



Leadership Search

PROSPECTUS

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Welcome

Welcome to Saint Monica's Montessori, serving 44 students aged 3 to 12 in Pre-K through 6th grade. We offer a comprehensive Montessori program, including Children's House (children ages 3-6), Lower Elementary (1st-3rd grade), Upper Elementary (4th-6th grade), and a unique homeschool co-op support program. Each classroom is led by a certified Montessori Guide or a Guide in training, supported by an Assistant, ensuring individualized attention and expert instruction. What truly sets SMM apart is the extraordinary engagement of our parents, who contribute their time and talents through diverse volunteer roles, from recess supervision and facility maintenance to marketing and catechesis instruction. This deep community involvement fosters a strong, supportive environment that enriches the educational experience for every child.

Our History

St. Monica's Montessori (SMM), though one of Fargo-Moorhead's newest schools, is rooted in a powerful vision: to serve Christ in each child. Born from the grassroots efforts of dedicated families in 2019, SMM began as a dream, evolving through tireless planning and hard work. Their unwavering generosity has been the driving force behind our remarkable journey.

From humble beginnings in a family basement in the fall of 2021, serving just a small group of 3- to 6-year-olds, SMM has experienced extraordinary growth in a mere four years. We have expanded from a single Pre-K classroom to a thriving school serving children aged 3 to 12, encompassing Pre-K through Grade 6. Transitioning from only a North Dakota licensed daycare to now a fully approved school, we recently achieved a significant milestone: the purchase of our first school building in July 2024. This pivotal step positions us to serve even more families in the Fargo-Moorhead community with a renewed approach to education.

Letter from our President



Thank you for your interest in St. Monica's Montessori.

Founded in 2021, St. Monica's is a young, vibrant community and growing Montessori school led by Catholic values. Our focus is to guide children to their divine mission. Rooted in a deep respect for the child, fidelity to the Montessori method, and devotion to the teachings of the Catholic Church, St. Monica's offers a rich environment where faith and discovery flourish side by side. We are seeking a Head of School who feels called to lead with wisdom, humility, and vision — someone who is passionate about Catholic Montessori education.

Our ideal Head of School is a servant-leader who embraces the Church's vision for Catholic education 1 : 1 inspired by a supernatural understanding of the human person, animated by a strong sense of communion, and guided by the Gospel in every aspect of school life. This individual will be called not only to administer and steward our mission, but also to serve as a joyful witness to the faith — forming young hearts and minds to see all of creation in the light of Christ.

Thank you for discerning with us. We look forward to learning more about you.

Bryan Wilburn





Mission

At St. Monica's Montessori, our mission is to serve children by combining the truth, beauty, and goodness of the Catholic faith with the genius of Montessori philosophy to guide children to discover, enjoy, and attain their divine mission in this life and the next.

Our students thrive in an environment that values wonder, discovery, community, and independence. The generosity of the community as a whole joins integrally in this task of forming the next generation of children, ensuring families of all income levels have access to a premier education.

SMM stands apart in our region, built upon three foundational pillars: an authentic Montessori education, a Catholic Christian worldview, and a transformative generosity-based funding model. This powerful combination provides a premier educational experience that resonates deeply with our community, and is available to any family of any means.





Our Beliefs

- We believe that parents are the primary educators of their children.
- We believe that the home environment and the role of the parents as guides and models throughout a child's life are fundamentally important.
- We believe that all children are called to holiness and are created by God in His image and likeness with a unique combination of abilities, interests, and learning styles.
- We believe that all children are inquisitive and creative and that they possess a natural desire to learn.
- We believe that all children move through successive developmental stages, and at each stage, the children must be committed and actively involved in the learning process.

Our 3 Pillars

SMM stands apart in our region, built upon three foundational pillars:

1. An authentic Montessori education
2. Catholic Christian worldview,
3. A transformative generosity-based funding model.

This powerful combination provides a premier educational experience that resonates deeply with our community, and is available to any family of any means.



Authentic Montessori Method

The most visible difference that is noticed immediately within the SMM walls is the application of what is termed the “Montessori Method” of education. At the heart of a Montessori education lies a profound respect for the child's innate capacity for learning. Our classrooms cultivate this through a unique structure: multi-age groupings spanning three years, fostering peer mentorship and collaborative learning. Children engage in self-directed activities, choosing from a carefully prepared environment that sparks their curiosity and allows for deep, uninterrupted work cycles. Instead of traditional, teacher-directed instruction, our artistically trained guides facilitate discovery, gently leading each child on their individual path to knowledge. This approach stands in stark contrast to conventional models that rely on standardized curricula, age-segregated classrooms, and short, fragmented lessons. Through the Montessori method, we prioritize the holistic development of each child's intellectual, social, emotional, and spiritual potential.



At SMM, we believe that exceptional guides are the cornerstone of an exceptional Montessori education. Our lead guides undergo extensive training through internationally accredited programs, earning diplomas that signify their mastery of the Montessori method. These programs involve 12 weeks of intensive in-person study, immersing guides in Dr. Montessori's foundational principles and practical applications, culminating in a year-long practicum under expert guidance. This rigorous training empowers our guides to create dynamic, student-centered learning environments that foster independence, curiosity, and a lifelong love of learning. It also ensures they are well equipped to use the hundreds of unique material presentations developed by Dr. Montessori. While online courses may offer a superficial understanding of Montessori, our guides' comprehensive training ensures they can deliver an authentic and impactful Montessori experience.





Catholic Christian Worldview

St. Monica's Montessori holds a unique position in the Fargo-Moorhead community as the first Catholic Christian Montessori environment. Unlike other Montessori programs in the region, which operate in secular settings, SMM integrates a Christian worldview, reflecting Dr. Montessori's own Catholic faith and her belief that her educational discoveries were divinely inspired. This distinction is crucial for Christian families seeking a Montessori education that aligns with their values.



St Monica's Montessori aims in every way, to be grounded in the principles of the Catholic faith. Our daily work starts with each child taking a moment of prayer, asking Jesus to guide them through their day. Through our "Catechesis of the Good Shepherd," we provide weekly religious formation for all children.





Transformative Generosity-based Funding Model

Recognizing that the cost of private education is a significant barrier for many families, SMM has adopted a transformative "generosity model." We invite families to make a generous and sacrificial commitment of their time, talent, and treasure, fostering a community where children from all income levels can access a life-changing Montessori education. This approach has proven remarkably successful, drawing support from our enrolled families, the broader Fargo-Moorhead community, and beyond. This collaborative model strengthens community bonds, reinforcing the collective responsibility to nurture and educate our children.





The Head of School

St. Monica's Montessori School's mission is to serve children by combining the truth, beauty, and goodness of the Catholic faith with the genius of Montessori philosophy to guide children to discover, enjoy, and attain their divine mission in this life and the next. Our new leader will have the opportunity to continue to celebrate our school's strengths, recognize our needs, and collaboratively work towards nurturing our growth. As a collaborative leader, the Head of School works closely with the parish leadership team, faculty, staff, families, and other stakeholders to complete the mission and achieve our goals.

ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS/MAJOR RESPONSIBILITIES: Our Head of School serves as the school's spiritual, instructional, organizational, and community leader.

As *spiritual leader*, the Head of School collaborates with the president in advancing the evangelizing mission of the school through an integrated Catholic Montessori model. As lead witness, the Head of School supports faith formation activities for students and their families; and integrates the Catholic faith into all aspects of school life.

As *instructional leader*, the Head of School works with the guides to plan, support, and evaluate the instructional program establishing goals and dispositions necessary for successful student life. The Head of School also assures that instruction and formation meet the various needs and abilities of the students. Finally, the Head of School facilitates the professional growth of the staff and guides building upon the strong foundation that exists in a true Catholic Montessori Community.

As *organizational leader*, the Head of School selects, supervises, and evaluates guides and other staff; provides leadership and insight in strategic planning efforts; ensures effective use of personnel resources and the physical plant; and collaborates with both the President and the Board in the development and implementation of policies, procedures, and financial planning. The Head of School prepares the school budget in dialogue with the President and with accountability to the Board.

As *community leader*, and under the direction of the President, the Head of School collaborates with guides and staff to develop and encourage broad family and student participation in the total school program. The Head of School supports the President in keeping the local parishes and the broader community informed about the school's programs and assists in communicating the school's philosophy to the public.



Expected Qualifications and Characteristics

The successful candidate must be someone who:

- Is a practicing and active Catholic who shows an understanding and commitment to the mission of both Catholic education and the Montessori philosophy of education and is enthusiastic to embrace the goals of St. Monica's Montessori school community
- Has a minimum of a Bachelor's Degree (Master's Degree preferred) and/or demonstrated leadership skills within an educational and/or corporate setting
- Exercises leadership and vision
- Demonstrates superior written and verbal communication skills
- Develops and fosters the philosophy of Montessori education throughout the entire community, including local parishes, guides, staff, parents, alumni and donors
- Assures compliance with all laws and regulations, as well as internal policies and procedures



Preferred attributes:

- Experience teaching in a Montessori school and Catholic school leadership at the primary or secondary educational level
- Experience in church-related ministry with an understanding of the nature of a Catholic education in the Montessori tradition
- Demonstrated record of leadership ability and accomplishments.
- Outstanding poise, presence, and communication skills
- Demonstrated experience in collaborative leadership





Search Process

St. Monica's Montessori Catholic School is proud to partner with Mission Driven Catholic for this leadership search. Mission Driven Catholic works to revitalize Catholic schools to fully embrace their mission to be centers of evangelization for students and their families.

All interested applicants should forward a letter of interest, and a resume or CV to:

MISSION DRIVEN CATHOLIC

Attn: Dr. Daniel Baillargeon, Recruiter

d.baillargeon@missiondrivencatholic.com

