

January 24, 2022

Dear Families of Residents and Friends of St. Augustine's Home,

Happy new year! The Little Sisters and I hope that 2022 will bring you an abundance of peace and hope... and to all of us a final end to the pandemic. While the media provides all kinds of Covid updates and ever-changing guidelines both for our state and on a national level, we want you to know what the Covid status is here at St. Augustine's Home and provide a snapshot of our present situation. Since the day before Thanksgiving, there have been 13 confirmed cases of Covid among lay staff. On January 17, a Resident tested positive and today a second Resident tested positive for the virus. Thankfully, no one required hospitalization, for which we are greatly relieved. Rapid results testing is provided in-house and PCR tests, when indicated, are scheduled outside of St. Augustine's. Covid screening continues for all who enter and leave the Home through the front entrance. Residents are up and out of their rooms for communal dining, chapel services and moving about in their hallways. Small group and individual activities continue. There have been no group events or gatherings in Lanagan Hall since shortly before Christmas. Safe distances and lots of sanitizing are on-going protocol!

Many Residents are frail with compromised immune conditions. Tours of the Home's interior have been put on hold to reduce unnecessary exposure. Residents do go out with loved ones or to appointments. While visitors to Residents are not limited, we ask everyone to be very prudent and cautious. Please help us keep St. Augustine's a safe place for all by doing your part whenever in the building or taking a Resident out.

Beginning late September after a long pause, we cautiously resumed welcoming new Residents to independent or assisted living. At the same time, we are obliged to reserve and keep an entire resident living area vacant should one or more Resident test positive and need specialized care and attention. This requirement greatly limits our ability to open our doors to more needy elderly while the pandemic continues.

Our team of nearly 90 employees are admirable in their commitment to assuring the around-the-clock services that keep St. Augustine's operating. They have accepted many sacrifices that healthcare workers are facing everywhere at this time. When you see them, let them know of your appreciation. They are a great group!

Our very dedicated corps of volunteers and Jeanne Jugan Associates have returned over the months and can be seen helping all around the Home – *after assuring the necessary weekly Covid testing requirements and screening!* We find them in the main laundry, as weekly bedmakers, meal servers, kitchen “peelers”, dishwashers, gift wrappers, drivers, assuring secretarial work and even pouring wine! What a welcome sight they are, day after day. Please join us in offering a prayer of gratitude for all those who are helping our community of Little Sisters to “*make the Residents happy*” by keeping them Covid-free! Thank you to everyone who are a part of our St. Augustine family. Let's pray for one another.

God bless you!

Mother Maria Christine, lsp  
Superior