

September 7, 2021

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

Here I am at St. Augustine's Home already six weeks and most anxious to get this introductory note posted on our website. These first weeks have flown by and have been both happy and busy. Not only am I learning so many names but trying to match them to faces and the story behind each person. Our community of 10 Little Sisters is now complete. It's great to be an international group made up of Sisters from Ireland, the Philippines, New Zealand and the USA! There's no shortage of laughter and hard work as we deepen the joy of hospitality near our Residents.

As our country moves from vacation back-to-school and from summer to fall, we have also moved from a completely negative Covid status within our Home to having one positive case as of this date. Late Friday afternoon, as the Labor Day Holiday was just beginning, one staff member tested positive with the Binax rapid test. This individual will remain away from the Home until all necessary requirements are met for return to work. With the increased positivity rate in our local area since July, twice weekly Covid testing has been done for all staff and Sisters. Extra vigilance is in place without the need to disrupt or significantly change the daily rhythm for the Residents. So far, guidelines for visiting and Residents going out have been able to remain the same. As we all know, things can change very quickly if other cases are identified.

Darlene Adair, our Administrator continues to provide families and Resident contacts with weekly updates via email on the local Covid-19 positivity rates in Marion County. Unfortunately, the positivity rate continues to climb and state regulations continue to tighten for long term care facilities.

Inside the building we like to remind everyone frequently to hang on to the 3 W's – **wear** your mask, **wash** your hands and **watch** your distance! Help us out. If you are coming to visit a loved one, volunteering or coming to St. Augustine's for any reason, please remember these 3 W's.

I look forward to meeting as many families and friends of St. Augustine's as the occasions provide. Please don't hesitate to let me know how I can help you or direct you to someone who can. We can't wait to see life at St. Augustine's in full swing again!

There are lots of ways to keep helping us out during these challenging times and the Little Sisters and staff are in awe of the surprises that come to us from all over. Right now, we could use medium or large size nitrile gloves. You can imagine how many gloves are used 24/7 during these long, long months of the pandemic. Every department in the Home uses disposable gloves on a daily basis. Of course, bottled water is always welcome, too. Thank you for any and all things you share with us.

This is a very busy week for us. Our devoted St. Augustine's Guild Fall Membership meeting takes place (*they are welcoming 10 new members!*) as well as the annual Golf Tournament fundraiser. Be assured that Covid precautions are in place for both events. I know this first letter is long. Thanks for your indulgence.

God bless you.

Mother Maria Christine, lsp
Superior