

CHURCH OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION ORANMORE

CHURCH OF ST. JOSEPH MAREE

19th May, 2021

*Dear Parents and Guardians
of all those preparing to celebrate First Holy Communion and Confirmation,*

While the ongoing pandemic has brought many challenges both to our country and to our community, perhaps the biggest consequence for our parish has been the ongoing postponement of these very significant 'milestone' occasions for your family, for our schools and for us.

Thankfully we can now propose dates for the celebration of these sacraments. In doing so, we have taken a number of competing factors into account. Our first priority has been to ensure we do nothing to hinder the tremendous national campaign against Covid 19. Thus we are guided by the direction of Bishop Brendan and his colleagues, that First Holy Communion and Confirmation would not be celebrated until Autumn. We also note with respect that the Government/HSE have advised that these sacraments would 'not be celebrated at this time'. We are also aware that a very significant number of families across the four primary schools in our parish have already made holiday, family and other arrangements during the month of August. Taking this into consideration – and it hasn't been easy – we now plan to celebrate First Holy Communion and Confirmation on the following dates this year –

- | | | | |
|--|-----------------------|---------------------------|----------------------|
| • Saturday, August 28 th | 3 rd Class | <i>Scoil Iósaif Naofa</i> | First Holy Communion |
| • Saturday, August 28 th | 3 rd Class | <i>Maree NS</i> | First Holy Communion |
| • Friday, September 3 rd | 2 nd Class | <i>Scoil Mhuire</i> | First Holy Communion |
| • Friday, September 10 th | 2 nd Class | <i>Gaelscoil de hÍde</i> | First Holy Communion |
| • Friday, September 17 th | 2 nd Class | <i>Scoil Iósaif Naofa</i> | First Holy Communion |
| • Wed'day, September 22 nd | 6 th Class | <i>Scoil Iósaif Naofa</i> | Confirmation |
| • Thursday, September 23 rd | 6 th Class | <i>Scoil Mhuire</i> | Confirmation |
| • Friday, September 24 th | 2 nd Class | <i>Maree NS</i> | First Holy Communion |
| • Wed'day, September 29 th | 6 th Class | <i>Gaelscoil de hÍde</i> | Confirmation |
| • Thursday, September 30 th | 6 th Class | <i>Maree NS</i> | Confirmation |

The classes specified here are those that the candidates have belonged to during the academic year 2020/2021.

There are some things to note –

- (1) Because the pupils of Third Class in both Maree NS and Scoil Íosaif Naofa have been waiting since May 2020 to celebrate their First Holy Communion, they are first on our list !
- (2) Since Confirmation will take place after most candidates have commenced secondary school, we encourage you to ensure the authorities in those schools are aware of these arrangements.

We have already spoken to the Principal of Calasanctius College in this regard and she has offered her full cooperation.
- (3) While we earnestly hope to celebrate these sacraments on these dates, we will, continue to be bound by whatever diocesan/government/regulations are in place at the time.
- (4) In all likelihood, because of ongoing Covid 19 restrictions, there may well be more than one ceremony on the day.

A ceremony time will be assigned to each candidate in September.
- (5) Louise in the Parish Office requires *an original Certificate of Baptism* for each First Holy Communion and for each Confirmation candidate.

Please ensure this certificate is promptly submitted if not already done so.
- (6) Our parish Holy Communion/Confirmation online preparation programme can be found by following the appropriate menu-links on our parish website www.oranmoreparish.org
- (7) Mass from Oranmore and Maree churches continues to be broadcast locally on *FM 105.3*

Mass is also streamed from Oranmore church by webcam on www.oranmoreparish.org

We remain indebted to the principals and all the staff of the four primary schools in our parish for their constant resilience, kindness, positivity and cooperation in helping make these arrangements and in so many other ways. We will continue to keep them, and you, and the young people who are preparing to take more big steps in life, in our hearts, minds and prayers.

Sincerely and with respect,

Diarmuid

Daniel