

Enrolment for Confirmation 2023

Dear Parents / Guardians,

This will be a year of **choices** for your son/daughter who is now in sixth class – the choice of secondary education, the choice of whether to be Confirmed. Traditionally the choice of Confirmation was virtually automatic – nearly everyone in sixth class was confirmed, when the Faith was fully alive as part of our parish community – a strong faith tradition being passed on from generations past with regular prayers at home and Mass on Sunday. But we are now living in a very different world. We have a crisis of faith, living in a post-Christian era. Many do not practice anymore. And still the sacraments were celebrated in this faith vacuum with the result that our youth no longer practice either. The Sacraments have become social occasions for many marking the transition from primary to secondary education. This year I am urging you all not to use Confirmation as a social occasion. Confirmation is **not a social occasion** – but the celebration of a **Sacrament of the Church** which can only be significant if celebrated as part of a journey of living faith.

Enrolling for the Sacrament of Confirmation entails regular practice of our Catholic Faith, celebrating a key moment on the journey of faith, making their own the decision you as parents made for them on the day of their Baptism – to be members of God's Family, the Church. To be a practising Catholic today in a secular society is not easy. Parents and families must make decisive and committed efforts to practice their faith at home and as part of our parish faith family. And then there is the peer pressure on many of our young people today too.

Hence, in order to respect our Faith and the Sacraments, it is of the utmost importance that our young people, with your guidance, decide if they wish to be confirmed and continue as members of a living faith family. If they do, this is an important year of preparation for the Sacrament of Confirmation. It calls on the **close cooperation of the home, school and parish** – parents, teachers and priests working together educating and forming your children in faith and love for the challenging world of today.

At School their teacher will guiding them through the catechetical programme “**Grow in Love**”, helping them understand their faith and how to live a Christian way of life in today's world.

At Parish level we celebrate our faith at the weekly Eucharist and the celebration of the Sacraments. They will also have the special prayers and support of the parish community as they prepare for their Confirmation. We also visit our schools on a regular basis. We hope to run the “**You Shall be my Witnesses**” Programme in March, the beginning of Lent.

At home you as parents carry on the onerous duty and responsibility of passing on the faith with daily prayer and attendance at weekly Mass. The role of the teacher and priest will only be of lasting value when they are supporting you as the **primary educators of your children**. Your home is the cradle of faith for your children, as indeed ours were for us.

Should your son / daughter choose to be Confirmed, I invite you, parents and Confirmandi, to a meeting in **St Patrick's Church on Monday 26th September at 7.30 pm.**

May the Lord through the power of the Holy Spirit guide us all – parents, teachers and priests – as we work together in preparing the children of our parish for the coming of the Holy Spirit on them at Confirmation.

Sincerely yours in Christ

Rev. Cathal Ó Fearraí