



*To Priests, Teachers, Parents and Candidates for First Holy Communion and Confirmation in the
Archdiocese of Cashel and Emly.* **April 24nd 2020**

Dear Friends,

Easter greetings and good wishes to All.

Firstly, I would like to say to all our school pupils preparing for the sacraments this year: it is now nearly six weeks since your schools closed. Life has changed considerably for you, your family and for the entire country. You are now at home without contact with your friends from school and other activities. I am sure you miss them very much as you miss visiting other family members – especially your grandparents. This is a great challenge for everyone. I am sure you will show great courage in following all that is asked of you at this time to protect one another.

I have received a number of requests for information about the Sacraments of First Holy Communion and Confirmation - as to whether they will be held as previously planned in the parishes of the Archdiocese. As we come to the end of the month of April and the Easter season progresses it is now certain that all the plans and preparations we have made for the reception of the Sacraments of First Holy Communion and Confirmation will not be realised.

These ceremonies are big occasions and bring many people together to celebrate with those receiving the sacrament. However, following guidelines from the government, right now it is impossible to gather large numbers of people because of the risks involved for the spread of Covid-19. I am sure this will be a big disappointment for many people, including myself. I really appreciate and enjoy the confirmation ceremonies that I participate in.

To all of you preparing for these sacraments this year I would like to state that your First Holy Communion and Confirmation will happen when it is safe to do so. The planning of a new date will involve your local Priests, your Teachers, your Parents and, of course, the assurance from the government that it is safe to hold the ceremony.

I wish you every Blessing and Joy this Easter Season. I invite you to pray with me the words of Psalm 26, that all your families and friends may be safe at this time:

“The Lord is my light and my help, Hope in the Lord, hold firm and take heart”.

Yours in Christ,

+ Kieran O'Reilly.

