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Box 06, Folder 23 - "Montessori's Approach to the teaching of Religion, Lecture I, The Atrium" (E.M.S.)

Edwin Mortimer Standing

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LECTURE I

MONTESSORI'S APPROACH TO THE TEACHING OF RELIGION

6

LECTURE ONE THE ATRIUM

E.M. Standing .

- 1 -

MONTESSORI'S APPROACH TO THE TEACHING OF RELIGION

THE ATRIUM

TWO MOVEMENTS BEGIN AT THE OPENING OF THIS CENTURY IN ROME

The Liturgical Movement --- Benedict XV

The Montessori Movement .

They were destined to be united more and more
by a special affinity - a common element (Lecture II)

That THE MONTESSORI MOVEMENT A SPIRITUAL APPROACH TO THE CHILD

Recognised by most people

of the ideas of Dewey .

ESSENTIALLY CATHOLIC IN ITS NATURE AND BACKGROUND .

Much more so than is generally known .

QUOTE ... THE REAL START ...

More like the beginning of a Religious Order .

MORE IN THAT SUGGESTION THAN YOU WOULD THINK

Montessori and the idea of a Religious Order .

--the man compared with a Bulldozer --

Still hoping and praying for that Order

In God's good time .

BRIEF OUTLINE OF MONTESSORI'S WORK FOR RELIGION

The Barcelona Experiment

Father Clascar's comparison 1909

Quote

BAMBINI VIVENTI NELLA CHIESA

(coming out in THE CHILD IN THE CHURCH .

The church the end and consummation of our work)

QUOTE FROM MONTESSORI .

page 25-26

*comes to
it again*

*p 5
p 6-7-8-9 ?*

ORIGINAL

-2-

AN ORIGINAL APPROACH FROM THE BEGINNING

Growing the wheat and the grapes

QUOTE

must pass on .

WRITINGS ON RELIGION

The Mass Explained to Children .

The Life in Christ (Liturgical Year)

The Mass Cards (Lecture III)

The Children's Missal

The Mystical Drama of the Mass .

HER IDEAS DEVELOPED WITH THE YEARS

a) Conversations (Child in the Church)

b) Lectures --- Cambridge Summer School (ditto
Assumption Convent . new edition

..... (Introduction)...

T H E A T R I U M

ASKED HER ONCE WHAT ABOUT A PREPARED ENVIRONMENT FOR RELIGION

ANSWER It is already there -- the Church

What is the Church if not a Prepared Env't.

(I got many of my ideas from the Church)

THE CHURCH IS FOR WORSHIP NOT INSTRUCTION

QUOTE P. 72-3

QUESTION Would you have Religious Apparatus ?

Yes

Would you have it mixed up with the ordinary
Apparatus . No .

THUS THE ATRIUM WOULD BE A PLACE WHERE THE CHILDREN COULD LOVE THEIR LIVES FREELY UNHINDERED BY UNNECESSARY ADULT INTERVENTION ... WHERE THE RELIGIOUS SENTIMENT COULD BE NURTURED .

IT IS NOT A PLACE FOR "RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION " from 9.30 to 10.45 - a class subject .

A FEW FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES

1- Sponataneosu " Suffer the little children to come unto Me- and how they come ' . and how joyfully (Cavalletti's little book)

2- The child learns through activity - Mvendo-si - Thus we are helping a child - who has a rpinciple of activity in himself .

And we do not realise how tremndous is the urge to learn and devlope in him .

3- We must give him this creative activity in relation to the SENSITIVE PERIODS THROUGH WHICH THE IS PASSAING .

4) He must be alawed to wotk and live at the rhytm of his own life -- not ours

A WORD ON SENSITIVE PERIODS

6

Like a search light , coming from within , which illumines certain aspects of his environment to the exclusion of others .Varies according to his age .

THE ABSORBENT MIND

Works differently from that of the Adult .

USUAL AGE TO BEGIN INSTRUCTION IN RELIGION 6 - 7 years

WHY ?

Because that is the age when the reason begins .

But the child absorbs knowledge on different levels

THE SENSORY -MOTOR STAGE

Begins years before .

He can take in Religious influences right from birth .

(Mothers take their babies to church when they visit it)

~~I) The Four Tablets~~

I) The Colour Tablets

Interest in colours so.... The Liturgical Colours

Have the stuffs for vestments on the Walls .

the five liturgical colours -

Their meaning .

The Liturgical Table (more about it next time)

The table cloths --vases - flowers etc.

Thus the children realise at a sensoril level these changes
whih take place on amore or less fixed back ground .

2) Hand washing The Holy water stoup

a real intellectual difference

3) Laying the Table

So now preparing the Table of Our Lord .

(more meaning than you think they could realise)

- 4) The Silence Game -- now the reclected silence in the
House of God .

THE ATRIUM WOULD HAVE A LITTLE ORATORY IN IT
AND A LITTLE SACRISTY .

- 5) ALL THE MOVEMENTS REQUIRED IN THE HOUSE OF GOD .
£

This is the period for the joyful acquisition of
perfected movements.

Sign of the Cross , this and that
Genuflect .

standing up and sitting down and kneeling
walking gracefully

6)

Walking on the Line
WALKING ON THE LINE

carrying glass of water

So - for Little Processions

Putting flowers before the statue .

first arranging the flowers - as they do .

Carrying lighted candles .

In fact a WHOLE CHILDREN'S LITURGY will spring up

is springing up

Lanternier and Cavalletti

Easter ceremonies -- through action

Parables through action

The Story through action

the Empty Tomb -- the model

Names and Places of Objects

6666

The Sacred Vessels
The Priests vestments .

"Good manners in all"

THE LATER STAGE READING AND WRITING

Some examples - hurriedly

1) The Moveable Alphabet

e.g Annunciation

Little scenes made - models (that Hong-Hong book)

The child composes a little story on the mat about the scene with the movable alphabet . (see picture)

2) Objects - or pictures - of them - with their names on slips of card board .

29 | The Sacred Vessels .

The Priests vestments

The different parts of a church
pew , pulpit , altar rail etc.

The various materials used
water , oil , wine , etc.

3) The Stations of the Cross

Example How to Motessori-ise the Station

i.e. turn it into an activity .

A) an activity

B- a control of error .

c) Possibility of repetition and self-perfectionment

d) Freedom of choice .

The Rosary (4)

Explain with an example . two ways .

5) Reading Commands

See Book page 39

6) Composition

a) movable letters

b) free compn in writing in books

(illustrated)

7) Biblical Animals

Biblical Animals First tell the stories as stories

The Material

- a) Picture of the animal
- b) A brief story on a corresponding card

say eight or ten at a time .

Put out the pictures -----then--- read the story

put it to the right picture .

Examples

The Creation of the Animals

some good pictures

The Serpent

1- the Garden of Eden(till the serpent came .)

2) The plague of serpents in the desert

The Bronze Serpent .

" as Moses lift up the serpent in the wilderness
so will the Son of Man be lifted up "

3) The donkey that spoke

Balaam and his Ass

Balaam s donkey saw the angel
And stoppped short in fear
Balaam didn't see the angel
Which was very queer .

4) Noah's Ark

First the whole story of the Deluge .
Special reference to Noah's Dove . *+ Raven*

famous pictures .

the sacrifice of thanksgivin

5) The plagues of Egypt .

frogs , flies , locusts .

6) The quails in the desert (The Golden Calf)

7) Jonah and the Whale

8) Elijah and the Raven

9) The Lion

David slays a lion and a bear .

10) The imperiment boys and the prohpet .

"Go up thou bald head " and the bear comes

II) NEW TESTAMENT

II) The Donkey

Flight into Egypt

the Entry into Jerusalem palm Sunday

12) The Mother - Hen

13) Sheep and shepherds

The Good Shepherd

see the Parable and Cavalletti's book

14) Swine

^{Gaderene}
The ~~Daxxane~~ Swine

The prodigal son .

Pearls before swine .

15) Fish

The miraculous draught of fishes.

the temple money tax in the mouth of a fish .

(also Tobias and the fish)

16) Camel

It is harder for arich man etc.

77 (9)

HANDWORK IN THE TRIUMPH

Great scope

e.g The Travelling Church The Tabernacle in the Desert

see Schuster's Illustrated Bible p81 and text

the The Sanctuary

The Holy of Holies.

The Objects contained there in

the Huge Altar with ramp

the Ark of the Covenant

the Vandle sticks .

The Two Parts of the Tabernacle

1) for the Priests and 2) for the people

like our present Churches .

BIBLICAL HISTORY

The new emphasis - instead of the Catechism .

BIBLE STORIES the best in the world .

Sensitive periods and Stories

- a) the Little ones -- God's protection
- b) The adolescent --- God the God of History and Destiny of Nations
- c) The Gangsters

A New view of the Life of Christ

The Rival Gangs .

The whole idea of the Herd Instinct .

It would make a lecture in itself

The Pharisees -- the Sadducees , - the Herodians

Our Lord the Head of His Gang . the Disciples

Always sticks up for his own gang .

BIBLICAL HISTORY CONTD

History Charts are old ideas

The TIME -LINE

brings with it a prolonged activity ,
possibility of repetition
control of error .

Leads to new discoveries .

EXAMPLES OF TIME LINE

a) BC. 2000 to A.D. 2000

b) The Life of Our Lord

(Useful also for secular history)

And can combine the two together excellently

(Show the Diagram of the Roman Empire
that History Chart

the principle of spreading out your knowledge .

BIBLICAL GEOGRAPHY

The Jig - saw map

Names of places with Key map

Model of Jeruslaem

Model of Palestine

BIBLICAL HISTORY AND GEOGRAPHY COMBINED

Show them the example if it has been done

IMPORTANCE OF ACTING THE STORIES

often comes spontaneously . THE 8th and Nativity.

MUSIC IN THE ATRIUM

Gregorian

Singing hymns

THE STUDY OF THE MASS IN THE ATRIUM

The great central act of Catholic Worship
This is of course very much in focus in the Atrium
Deal with it on a separate occasion

The Study ~~of the Liturgical year~~

THE LITURGICAL YEAR - and the Liturgy generally

6 50

Also on a special occasion - next lecture .

THE ATRIUM A LIFE OF ACTIVITY

But you see already a glimpse of a new kind of Religious instruction - a more intense and vital one .

It is a LIFE OF ACTIVITY

It has never been carried out completely as Montessor would have it .

But I have seen it - and it is astonishing *beautiful*
as Montessori children working spontaenously are always
astonishing *beautiful*

The nearest thing is perhaps the
Scuola Montessori Religioso in Rome

Marches Cavalletti
"er wonderful little book .

But this is a separate school

it is not an integral, organic part of
a complete Montessori school .

But - please God - it will come in His good time .