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In the first reading of this morning's Mass, the prophet says:

*"There is a time for tears,
A time for laughter
A time for mourning
A time for dancing
A time for embracing
A time to refrain from embracing"*

In the light of these words of Ecclesiastes and amid this current pandemic, I appeal to you all to treat the Covid-19 virus very seriously. I know that most people across the Diocese have been very diligent in washing or sanitising their hands regularly, wearing face coverings, keeping social distance, reducing their visits to family and friends etc. It has been a very difficult six months and there will be more difficult times to come, but to ensure that we contain this virus as much as possible, I ask you again to please continue to be vigilant. A particular area of concern is the holding of large parties following Confirmation and First Holy Communion ceremonies. Please be careful to limit the numbers attending such parties as much as possible. There certainly is a time for laughter and a time for dancing but there is also a time for prudence and caution.

Pray for God's protection and that God will banish this virus from our country and our world. Look out for your neighbour by following the health precautions set out for us.

I have no doubt that working together and with God's help we will be able to gather again in safety. Let you and I not forget that God has intervened in our lives and in our world through Jesus Christ who is always our hope and salvation.

Yours sincerely,

Most Reverend Alphonsus Cullinan, DD,
Bishop of Waterford and Lismore.