



***Church of Ireland
United Dioceses of Dublin & Glendalough***

**Church of Ireland House
Church Avenue
Rathmines
Dublin 6**

***The Most Reverend Dr Michael Jackson
Archbishop of Dublin and Bishop of Glendalough
Primate of Ireland and Metropolitan***

*Tel: 00353 1 4125663
archbishop@dublin.anglican.org*

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Dear Class of 2020

You are reaching the end of your time in National School. But you are not actually in school. You are at home, continuing your schooling there. This is an extraordinary time for you. You, your parents and your teachers will have looked forward to the end of this very special year for every one of you. From the day you first entered school you have had so many different experiences, you have done so many different things, you have met so many different people.

As well as playing your part in the building up of the school community you will have built up a pride in yourselves. Each one of you will have grown as an individual. And each-one of you will have learned so many ways of expressing your personality. It could be in friendship of others. It could be in school work itself. It could be in sport. It could be in drama or music or art. You all still have these talents. The frustrating thing is that you will more than likely not have a chance to show and share them at a Graduation in your school in 2020 as you prepare to leave.

As May moves into June, you would probably have been planning and rehearsing for a whole afternoon or evening where you could have shown your parents and your friends the things you can do. And they also would have been so looking forward to this with you.

I share your disappointment. But those who make decisions about your wellbeing and safety in school do not see the state of the coronavirus in our country at a point where it is safe for you to be in the school building together. I can only ask you to be brave about this and to explore whatever other ways are open to you through your teachers, and with your parents' support and approval, to rejoice in your achievements and to celebrate them virtually.

Nothing in the current crisis takes away from your uniqueness and your specialness as individuals and as graduating pupils from your National School. I wish you everything that is best for the autumn when you continue your education in secondary school.

Thank you and your parents, your teachers and all the school staff and management for what you have given and contributed, for the ways you have helped one another, for what you have learned and for the fun you have shared. And let us look forward to happy times together in the future.

Congratulations to everyone!

+Michael
Archbishop of Dublin and Bishop of Glendalough