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21<sup>st</sup> April 2020.

Dear Parents, Guardians and especially those younger members of our parishes who have been preparing to celebrate Sacraments of First Holy Communion and Confirmation.

Firstly, and most importantly, I hope this letter finds you and your family well. We are all praying for those affected by this global pandemic and for those who are doing great work to help slow down the spread in our communities.

I wanted to write you a short letter conscious that many were, until recently, busily preparing for the celebration of very special days and very important Sacraments of First Holy Communion and Confirmation. I know, you, like us all, would like to know what is to happen as the "lockdown" is phased out and the need for social distancing is removed, but, sadly for now, no one knows what will unfold. I want to assure you, however, that special days will happen again and when time allows, we will celebrate together the two wonderful Sacraments of Initiation for which you have been preparing. I look forward to meeting those children who will present themselves for the Sacrament of Confirmation and, no doubt, our parishes are looking forward to the excitement of First Holy Communion days.

Celebrations are important and for now while they are rightly on hold, it is good that we remember these ominous days will pass and a new day will dawn. Until then we all will continue to do what is advised by the National Public Health Emergency Team (NPHET) so that we too can contribute to stopping the spread of this deadly virus.

Wishing you and your family every blessing. Please know that I, and all in our parishes, continue to remember you in our prayers.

With kind regards,

Yours sincerely,

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✠Dermot Farrell,  
Bishop of Ossory,  
Patron.