



**UNIVERSITY OF NOTRE DAME
OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT**

February 3, 2021

Dear Members of the Class of 2020,

We write to share an important update regarding plans for Commencement 2020 on Memorial Day 2021. As you know, since last March it has been our intention to host you and your loved ones on campus in-person over Memorial Day weekend for a special Commencement celebration.

Unfortunately, when we chose Memorial Day weekend as the date for the celebration last spring, we could not know how long and difficult the pandemic's trajectory would be. We hoped that by May 2021, travel and large gatherings would once again be safe. As I write this in early February, COVID-19 obviously continues to pose a great risk to public health and safety. Given what we know now, and informed by the guidance of public health officials, I regret that we must once again defer our in-person celebration of the Class of 2020. We do not expect that by Memorial Day 2021 we will be able to safely welcome back to campus the members of your class as well as your families and loved ones from across the nation and globe for the kind of joyful celebration you want and deserve. Instead, we will plan a celebration for those who graduated as part of the Class of 2020 with undergraduate degrees for summer 2022.

I am extremely sorry to have to give you this news. We know that the news of yet another postponement comes as a great disappointment to you and your families, as it does to all of us who looked forward to these celebrations with much anticipation.

Last April we convened a planning committee, comprised of a diverse cohort of leaders from the undergraduate Class of 2020, with whom we have consulted over these past months in formulating plans to celebrate your class. In the coming weeks, the planning committee will

send out a survey to get your feedback on the timing and features of the celebration in summer 2022 as well as your interest in other ways to connect members of your class until that time. We thank you in advance for providing input to aid our planning.

For those who earned doctoral, masters or professional degrees in 2020, the respective schools will each initiate conversations with their graduates to gather ideas on how best to further celebrate their achievements.

For those who might wonder how we will approach Commencement for the Class of 2021, at this point in time, we hope to be able to safely host in-person Commencement events. Commencement for the class of 2021 presents a different set of circumstances, as these students will have been on campus all semester, and therefore subject to regular weekly surveillance testing and the many other public health protocols the University has in place. We will assess the situation closer to the date, but our hope is that we will also be able to safely welcome a limited number of their family members for these celebrations, in addition to offering a virtual option.

For your information, we have also canceled the two in-person Alumni Reunions planned for June 2021 for those classes and groups that would have normally celebrated Reunion in summer 2020 and summer 2021. The Alumni Association will share additional information on upcoming virtual offerings and events for these classes and groups to be together.

Please share the information about the postponement of the Memorial Day weekend celebration with your parents, guardians, and loved ones. Know that you remain in my prayers in these challenging times. When we are finally able to gather, it will be quite a celebration. Until then, may God watch over and keep you and all who are dear to you.

In Notre Dame,

Rev. John I. Jenkins, C.S.C.

President