

ARCHDIOCESE OF CASHEL & EMLY

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23.6.2021

Dear Father, Parent, Guardian, Principal,

Please find attached a letter I received yesterday June 22nd from Dr Rose Fitzgerald of the Public Health Mid-West Region, (Limerick, Clare and North Tipperary) of the HSE.

In the letter there is a recommendation regarding **Confirmation and First Holy Communion** ceremonies that they be deferred until September 2021. I recognise that ceremonies are already scheduled, and this letter is disappointing at this time.

I have been informed that the recommendation of Dr. Fitzgerald is in response to queries from teachers, councillors, and members of the public. The recommendation is based on:

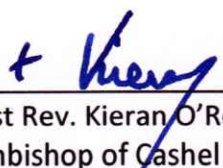
1. That the rate of infection remains high with special concern around the spread of the Delta Variant.
2. Many parents have not been vaccinated
3. Many enquiries to the HSE asking for their recommendation.

In evaluating the situation in your parish serious consideration must be given to this recommendation. There is a wide variety of church situations across the Archdiocese, it is hard to come out with one overall directive. I ask you to be cautious in your evaluation of the situation, discussing it with principals, teachers and parents/guardians, and parish personnel responsible for safety within the churches.

Whatever decision is arrived at the ceremonies should proceed with great care. Parents should be advised strongly against holding parties involving members beyond their own immediate family members.

If there are further issues, please don't hesitate to contact the office.

Yours sincerely,



Most Rev. Kieran O'Reilly, SMA,
Archbishop of Cashel & Emly.



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Protect. Prevent.
Improve.

June 22, 2021

RE: Recommendation to defer First Holy Communions/Confirmations

Dear Archbishop, Most Rev Kieran O'Reilly,

We have had a number of queries in relation to the holding of First Holy Communion and Confirmation ceremonies over the summer period in the Mid-West region (Limerick, Clare, and North Tipperary).

I wish to advise that it is our view that these ceremonies should be deferred until September 2021 due to a number of factors:

- The current high rate of COVID-19 infection in the Mid-West region
- By September most of those eligible should be fully vaccinated against COVID

Should you wish to discuss the above, please contact me by telephone at **061 483338**.

Yours sincerely,

Rose Fitzgerald

Dr Rose Fitzgerald, SPHM
Medical Council Registration Number: 11211