

# Montessori Schools of Central Texas Newsletter

November 2022

Dr. Jerry O'Donnell – Headmaster  
Mrs. Jennifer Watson – Director

## News from the Top

### The Power of “Please”

By Edward Fidellow



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#### Upcoming Events

November 2022

11/1	Temple Fire Dept
11/10-17	Elem Community Service: Operation Christmas Child
11/11	Veteran's Day – <b>SCHOOL CLOSE</b>
11/18	Thanksgiving Celebration @ 11am (Elementary, Primary, Toddlers) <b>EARLY DISMISSAL @ 12:30 PM</b>
11/21-25	Thanksgiving Break <b>SCHOOL CLOSED</b>
11/29	Elem Field Trip

Fred Astaire quipped, “The hardest job kids face today is learning good manners without seeing any.” Please and thank you are usually the first two lessons of grace and courtesy that we teach our children. These are the words our children hear from us as we try to train them in the world of good manners. How many times do we remember our parents coaching us, “Say Thank You?”

It seemed to take an extraordinary amount of time for the groove of “Thank You” to make its way into our unconscious brain where it would become the default response to any act of generosity or service. As children, we live in the cocoon of our own world where everything does revolve around us because we have not consciously entered into a realm of “others.” Sure, our parents are the controlling factor of our life but they seem to exist to serve us. They give us food. They give us clothes. They entertain us. We are sheltered and served. There is no natural springing up of the concept of “thank you.” One year I asked my teen-aged students what they were expecting for Christmas and there was excited chatter. I next asked what they were giving their parents for Christmas. The silence was profound.

Thank you embodies an attitude of gratitude which is a hard-won virtue - even in adults. Gratitude stands outside of my ego and may well be the first step of maturity. The delight of teen-age love - where someone outside of my own ego receives my whole attention is embodied by the rock and roll mantra of, “Baby, baby you make me feel so good.” The intensity of this new experience is dramatic but is still me-centered. Yet to come is the glaring reality that love puts someone else’s well-being before your own. Grace and courtesy - you before me - is the first step in learning how to love.

So, if “thank you” is gratitude where does the power of please come in? “Get me a drink,” (a command) is softened to a request by the addition of please - “Get me a drink please.” I was sharing this with a group of teachers and one of them (correctly) shared that if you put the please at the beginning of the sentence you change the whole atmosphere of the conversation. “Please” becomes a marker of grace (and courtesy.)

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## Infant 1

During the month of November, we will continue to work on tummy time and walking exercises. Helping your child meet their milestones keeps our hearts full! For English, Spanish and ASL vocabulary, we will be focusing on saying “please” and “thank you”, and we will continue with the colors of fall and the shape and feel of a pumpkin. Please feel free to bring any fun-shaped pumpkins or gourds to class for the children to see and touch. Our infants will explore squash and acorns along with learning about squirrels and turkeys.

As Thanksgiving approaches, we will begin talking about gratitude and are mindful of our blessings. Our lives are filled with hugs and smiles every day from your sweet babies, and for that we are grateful!

- Mrs. Terri Wallace

## Infant 2

Throughout November we'll continue talking about pumpkins and corn, and we'll add some conversation in circle time about Thanksgiving and gratefulness. The children will begin using basic Spanish words like, “hi”, “please”, and “thank you”, as well as, creating Thanksgiving-themed artwork. This month students will also start working with open cups and utensils, and some of our students are ready to start toilet training-- a big milestone! We have been enjoying all of the fall colors that are starting to show and working in the garden on the playground. It's a season filled with sensorial learning opportunities!

--Mrs. Karla Torres

## Toddlers I & II

November will be a month filled with many seasonal small and large group activities. During our small group lessons, the toddler classes will be enhancing their fine motor skills by spooning cranberries and shucking fresh corn. Our large group lessons will include circle time and Spanish lessons covering Thanksgiving (Accion de Gracias), the life cycle of turkeys (ciclo de la vida del pavo), Native Americans (Nativos Americanos), Pilgrims (Peregrinos), and corn (maiz). We will also teach and practice gratitude (gratitud).

As the weather grows colder, the toddler students will learn how to put on their own sweaters and jackets to build more independence. When outside, we will continue tending to our fall gardens and we hope to harvest some nutritious vegetables soon! The toddler students will also practice sweeping and raking leaves. While inside, the children will create many Thanksgiving arts and crafts this month, to include Native American Chief hats, handprint turkeys, and painting Pilgrim hats using dots.

--Mrs. Tammy Clausen & Ms. Janice Gonzalez

## Notes from Mrs. Watson:

1. Our annual Thanksgiving Celebration for Elementary, Primary, and Toddler students and parents will be at 11:00 a.m. on Friday, November 18th. A sign-up sheet will be made available for items needed to make our celebration a great success! This celebration is open to parents and students enrolled, but not to extended families due to space and food preparation planning. We wish you and your family a Happy Thanksgiving!
2. Make your calendars for Friday, December 16<sup>th</sup>. We plan to host an amazing Christmas party and children's performance. Details to follow soon!

~ ~ ~ ~ ~ **Primary I & II** ~ ~ ~ ~ ~

We have many exciting lessons in store for the month of November. The students will wrap up their study of our solar system with a focus on Saturn and Neptune. Next, we will delve into the layers of our Earth and move into rock classification and volcanoes. For social graces and courtesies, the students will be taught how to care for books, proper usage and placement of a napkin, table setting, and dining etiquette. Cooking lessons will be spiced pumpkin muffins, a dessert for our Thanksgiving celebration, and *pan de bono*, a Columbian dish, to tie into our study of South America. For our Bible lessons, the students will hear the stories of *A Baby in a Basket*, *The Burning Bush*, and *The Ten Plagues*. Lastly, the primary students will be able to define an isthmus and strait, compare the size of planets, learn weather patterns, and classify plants and animals. We also look forward to honoring our Veterans this month.

--Mrs. Carmen Alvarado, Ms. Copeland & Mrs. Veronica Prudencio

### Lower Elementary

For the month of November, we will shift gears studying our first President, George Washington. In geography, we will focus on the South American continent, learning the culture, countries, flags, and capitals. Our Botany studies will center on roots to learn the parts and the types of roots, and root adaptation.

In Bible, we will read about *Prophet's Show the Way*, *Mary's House*, *Elizabeth's House*, and *Mary and Joseph*. In Zoology, the children will learn the parts of a fish and also research different species. Our Physical Science experiments will encompass states of matter and the water cycle. We will also introduce fractions in math and complete some verb lessons in language.

For history, the students will continue working on their personal family timeline and we will also learn about our first Thanksgiving. There will be plenty of Thanksgiving crafts also as we prepare to celebrate Thanksgiving together at the end of the month.

--Mrs. Dolline Abraham & Mrs. Monica Walker



### Parent Volunteers Needed

Very soon, Mrs. Watson will be meeting with Mrs. Beason & Mrs. Jackson to discuss up-coming parent volunteer opportunities. Please consider if you would be interested in joining our Classroom & Staff Support Team. At least one volunteer from each classroom is needed. Over the next two months, you will be asked to help with the Thanksgiving & Christmas festivities (set-up and breakdown of events, serving food, and helping to manage children during the Christmas performance since we will be at a different location). Also, members of this team will be asked to coordinate with other parents to gather teacher Christmas gifts.

Who would like to join our Helping Hands Committee? Over the Christmas break, the Toddler and Infant 2 playground will have grass turf installed with a goal to open up running space and add beauty, durability, and a better overall outdoor experience for our young children. Before we break for Christmas, a group of Helping Hands members will be asked to transport the rubber mulch that surrounds the playscape to the elementary playground. The rest of the work will be handled by the Astro Turf installers. Tax-deductible donations are welcome to help facilitate this \$40,000 project.

If you are interested in joining any of these committees, please contact me 😊



Happy  
Birthday



- |                     |            |                           |         |
|---------------------|------------|---------------------------|---------|
| ▪ Leah Ellis        | Toddler 1  | November 1 <sup>st</sup>  | 3 Years |
| ▪ Rosemary Schaefer | Primary 2  | November 4 <sup>th</sup>  | 5 Years |
| ▪ Etta Thiel        | Toddler 2  | November 8 <sup>th</sup>  | 3 Years |
| ▪ Vivienne Thiel    | Toddler 1  | November 8 <sup>th</sup>  | 3 Years |
| ▪ Julian Preciado   | Toddler 1  | November 11 <sup>th</sup> | 3 Years |
| ▪ Madelyn Tisdale   | Toddler 1  | November 12 <sup>th</sup> | 3 Years |
| ▪ Knox Sparkes      | Primary 1  | November 12 <sup>th</sup> | 4 Years |
| ▪ Henry Samfield    | Primary 1  | November 15 <sup>th</sup> | 6 Years |
| ▪ Vira Soto         | Infant 1   | November 15 <sup>th</sup> | 1 Year  |
| ▪ Liam Abbott       | Infant 2   | November 16 <sup>th</sup> | 2 Years |
| ▪ Siyona Naik       | Primary 1  | November 18 <sup>th</sup> | 6 Years |
| ▪ Paxton Pehl       | Elementary | November 23 <sup>rd</sup> | 7 Years |



## Elementary Service Project

Each semester, our elementary students participate in service projects to instill a sense of giving back and building their community. For this semester, the elementary children will be participating in a project called Operation Christmas Child, sponsored by Samaritan's Purse. This project will bring the word of God through Christmas in the size of a shoebox to young children in more than 100 countries.

For many of these children, this will be the first Christmas presents they have ever received. Many others will be experiencing God's love for the first time through the volunteers serving these communities.

In support of our elementary class, all students at MSCT are encouraged to bring a shoebox filled with gifts: clothes, hygiene products, toys, and one "wow" present. Please make sure to add a personal note to the recipient.

The office will be accepting your gifts of love November 10<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup>. When you bring your shoebox, please write on the outside if the gift is for a boy or girl, and the age group: 2-4 years, 5-9 years or 10-14 years. Also, please send \$10 to cover the shipping cost. This can be given in cash or checks payable to MSCT (we will write one check when we drop off the shoeboxes.)

The King will reply, "Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me."  
Matthew 25:40

## The Power of "Please"

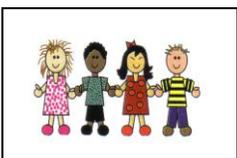
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It also indicates an attitude of "non-entitlement." In so much of life we deal with people who demonstrate a superior attitude of "I am better than you. I am more important than you. I am richer, better looking, smarter etc. ... than you. Therefore, I am entitled." This type of attitude in children gets them labeled as brats. Good manners is a great equalizer - there are not servants and masters but just human beings who appreciate the respect that comes from manners.

The power of please does more than change and soften external social relations. It becomes central in its ability to change the practitioner of grace and courtesy. The world does not revolve around me, no matter how much I wish it did. Grace and courtesy softens the edges of my personality, it softens the way I look at the world and how I react to that world and in the end how I look at myself.

A Montessori program that emphasizes grace and courtesy is giving your child, not only advantages in life, but an internal gyroscope to keep them in balance as they navigate the world. Remember, grace and courtesy is the first step in learning how to love - and to be loved in return.

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