

March 11, 2021

Dear Residents, Families and Friends,

As I write this update, I want to share with you news concerning our weekly Covid-19 testing. For the past two weeks, all our staff and Sisters had negative test results. Then the results of March 8 were negative for everyone except for two staff members who tested positive. These employees are asymptomatic and currently in isolation. We have completed the appropriate internal contact tracing to determine who may have been exposed, and it is recommended that several of the Residents in one of the nursing units be quarantined for 14 days. As we have been doing all along, we will continue to monitor all the Residents on both nursing units for signs and symptoms. We will also continue with our nursing staff screening while monitoring their temperatures three times per shift. All precautionary measures already in place will be continued, along with any additional guidance of the CMS-CDC and DC Health.

Unfortunately window visits off the unit (ground floor conference room) and outdoor visitation will be suspended **for those Residents in quarantine**, but you can still stay connected with them through social media and telephone calls. Francine Whitley will continue to assist in arranging Zoom and FaceTime for all Residents.

For those Residents not in quarantine, Maggie Drew can be contacted for outdoor visits, weather permitting and again, Francine Whitley, for window visits in the conference room. We encourage you to take advantage of the current spring-like weather to visit with your loved one!

The Residents, Staff and Sisters were able to receive the **second Covid-19 vaccine** on February 19 and Walgreens will be at our facility on March 19 for the final clinic for the remaining vaccinations. We are happy to report that we have attained 94% vaccination for our Home. Since all Residents have remained negative, we have been given permission to allow some Residents from the second floor to attend Mass in our chapel with some minor stipulations: Since the two floors cannot comingle yet, a separate elevator must be used. The Residents are asked to sit on socially-distanced chairs set up in the rear of the chapel, and they must wear a face mask. They are so happy to be able to be in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament after a whole year!

Many sacrifices have been made over the course of this past year, but the Residents give us an example and remind us that we cannot make this journey alone. Our faith has strengthened us and we have certainly felt the support of one another. We will still maintain weekly testing as protocol by DC Health, even post-vaccination, as well as safeguarding the other means we have in place — wearing masks, social distancing, and frequent hand sanitizing.

Our proposed indoor visitation policy was submitted to DC Health but we were asked to revise it with additional information. Each time we come close to moving forward, the coronavirus affects someone associated with our Home; we are then required to quarantine the Residents; as a result, visitation is put on hold.

As of yesterday, March 10, CDC issued new guidance on opening nursing homes for indoor visitation. As we await further directives from DC Health, we are happy to be able to anticipate greater visiting possibilities. If you are checking the CDC guidelines, please note that those pertaining to our facility fall under “Healthcare settings.” Thank you for your understanding and patience.

God bless you,

Sr. Mary Michael and all the Little Sisters