

Feast day- two days early



Well, it looks like I was somehow able to get a day of work in this week. Apparently the teacher was gone yesterday too, and they didn't use the same sub which left the door open for yours truly. I am writing this post with a headache, so don't be too surprised if it turns out shorter than normal.

I was able to pick up this day early yesterday afternoon meaning that had I worked yesterday I may not have secured a job for today. Who knows? Only one opening slipped past my radar for yesterday (locked when I tried to select it) so I imagine today would have been no better with the selection still being only one district. The job? Mentally impaired kids at the school furthest from me at about 13 miles. I hoped to run into one of my church students here who graced my cabin at summer camp a year ago, and even found myself in the classroom across the hall from his, but as it turned out our paths never crossed.

So what is this sort of classroom like? Think kids who can barely talk even though some are ten or eleven years old, two of which are wheelchair bound and can't even feed themselves. There were seven kids, three aides, and one teacher. Yes, a ratio of less than two students per teacher; it takes that much energy to work with these kids. Now these kids were very low-functioning, but that doesn't mean non-functioning, so there is room for teaching them. Mostly this is very basic math and simple writing (not all can write though), and a lot of coloring, cutting, and pasting. Naturally the theme for the reading and writing lesson was- drum roll please- Thanksgiving. I read them a book parodying *The Night Before Christmas*, replacing Christmas with Thanksgiving. Then the kids did a sequencing activity on the book. The ones who were able to write not only sequenced things from the book, they

also had to write about it, a challenge for me to get them to do this.

Mostly the aides ran the class. This was pretty much my only lesson. I acted as an aide myself for much of the day which is standard practice as the aides know the routine and what to expect out of their students. In the afternoon the day ended with an actual Thanksgiving feast. There was corn, mashed potatoes, stuffing, pumpkin pie, and turkey- erm, cookies. No actual turkey- several kids don't eat meat anyway- but cookies decorated to look like turkeys. I actually didn't eat much of anything, and since this was less than two hours after lunch not much was given to the kids, but for them it was supposed to be a learning experience. A lot of what these kids do is life skills, including cooking. Last year I subbed in a class like this where the kids folded laundry (gym loaner uniforms). I did force myself to eat a small slice of pumpkin pie. There was only once slice left and I didn't want to start any arguments . I also took a cookie home since they were homemade and I didn't want to offend. You got me, I have a sweet tooth anyway so I didn't mind. One thing that the meal was missing was the thanksgiving part. I didn't expect prayer, this being the 21st century in a public school, but the aides didn't ask what the kids were thankful for. Maybe that's too high a level for them, I don't know.

Well, it looks like my post isn't short after all, though I do still have my headache even after taking an allergy pill and a 600mg Tylenol. Come to think of it, I seem to remember that you don't take Tylenol for headaches. Waste of a pill- now where's my Aleve?