

# Confirmation

WE BEGAN OUR SIXTH GRADE YEAR with looking at the individual who is Jesus, reading the gospels, studying his stories, and relating them to us as the unique individuals we were with gifts bestowed upon us from the Holy Spirit.

We read about the value of community and the parable of the house on the rock. We talked at length about how a community built on a pillar of stable core values stands in all kinds of weather.

When we began the invitation process in the seventh grade, where each child was invited to think about how he or she fit into this community, how he or she could recognize his or her gifts from the Spirit and bless the community so that it was further stable, the confirmandi were asked to choose a stone from a pile of river rock.

That individual stone, although similar to the ones in the pile of thousands, with its unique and differing characteristics, became symbolic of their own spirit. Each week, the stone was present with us during class, and each week, I reminded them to look at their stones, to memorize its features, to study it carefully, and then to place it back within the pile of others.

Each week, the confirmandi sought out to choose their stone from among the community of stones. And each week, we laughed about being able to tell whose was whose. Each week, the confirmandi reminded one another of what each person's stone looked like, felt like, seemed like.

And thus, we carried the stones in our own beings. Toward the end of seventh grade, after a five-lesson invitation period, the confirmandi accepted their invitations and made their decisions to become one with the community. They each placed their stones on top of a large patio stone, which represented the Church, our Catholic St. Cronan community, and in one with Jesus. They were now building their houses on the rock.

We added candles that burned brightly throughout the rest of our classes, learned to pray around its presence, and used it as the centerpiece of many discussions. Our prayer corner became a focal piece during our retreat, as we lavished it with one-click prayers to Jesus and our now rock-necklaces draped over it, soaking in the reverence of the moment.

The rock of Jesus stands before you now, emanating from it the same many river rocks that comprise its community. The confirmandi now wear their rocks as necklaces, as a symbol that these rocks are just part of a larger peace that they carry forth within them.

—Jill Proehl



FRONT ROW:  
*John Proehl, Bobby Hogan (from St. Gabriel Parish) Abigail Hageman, Talia Marcelle Bennett, Austin Krueger, Michael Tettambel (from St. Gabriel Parish)*

BACK ROW:  
*Julia Hoffman, Jocelyn Hartung, Kalab Falvey were confirmed as ones guided by God's Holy Spirit on February 27.*



*The Confirmandi are pictured with Bishop Rice, who anointed them, and Fr. Gerry Kleba. All are wearing their rock necklaces.*