



John XXIII Montessori Children's Center

CGS Atrium Newsletter ~ Eastertide, Spring 2007

Eastertide in the Atrium concludes each year with a celebration which anticipates the feast of Pentecost.

This celebration extends the theme of the Light of the Risen Christ, which is so powerfully represented to the children in our Easter Liturgy of the Light. Just as in the Liturgy of the Light, and in subsequent Baptism presentations, we proclaim that not only did Jesus come to BE the Light, but He also came to share His Light with us. Now at the feast of Pentecost, we celebrate that as a share in His Light and Life, Jesus invites us to receive and enjoy the gifts of His own Spirit.

To introduce this celebration to the children, we discuss with them about how after His resurrection, Jesus promised He would send His Holy Spirit. Then, while the disciples were praying together, they saw something like flames of fire descending upon them. And they were transformed - they went out joyfully to tell everyone that Jesus had risen! We may discuss with the children what they know about fire, how it transforms and changes things: what is cold becomes warm, what is hard becomes soft, what is dark becomes bright and luminous. Like a fire, the Holy Spirit transforms us with His gifts.

After a procession, the red prayer cloth is placed on the prayer table

and seven red candles are arranged, each having a card with the name of each of the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit. Each gift is then briefly explained. The older children will read two scripture selections; one from Isaiah about the gifts of the Spirit, another from the Acts of the Apostles about the first Pentecost. Then, in a darkened Atrium, each child is invited to solemnly choose a gift they would most like to have, or with the older children, one they most need. The candle labeled with the gift of choice is used to light an individual candle for each child as the room is bathed in the Light of Christ and His gifts to us. There is then time to enjoy the beautiful light while we sing "Holy Spirit Come."

We hope that this Pentecost you and your family can also celebrate the joy of the many gifts Jesus shares with us.

Interviews and visits for new three year olds of currently registered families

will be conducted by appointment in the next few weeks in the 3-6 Atria. If you intend to register a three year old for next year, please contact your older child's Catechist if you haven't heard from her already in order to schedule a visit for your child. Six and nine year olds may also be invited to visit the next level Atria if they will be moving up next year.

**Parent Observations for
Wednesday afternoon Level I**

Atrium will be held Wednesday May 2nd and 9th. A signup sheet has been provided at the vestibule door or in the Atrium for half-hour observation slots. We ask that the observing parent please adhere to the following guidelines in order to preserve the Atrium environment with as few distractions as possible:

1. Please attend alone; do not bring siblings, spouse or other guests. (You will feel conspicuous enough as you try to be small and unnoticed!) If both parents wish to observe, which we definitely welcome, each should sign up for a different time slot.
2. Sit on the chair designated for observations.
3. Inform your child ahead of time that you will be observing their Atrium that day. Ask them to go about their usual work so that you can see what a normal Atrium day looks like. Help your child to understand that this will not be a time to talk to Mom or Dad; you will be there just to watch quietly and listen for God's whispers, too.

Atrium Calendar at-a-glance

May 2nd, May 9th – Parent Observations for Wed. afternoon Level I Atrium; sign-up sheets on clipboard in vestibule or Atrium.

May 5th – First Communion at St. John's.

May 16-18 – Last Atrium with Pentecost Celebration for all sessions excepting Wed. afternoon Level I Atrium. *Please remember to pick up your child's spare clothing and work folder!*

May 23rd – Last session for Wed. afternoon Level I Atrium.

June 1st- Pre-registration deadline for current families to receive preference for 2007-2008 Atrium.

Thank You to Catechist Elizabeth

Rice for traveling from Manassas this past semester to make the Atrium available to many new families and their children. Elizabeth will be getting married this summer and begin teaching full-time in the Fall at the Renaissance Montessori School in Manassas; as such she will be unable to continue her Level I Atrium with us. Elizabeth will be entrusting the new little ones she has helped to introduce to the Atrium to one or the other of our existing Level I sessions for the upcoming year. Our best wishes and prayers go with her as she embarks on her new married life!

Spring Pre-registration is now underway for our current families.

Attached you will find a Registration form for the 2007-2008 Atrium year. To reserve a spot for your child(ren) as well as to register new three year old siblings, please return the form and fees by **June 1st**. We will be filling Atrium sessions as we receive registrations and the \$50.00 sum of registration and materials fees for each child. After June 1st, any remaining spaces will also be made available to those on our waiting list. As always, the \$25.00 registration fee is non-refundable and will be applied to your first monthly or semester payment. The \$25.00 materials fee portion of this sum is refundable should your schedule or plans change for the upcoming year.

Please note on the Registration form the days and times that Atrium sessions will *likely* be offered next year.

Unfortunately, we are not yet able to make these times definite, but will let you know as soon as they are. Please check your preferences. We will do our best to accommodate your requests while striving to maintain a balance of ages and genders as well as preserving the integrity of this year's relationships.