



My name is Patricia Pieper and I am the first grade teacher at St. Peter's School. I have been the first grade teacher for many years and feel that I can call St. Peter's home. My own children attended St. Peter's many years ago and now I am excited that one of my six grandchildren will be in our Kindergarten class. I am very fortunate that I have been able to share in the teaching of so many children. My life has been touched, in a special way, by all of them.



My name is Laurie Gidoni and I am the first grade aide. This is my first year as the first grade aide and I'm enjoying every minute! I have been a member of the St. Peter's community for 5 years. My daughter is in the 4<sup>th</sup> grade class. In my spare time, I love to craft and bake.



### **September and October**

We began our first grade year by welcoming new friends to our school. They are Alana, Isaiah, Kyle and Kaiden. Our theme for the year is "Being a Good Friend". We made Friendship promises and even signed a contract promising to try our best to be a friend to everyone.



We also welcomed back the Superkids. We met these friends in Kindergarten as they formed the Superkids Club and now we will read about their adventures.

We celebrated Constitution Day on September 17<sup>th</sup>. We learned about the early history of our country as the colonists decided to become a new country. The children were surprised to learn that the United States began with only 13 colonies. We talked about how any group (even a school) needs rules or laws and that is why our Constitution was written. We then made blue ribbons celebrating America.

Johnny Appleseed provided another history lesson about early America. We learned that the pioneers were exploring a new frontier and traveled in covered wagons. Of course, his birthday means apple tasting. We compared apples and then wrote describing words about each apple. The best part of the day was eating apples dipped in caramel sauce.



October was suddenly here bringing cooler weather and signs of Fall. We celebrated our Guardian Angels on October 2<sup>nd</sup> by making angels carrying our thanks to God. On October 4<sup>th</sup>, we learned about St. Francis and his love of animals.



The Race for Education was a really fun and active day for us. We walked and walked and then joined in games and fitness activities such as an obstacle course and sharks and minnows. Our favorite was the tug of war. Everyone was tired after a morning full of exercise, so we relaxed in the afternoon with a movie and popcorn. A great day!



Columbus Day will bring another opportunity to learn history and map skills, as we hear the story of his journey and his discovery of the new world.

We will take turns bringing our Halloween pumpkin characters home each day. The children will write and tell us about their characters adventure with them. This is always a fun activity that helps us practice our writing and speaking skills.

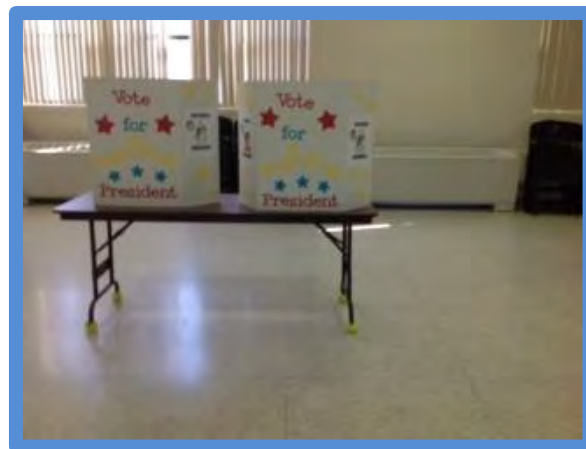




And then comes Halloween! We will wear our costumes to Trunk or Treat as we celebrate the holiday with the school. This is always a fun evening full of creativity and surprises. We will then have our classroom party on Halloween day with crafts and lots of goodies to eat. Another fun day in first grade!!

## Winter

The first grade had a very busy fall and winter time. We learned all about the election process by having our own election. Two of our Superkids characters, Oswald and Ettabetta, ran for president. We had a debate (two fourth grade students dressed as the characters), campaign signs, voter registration cards, polling place, and ballots. The children were very enthusiastic and learned about elections in a fun way. Ettabetta won the election!



We had a wonderful time with our grandparents on Grandparents Day right before Thanksgiving. We enjoyed activities in our classroom which included making cookie pilgrim hats.

During December we observed Advent by filling our wooden manger with the many good things we did to prepare for Jesus's birthday. The good deeds were written on slips of paper and our manger was very full by Christmas. Our Elf on the Shelf surprised us with letters that encouraged good behavior in the classroom and was found hiding in the most interesting places each day. We filled our days with Christmas learning activities and crafts. It was a really special time for us.

In January we made lots of snowflakes and snowmen with hopes of a snowstorm that never came. We learned about Martin Luther King and his dream of equality for all. In February we learned the story of Ruby Bridges. The children identified with her as she was a first grader and talked about her bravery for attending an all white school while people protested around her. They are very glad that we can all go to the same school and be friends!



On February 2<sup>nd</sup>, we made ground hog puppets and put them outside to watch for their shadows. However, it was a cloudy day so there were no shadows. Spring is right around the corner.



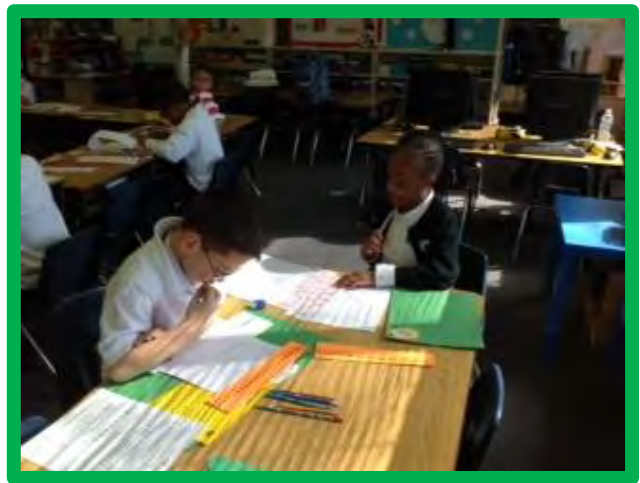
For Valentine's Day we did a special science experiment. We dissolved candy hearts in different liquids (water, vinegar, lemon juice, and vegetable oil) to see which liquid dissolved the hearts the fastest. It was a fun lesson!

February also brought our 100<sup>th</sup> day of school. We wore our crowns proudly all day. We used a large jar of cheese balls to estimate how many hundreds were in the jar. We then ate all of the cheese balls – all 835 of them!



## March, April and May

We have been working very hard in our Superkids language program and we are ready to start our second first grade book called "More Adventures of the Superkids". Our class has been reading and earning many dog tags in the Accelerated Reading program. We even have two children who have earned their gold dog tags. This is quite an achievement for a first grader. We have also been getting many, many Math Medals in Accelerated Math. Several children have received the Special Math Medal. We are a very hardworking group of students!!



Now that March is here we are anxiously awaiting spring. Lent has started and we will observe it by making our sacrifices each day. We will be learning the Stations of the Cross and attending Stations each Friday with our school family.

March 2<sup>nd</sup> is Dr. Seuss's birthday and we will celebrate it with hats and sharing our favorite Dr. Seuss stories.





Later in the month we will celebrate St. Patrick's Day and learn about the shamrock and the Blessed Trinity. On the 19<sup>th</sup> we will write letters to our fathers in honor of St. Joseph.

As March is the windy month, we are going to make paper airplanes and wooden model airplanes. We will then fly them to see which flies the farthest or the highest. A good lesson about lift and gravity.

In April, as we get closer to the great feast of Easter, we will be learning about each of the days in Holy Week. Each day has its own story and meaning, leading up to the day that Jesus died. And of course, we will celebrate Easter with banners with all of the symbols of Easter.

After our Easter break, we will be working hard to get ready for second grade as we continue our Superkids and Accelerated Math.

May is dedicated to the Blessed Mother so we will be learning to pray the Rosary and celebrate Mary with our school family at our annual May crowning.

During May, we will be studying habitats in preparation for our big day. Our field trip! We are going to Cypress swamp where we will explore a swamp, a meadow and a pond. We will see animals that live in these habitats, and we even get to go pond dipping to find minnows and tadpoles.

As June arrives we will be thinking of summer vacation but also remembering all of the fun and interesting things we have learned in first grade.