**Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church, Parish of Firhouse**

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15th September 2021

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Greetings. For the last 18 months or so we have been living through very strange times with a lot of uncertainty because of the Covid-19 pandemic, and hopefully the situation will improve in the near future.

I write to you at the beginning of this school year in relation to the Application and Request of your child for the Sacrament of Confirmation in 2022. The Home, the School / Catechist, and the Parish, have a vital role to play in the faith formation of your child. Only children baptised Roman Catholic can make the Sacrament of Confirmation.

To put the Sacrament of Confirmation in context: it is another step of commitment as one declares and accept belief in our loving God as members of the Roman Catholic Community. While all who have been Baptised in the Roman Catholic faith and have received First Holy Communion are invited to present for Application and Request for the Sacrament of Confirmation, we do not assume that this is your choice, or the choice of the young people concerned. It is a stage at which some ritual celebration seems to be needed in life, but as there are many forms of creative and meaningful ritual celebration in modern times, it is important that you make a choice that matches what is of value to you and your family.

I ask you to consider if your child wishes to present for the Sacrament of Confirmation in 2022. The young people are not obliged to present for Confirmation simply because they are in finishing Primary School. It will be necessary to complete the Application and Request process before Confirmation occurs and important that you have time as a family to consider if your child, supported by you, wishes to make this commitment to Roman Catholic Faith. Trust that you will have the support of the Parish with whatever decision that you make. We do not assume that all will choose to present to make a final sacramental commitment to faith. It is possible to present for Confirmation at any stage later in life, if not now.

There is a change this year in the way the Application and Request is done. All Applications and Requests for the Sacrament of Confirmation are now made online by means of a Google Form directly to the parish. I wish to thank Scoil Treasa, and Claire *(Catechist re Gaelscoil na Giúise* *& FETNS),* for sending this email and letter to you, with the link to the Google Form. In some family situations, both parents / guardians may wish to 'Submit' an Application / Request Form with your contact details. Please 'Submit' this Google Form immediately or at the very latest by 30th September 2021.

Your Child’s Baptismal Certificate from the Parish of Baptism will be needed, as evidence of Roman Catholic Baptism. If you do not have a copy of the Baptismal Certificate, please contact the parish of your child’s baptism for a Baptismal Certificate. For children baptised in the Parish of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, Firhouse, we will once again check the baptismal details of all children baptised in Parish of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, Firhouse.

In previous years many of you would have given the class teacher the Baptismal Certificates in Scoil Treasa or to Claire in the other schools. This year please do not give the Baptismal Certificate to the class teacher in Scoil Treasa or Claire re Gaelscoil na Giúise & FETNS, but directly to me by email attachment or drop it into the Parish Office during Opening Hours 9.30 am – 3 pm. If you wish to email me the Baptismal Certificate, use the email address [firhouseparishsaf@gmail.com](mailto:firhouseparishsaf@gmail.com) to send a scanned copy or a photo of the Baptismal Certificate to me directly please. As the Google Form requires you to give me a contact email address, I will be able to contact with you by email if I need to.

In our parish school of Scoil Treasa the class teacher will be covering the catechetical material in the ‘Grow in Love’ Catechetical Programme, as will Claire for those preparing from Gaelscoil na Giúise and Firhouse Educate Together National School, and I encourage you as parents / guardians to journey with your child in this ‘Grow in Love’ Catechetical Programme, and whatever else you may be able to do in helping your child to prepare for the Sacrament of Confirmation. Many parishes currently are using live stream webcam to broadcast the Celebration of Sunday Mass, including the Parish of Firhouse. I encourage you to join in, either in your own parish or another parish, so that your child may experience the online Celebration of Mass. I know it is not the same as being in person in church Celebrating Mass, and hopefully we will soon be able to have the normal in person Celebration of Mass in the church for large numbers and be able to use full capacity.

With every good wish and stay safe.

Yours sincerely,

Peter J Reilly

Fr Peter Reilly PP