



# *Encounter*

## Montessori West Preparatory School

### Fall 2011

#### *From the Desk of C.A. Gaabucayan*

The Orientation Weeks prepared our young students for the unique journey that will take them to new levels of consciousness. Many of them have acquired the basic tools that will help them along the way: joyful orientation to work, concentration, and a growing awareness of their role in a small community of learners.

The path that they will take will incite them to work with their hands, touch their hearts and lead them to ask a thousand and more questions to nourish their minds. They will discover the power of acting with respect, generosity and compassion, and gradually build their orientation as a guiding principle that will define their worldview and relationships with people.

The Montessori West Journey aims to anchor them to the goodness that is inherent in them. It will incite them to explore the universe and beyond; lead them to dream, and touch the roots of awe and wonder. It offers them opportunities to take a peep at their potentials and savor every attempt at strengthening them. We will soon see delight in their eyes as they witness the unfolding of these gifts.

We are aware that our mission to guide our students to develop this orientation is oftentimes thwarted by two factors:

First, our young children are starting to open their eyes to a rapidly changing world of ideas, images, and much too often, confused perceptions and expectations about childhood. Technology, electronics, and the television, are veering them away from experiencing the

powerful effects of using their hands for work and thinking on their own to solve problems. New lifestyles have disconnected them from the refreshing and humanizing effects of close encounters with nature.

Then, too, we have known parents who spouse the notion that given the unlimited freedom to fantasize and do what they are inclined to do, children, without discipline and responsibility, will flourish. While freedom is an essential feature of the Montessori Prepared Environment, Maria Montessori reminds us that : *“To give a child liberty is not to abandon him to himself.”* Responsibility and discipline must be imbibed for our children to grow into nurturing and productive members of their community.

It is of utmost importance then, that parents and teachers form a strong partnership. There is a need for us to strengthen programs that will offer a power antidote to the influence of modern values that debilitate our children’s spiritual growth. There is a need to understand and honor the true nature of children and help them express the miracles that they really are.

You have chosen the Montessori West Journey as the beginning. Let us work together as partners in planting the seeds that will empower our children to be what they can be; and express their growing vision, responsibly and passionately.