

A Chairde - Dear Friends,

Our society has been through an extraordinary experience over these past years. You together with principals and teachers, have been at the coal face. You have been on the front line meeting the challenges COVID 19 presented. You have done so in an exemplary fashion. We are deeply indebted to you all.

Covid disrupted many facets of school life, including religious education and the celebration of sacraments. I wish to extend my personal appreciation for the flexibility and imagination you brought to that challenge too; so that the rhythm of the sacramental life of the parish was sustained.

In regard to supporting you in the task religious education, during Covid, the work of the Diocesan Advisors was not possible. In re-establishing that support service I have appointed Mr. Tony Keneally, the retired principal of Scoil Naomh Iosef N.S., Cobh, to co-ordinate this support service to our primary schools. As heretofore, he will be assisted by a team of experienced teachers.

Tony has alerted me to their plans to engage with schools in the Spring. He will apprise you of his plans in due course.

As Patron, I thank you for your commitment and dedication to the education of our young people and for your support to their families. I wish to acknowledge too the welcome you have extended to the many Ukrainian children who have enrolled in our schools over these past months. Your welcome for the stranger goes to the heart of our Christian discipleship.

As the day of festival of the birth of Jesus approaches, we each seek to embrace its meaning for and in our lives. The infant confounds us. The mystery of the divine is in our midst wrapped in swaddling clothes. Strangely, the 'little ones' find they can 'get it' more easily, bless them!

My friends, let us be mindful of each other in prayer. The world needs the blessing of peace. It is especially in need of peacemakers. So many are suffering and dying needlessly. We remember them and their families.

I wish you and yours the blessings of joy and peace. May the New Year be rich in surprise and new accomplishments.

Yours Sincerely,
+William Crean
Bishop of Cloyne