe to one another the wonder and beauty that God

has put into creation (Ec 3:11).

Moreover, we can also begin to describe the indescribable wonder and beauty of God's holiness (Ps 27:4 & Ps. 29:2).

Once the noun, article and adjective lessons are complete, students are shown a picture of the noun family. It shows how the three parts of speech work together, with the noun as the central figure of the family. Teachers explain how this is like the child's own family. I would encourage the further illustration that this is even more like God's family; where God is the central figure.

Ideas for the Conjunction

By Emilie Cartwright

Matthew 28:19

Go ye therefore, **and** teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, **and** of the **Son**, **and** of the **Holy Ghost**:

Exodus 20:12

12 Honour thy father **and** thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee.

Matthew 2:11

11 **And** when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, **and** fell down, **and** worshipped him: **and** when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts; gold, **and** frankincense **and** myrrh.

Things that "go together" in the Bible:

Adam **and** Eve

David **and** Goliath

Sampson **and** Delilah

Reuben **and** Simeon **and** Levi **and**

Judah....

Mary **and** Joseph

Ham, Shem **and** Japheth

Noah **and** the Ark

Rod **and** staff

Regional Seminars

Registration Fee	\$150
Early registration (two weeks before)	\$125
Early Registration for CMF members	\$100

All registrations should be sent to the Christian Montessori fellowship.

Seminar agendas are found on line at www.christianmontessorifellowship.com
Under regional seminar title

February 9

Phoenix, AZ

North Phoenix Montessori
28025 N. 40th St.
Cave Creek, AZ 85331
Cyndy Lane
(480) 515-1800
Agenda 2

February 22

Amarillo, TX

Southwest Montessori Preschool
4515 Cornell St.
Amarillo, TX 79109
Vicky Mashburn
(806) 359-9826
Agenda 3

March 1

Dallas, TX

St. James Episcopal School
9845 McCree Rd
Dallas, TX 75238
Loree Birkenback
(214) 348-1349
Agenda 2

March 8

Atlanta, GA

Cross of Life Montessori School

1000 Hembree Rd.
Roswell, GA 30076
Kim Coleburn
(770) 475-3812
Agenda 1

March 29

Seattle, WA

Kidus Montessori School
834 18th Ave.
Seattle, WA 98122
Dee Stephens
(206) 720-0523
Agenda 2

Continuing the celebration

The first century of Montessori education has been celebrated. We now enter the second century. However, we still have a number of items available to keep the celebration going.

!00th Anniversary T-shirts were \$20, now \$10
!00th Anniversary Sweat Shirts were \$25, now \$12.50
!00th Anniversary banners (beach towels) were \$30, now \$15
“Monty” Bears were \$10, now \$5.

All of these are still great gifts and will continue the celebration.

Visit our website

www.crossmountainpress.com to order

Parent Education

“Getting Your Money’s Worth” book now has a companion work book which is excellent for parent education classes. Visit the Cross Mountain website to view excerpts from the workbook. An educated parent is a blessing to their child and to your classrooms.