

SPECIAL NEEDS CHILDREN CONFIRMED AT
ST. JUDE PARISH, LONDONDERRY, NH

Londonderry, NH . . . May 25, 2008 . . . In an emotional, and spiritually uplifting celebration, Bishop John B. McCormack, D.D., Bishop of the Diocese of Manchester, celebrated the 10:00 AM Mass at St. Jude Parish, Londonderry, NH Sunday, May 25, 2005. During the Liturgy, Bishop McCormack ministered the Sacrament of Confirmation to seven children who are participating in a Religious Education Program designed specifically for children with Special Needs. Several are non-ambulatory, several are unable to communicate verbally and most have experienced a variety of surgical procedures for various conditions. It is believed to be the only such program in the Diocese of Manchester.

The unique program, now in its third year, teaches the basics of the Catholic faith at a level the children can comprehend. The program resulted in the children previously celebrating First Penance and First Eucharist. With the Sacrament of Confirmation, the children achieved a milestone in their faith development. According to Rev. Bob Couto, Pastor, "We are grateful Bishop McCormack reached out to these children and their families. His homily was passionate, his ministry sensitive and it was obvious to the packed church that the celebration brought great joy to the Bishop. Each of the candidates were visibly excited as Bishop McCormack anointed them, extended the sign of peace and communicated with each child individually. It was a beautiful and blessed moment for all who attended the Mass."

Confirmed were Yvette Livernois, age 8 ; Lenny Gratton, age 10, Ian Radloff, age 12, triplets: Sarah, Matthew and Susan Kuczvara, ages 12, and Ryan Dunn, age 15. The program is under the guidance of Trish Woodward, Director of Religious Education and is directed by Mrs. Theresa Mayer who is currently on leave from her position as a Special Needs Assistant at Londonderry South School. Caitlin McKenny, a junior at Londonderry High School, is an aide to Mrs. Mayer.