

Diocese of Limerick

Letter to be Read Out at Masses the Weekend 8/9 November 2025

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

Today is the Feast Day of the Dedication of the ancient St. John Lateran's Basilica in Rome, the mother church of all churches. Just last week a pilgrimage of teachers from our Diocese passed through the Holy Door of that great Basilica and we remembered all of you on that occasion. I was also grateful that we had the opportunity to take part in an audience with Pope Leo during which I was able to greet the Pope and extend to him the greetings and assurance of prayers on the part of the People of the Diocese of Limerick. He thanked me/you for that. I had met Pope Leo briefly before he became Pope during the two sessions of the Synod in Rome that I attended in 2023 and 2024. He recalled for me on those occasions how he had visited Limerick.

Today, I write to you about two matters to do with us as the People of God in this Diocese of Limerick.

First, the Department of Education has launched a survey on the future of patronage in the primary sector. It is important in that it will shape the discussion on primary school divesting for the years to come throughout the Republic of Ireland. That includes the question of the divesting of schools under Catholic patronage to other forms of patronage.

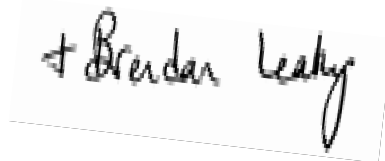
It is, of course, important that those who wish for a change in patronage would have their voice heard. It is equally important, however, that those who wish for a Catholic Education for their children and for those who would wish for sacramental preparation within schools would have their voice heard also. For those reasons and to ensure that an accurate picture emerges, I am encouraging parents or a prospective parent of a Primary school student to participate in this survey. I would ask grandparents or relations present at our Sunday Mass to alert their sons and daughters who might be parents or a prospective parent of a Primary school student to engage with this survey.

A second reason I write to you today is let you know that, in this month of November, a month traditionally associated with our remembrance and prayer for the dead, I am offering you a pastoral letter reflecting on the topics of dying, death and pray for the dead. I do so in the context of the Jubilee Year of Hope that is being celebrated by Catholics all over the world. As Catholics, we approach the topics of dying, death and prayer for the dead with great hope. We believe that, in

God's love and mercy, we can reach heaven and that we will meet our loved ones again in the next life. However, people often ask questions to do with our faith such as what happens when we die? What does Purgatory mean? What does the Church teach about the particular and general judgements? And there are also practical questions that people ask regarding the funeral liturgy and eulogies, the use of the webcam and Mass offerings, the grieving process and burial arrangements. I've tried to touch on all these topics, so please pick up a copy of the pastoral letter on your way out or read it online on the Limerick Diocesan website.

We have another seven weeks or so left of the great Jubilee Year of Hope. Let's ask for the grace to keep hope alive in our lives and communicate hope to those we meet.

With kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "+ Brendan Leahy". The signature is written in a cursive style and is enclosed within a thin, light-colored rectangular border.

✠ Brendan Leahy, Bishop of Limerick, Ireland