



## Parent Pages

### Preparing the environment of the Domestic Church\*

\* The term "Domestic Church" refers to the family, the smallest body of gathered believers in Christ. Though recovered only recently, the term dates back to the first century AD. The Greek word *ecclesiola* referred to "little church." The early Church understood that the home was fertile ground for discipleship, sanctification, and holiness.

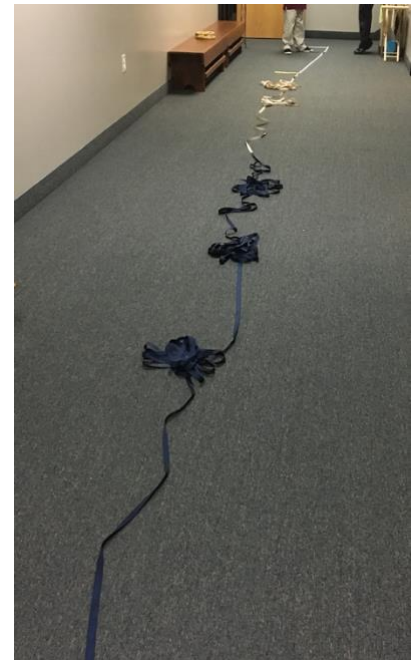
## The History of the Kingdom of God

"A plan has always existed in the mind of God, the aim of which is to bring humankind to the full enjoyment of God. We usually call this plan 'sacred history,' or 'the history of salvation.'" *(The History of the Kingdom of God: From Creation to Parousia).*

### The "Big Picture" of Salvation History:

We live in a world that has been perfectly prepared for us. The minerals we mine from the depths of the earth, the vegetation which nourishes and heals us, the animals that provide food, help, and companionship are all here for our use. God, who has set all of this in motion, as well as those many, many people who have come before us to form these gifts into the inventions and necessities we see, use, and enjoy today, deserve our gratitude. Dr. Montessori believed that with this as our foundation, the journey toward a better society and world were possible. Through the study of the contributors of the past we can begin to look forward to the future, reflecting on how we can use our own individual and communal gifts (in union with God's perfect plan) to provide for those yet to come. This is the foundation of a society which has a future filled with hope and promise.

Within the Atrium, we first offer this "big picture" to the children of the Level II (6-9yo) Atrium through the Great Lesson called "La Fettuccia" (in Italian) or "The Ribbon." La Fettuccia follows the History of Salvation beginning with God who always existed and who at a particular time chose to create. The moment of **Creation** continues even today but has been joined by a new moment, that of **Redemption**, with the Incarnation of Jesus in response to Mary's "Yes." Today, we live in the moment of Redemption, carrying His Risen Life out into the world as we await the third and final moment, **Parousia**. When Parousia begins it will never end and God "will be all in all" as He shares the fullness of life with His creation.



The older elementary child, the 9-12yo in the Level III Atrium, enjoys another Great Lesson, "The Plan of God," which focuses on the Plan which God has always had for mankind by beginning at



the creation of humanity. In the Plan of God, the horizontal bridges which link us to peoples from long ago, and the gratitude we can have for them, even without knowing their names, becomes clear. Our ancestors discovered fire and invented the wheel, they figured out how to plant gardens and domesticate animals, developing shelter and transportation. We have learned so much from them! Great civilizations in the past like the Egyptians, Babylonians, Phoenicians, Incas, Chinese, and many more have also passed on to us their inventions, discoveries, and ideals that have shaped us today. But God also desired vertical bridges which would link us more closely to Him. These He established first through Abraham, through whom He gave to the world the gift of knowledge of the One true God. It is from the People of God, the Jewish people, that Jesus Christ, True God and True Man, is born. Through His

death and resurrection, Jesus has chosen to remain with us through the Sacraments which gives us all that we need to meet our spiritual needs. But what is the ultimate Plan of God? His Plan is for Parousia, the day when He "will be all in all" and there will be "Cosmic Communion," the union of all of creation with one another and with God. We await this day together, preparing for it through how we live today in His Kingdom.

### **Enjoying and Responding with Gratitude in the Moment in Which We Live:**

In this moment of Redemption, we are offered a banquet table filled with countless gifts of creation as well as those inventions which people from the past have handed on to us for our use and enjoyment. Yet we can also spend time enjoying the greatest gift, the ongoing Presence of Jesus, the Good Shepherd, among us. This gift is enjoyed in a most particular way through the celebration of the Eucharist where we are surrounded by elements of creation as well as our family and friends. We are called by the Good Shepherd to come and receive the very best food and drink, His Body and Blood and to respond with praise and thanks. How could you and your family live in gratitude for the gift of Jesus, present among us, this week, and this month?



- What gifts of creation do you notice being used during the celebration of the Eucharist?
- Which people have helped to contribute to the preparation for and celebration of the Sunday Liturgy? What about the church building itself and the grounds that surround it? Who is part of leading and contributing to the celebration?
- How are you a part of receiving and responding during the celebration of the Liturgy?
- For which gifts of creation and which people could you give God thanks today? In what way will you remain with Jesus this week, the One remains with you and with all people?