



We value the importance of rituals and traditions in our children's lives and embrace these moments with our students. Taking the time to honor and celebrate special occasions and traditions provides us with a life perspective grounded in mindfulness, respect, peace, beauty, and joy.

Many of you, as parents, have participated in the wonderful birthday celebrations at the Primary level. With thought and care, we place a candle to represent the sun and a globe to represent the earth on a small table. For each year that your child has lived on this earth, he or she walks around the sun (candle) while holding the earth (globe). The parents then share a simple story about each year that their child has lived on this earth, and we listen with great love for this child. We honor the life of another human being and we celebrate with joy each year he or she has lived on this earth.

And we celebrate with light.... the light that represents the sun or the stars, as well as the symbolic light that shines brightly within each one of us.

During the winter months, we embrace many wonderful holidays. With the shorter days, the Winter Solstice reminds us to celebrate the sun and the gift of light. So many holidays incorporate and celebrate light as a representation of possibility, birth, wonder, renewal, hope or joy. The Toddler classes have begun to discuss this common theme of light as they learn about Diwali, Hannukah, Kwanzaa and Christmas. And both the Toddler and Primary classes have begun singing some holiday favorites!

As an international community, we welcome the stories of light from around the world. We welcome the rituals and traditions that make each family unique and special, and we study the important rituals and traditions that are celebrated in different cultures all over the world. Children have the opportunity to learn about all the wonderful and beautiful ways that human beings choose to celebrate and honor life.

As we welcome the light that surrounds us and the light that is within, we invite you to pass it along and spread your warmth. Light a little candle with your family and take a moment to embrace the joy of this season and the wonder of today!

In light and peace,

*Ashley and the Toddler/Primary Team*