

DIOCESE OF PLYMOUTH

CATECHETICAL CAMPS



21 June 2020

I am writing to you all at this time because you have in recent years helped to advertise and support the very successful Plymouth Diocese Catechetical Camps amongst the children in your parishes and schools. The camps have been so important in growing the personal relationship our young people should have with Jesus Christ, Our Lord.

At the end of March, when the country went into lock-down, the Catechetical Camps Committee came together by videoconference, and sadly came to the conclusion that it would not be possible to run safely the advertised Summer Camps this year. We are all deeply aware how much the young people enjoy coming to the camps and meeting new friends and old, living and sharing their faith, and how disappointed they will be that the camps are not happening in 2020.

The Camps Committee, at this time, set next year, 2021, as their target for the next physical Summer Camps but at the same time acknowledged that there is a need to give the campers an identity, and keep them involved during the course of this year and the start of next year. The use of social media will be important in helping to keep the camps in the public domain, and we have considered the organisation of a "Camps Day" later in the year to which seasoned campers and new potential campers may attend.

It is clear that despite the difficulties faced by the Church at this time, the current situation has led everyone to be creative in how the Gospel message is passed on to communities. The rise in the use of streamed masses, often including external readers and musicians, the rise in virtual retreats and even virtual pilgrimages, led us to believe that we needed to reassess our plans for the Camps.

As a result of our prayers and discussions, and decided at our recent meeting, we are going to offer the young people of our diocese part of the Camp experience, through the use of social media and other internet avenues. With support of the Chaplains for each of the camps, it has been decided that each camp will put together a programme of prayer and activity which will take place during the week in which the camp would have taken place. This might involve morning and evening prayer, quizzes and games, starting and finishing with a celebration of Mass.

Our planning involves looking at the Summer Camps with new eyes, looking to see which aspects of the Camps can be shared with the young people online. We have teams of helpers in place whom we are sure will be able to produce a vibrant and spiritual Camp experience.

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There will, as usual, be three Camps, running over the advertised two-week period, with Senior and St Petroc's starting on Sunday afternoon 26th July and finishing on Friday 31st July, and the Junior Camp from Sunday the 1st August until Friday 6th August. The structure of the days and the shape of the week, will be planned by three separate teams.

An invitation has been placed on the Camps page of the Diocesan Website and is on our social media platforms. Details about how to apply to join are given below.

Thank you so much for your support over the past year, and we look forward to involving you in this year's exciting new venture.

I am writing to all the parish priests, parish administrators, CAST, and our Schools, to inform them of our plans asking them to advertise and promote our "virtual" Camp 2020.

There are three separate email addresses for contact with young people.

Junior Camp - current years 3 – 6:	junior1pdcamp@mail.com
Senior Camp - current years 7 - 10:	seniorpdcamp@mail.com
St Petroc's Camp - current years 11 - 13:	chrislee4sc@gmail.com

Any young person should register their interest by sending an email with the full name of the young person, current school year, and Parish to the relevant email address. The email should be sent from a parent or guardian account. Parental permissions will be required at an age appropriate level. The CO of the relevant camp will email back requesting the relevant permissions, following guidance from the Plymouth Safeguarding Office.

I thank you once again for your support. Please don't hesitate in contacting me for any further information.

With very best wishes and blessings to all,

Michael Turnbull

Deacon Michael Turnbull
Chair, Plymouth Diocese Catechetical Camps Committee