



ST. MARY'S SECONDARY SCHOOL

HOLY FAITH CONVENT, GLASNEVIN, DUBLIN 11



5th April 2020

Dear Parent(s)/Guardian(s),

We hope you all continue to stay safe and well as we navigate together through these uncharted territories. We have been updating you as a community through our Website, our school App, our Twitter feed and by text, and individually by phone and email and would like to remind you all that the school can still be contacted through the main line **01-8374413** which has been diverted for the duration of this emergency.

We are now into the second week of the more serious lockdown measures which were announced by the Taoiseach Leo Varadkar on Friday 27th March. The school building is completely out of bounds until 12th April and we will keep you updated as new information is released. We would like to take this opportunity to thank you for helping our students to engage with online learning since the schools were closed on 12th March. You, our parents and guardians, have been heroic in the manner in which you have embraced the needs of the moment – turning your kitchens and living rooms into virtual schools – where our students have been able to continue with their schooling under your watchful eyes. We know it has not been easy and congratulate our students too who have thrown themselves with enthusiasm into this new and sometimes challenging learning experience. The Easter holidays should provide a well-earned rest for teachers and students alike who have been working so hard since the school closed. For those students who came late to the teams – the break affords the opportunity to catch up. For our exam students, our third and sixth years, we would advise you all to commit to a study regime as you would have done had supervised study been scheduled in the school in the knowledge that plans are being drawn up to ensure that both the Leaving Certificate and Junior Certificate exams will go ahead this year. The Taoiseach Leo Varadkar said that the Minister for Education Joe McHugh and the State Examinations Commission are drawing up options to allow the State exams to be held. Mr Varadkar said there are a "number of options" and Minister McHugh is working to ensure that "by hook or by crook" the exams take place.

As already stated in previous letters we are acutely aware that the health and wellbeing of our school community is of paramount importance and we are conscious of the difficulties that many members of our school community are suffering due to the restrictions that have been put in place. We are mindful that employment circumstances may have changed in some households due to the Covid-19 situation to the extent that some families might be experiencing unforeseen difficulties. We would like to remind you that the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection has confirmed that funding to schools for school

meals will continue, and food packages are available to families who are experiencing need at this time. The first delivery took place last Friday 3rd April and we are hoping that another delivery will take place before the end of this week. If your family has been hit badly by the measures in place could you please email Ms Bourke at bbourke@stmaryshfg.ie and we will put you on the list to receive whatever support is available.

As Holy Week begins our thoughts and prayers are with you all and especially those who have been impacted negatively by the Coronavirus and we urge all our students to continue to play their part – to stay at home and maintain social and physical distancing as instructed by the HSE in order to curb the spread of Covid-19, and to stay safe and well.

Yours faithfully,



Bernadette Bourke
Principal



Mary O'Donnell
Deputy Principal



Frances Devaney
Deputy Principal

