

Creating a Joyful Noise!



“These things have I spoken to you, that My joy may remain in you, and that your joy may be full.” John 15:11

There are many things for which I am thankful in relation to my work at preschool. I have written in previous articles and also told many people how fortunate I am to be able to go to a job where every day I am guaranteed a smile. Particularly in this challenging year, more people should be as fortunate.

I think I would need several pages to catalog all of the smiles that I have had and received in my last 11+ years at preschool! As you might expect, the students are behind the vast majority! This past week was no exception. Our five year olds had me sporting a real Cheshire Cat grin early in the week when they were enjoying time in the sunshine out on Exploration Station. The original thought behind the creation of this play area was to create an outdoor space where children could fully use their imaginations while connecting with nature and the outdoors. One of the favorite activities on Exploration Station has become “cooking” in the kitchen. Pine

cone soup, mulch muffins, and grilled leaf burgers are just a few of the recipes being concocted on any given day. Our 5 year olds took the use of the cooking utensils to a whole new level when they spontaneously came together as a class and started beating on the pots, banging sticks together, and dancing on the log pieces. They were radiant as they worked together to create an impromptu band. There was no input from their teachers or prepared lessons; the idea sparked from their own creativity. Their teachers only interfered on their fun enough to cheer words of encouragement. The preschoolers certainly were creating a joyful noise! One of the band leaders, Penelope, commented to her teachers: “We are gonna do this every day!”

The organic formation of this class activity as well as the smiles and comments helped me reflect on how grateful I am that we have a place in which children feel loved and free to express themselves. I am grateful that we have a place where our teachers nurture and

encourage new ideas, active exploration, and budding imaginations. I am grateful that we have a place where our children learn that working together can lead to the sharing and development of fun and exciting experiences. How lucky we are to have a place in our community where enthusiastic smiles are contagious and can remind us of all that God puts in our days to fill them with joy. This is especially true on the difficult days when we have trouble seeing beyond the darkness and remembering that God is always with us.

May we always look for the joyful moments that God gives us. May we be open to smiles and the opportunity to see the goodness of the people or situation around us. Let us always feel the Lord's presence among us!

Registration for the 21-22 school year is ongoing! To learn how to join our amazing preschool, please visit our website at: preschoolatstfrancis.com or contact Shelley Freeman at shelley.freeman@stfrancisraleigh.org.