

October 2, 2020

Dear Resident Families,

Since my last letter, we have again been tested and gratefully, all 135 tests were negative! Today we celebrate the feast of the Guardian Angels and I'm sure it is they who are watching over each one of us!

Before I share some news of the Home, allow me to remind you to please mail the consent form for the flu vaccine to be given to your loved one. Sister Sheila and the Medical Department hope to begin giving the vaccine to the Residents mid-October.

We continue to have outdoor visitation when the weather is pleasant, as that is the preferred route. Living in New York, we know that won't last as autumn turns to winter. Indoor visitation is still very strict. No more than five visitors can be in the Home at one time and each Resident is never allowed more than two people in a day. We mentioned to you that a COVID-19 test needs to be presented to us before visitation. It has to be dated within seven days of the visit, counting from the time you were swabbed. Unfortunately, the Department of Health is not permitting antigen testing at present. We pray daily and often for a return to normal! We are monitoring and keeping a close eye on the uptick of cases in Queens and Brooklyn. As of October 5, our staff will be going back to wearing gowns, eye protection and gloves for all Resident care. In addition to the masks, hand hygiene and social distancing, about which we are all so diligent, this will hopefully give an added layer of protection

On September 19, I received a Papal Honor, namely the Benemerenti Medal. I told Bishop Raymond Chapetto, Vicar General of the Brooklyn diocese, that I would accept it in the name of the Congregation of the Little Sisters of the Poor. Many other people received various honors. The ceremony was to take place in May, but then COVID-19 prevented this! Finally, on September 19, the ceremony took place at Saint Joseph's Cathedral in Brooklyn during mid-morning prayer. Bishop Nicolas DiMarzio, Ordinary of the diocese, presided. Originally, I was allowed to have nine guests, but with the new date and the "new normal," only three could accompany me. Mother Provincial Alice Marie Monica and two Little Sisters came with me. I received a medal and a certificate. As Saint Jeanne Jugan would say, "Blessed be God. Glory be to God. Thank you, my God."

On September 24, feast of Our Lady of Mercy, we celebrated the feast day of Mother Provincial Alice Marie Monica. It was shared with the Queen of Peace community, Novitiate community, novices and postulant. We were able to have the other communities present via Zoom for one of the activities of the feast. Thank God for modern technology! Mother Provincial made sure she was present to each Resident either the day before or the day of the feast and gave each one a little gift.

The Residents continue to be admirable as we try to keep them both safe and active. Mother Provincial gave us a game to share with them. It is a blown up "pizza" decorated with toppings. Each person gets three bean bags. They have a choice between the red "pepperoni" or the black "olives" bean bags. The object is to get the bean bags into the holes in the pizza. However, there is a trick! Some holes have negative numbers, so the person can end up with a negative score! That doesn't matter as long as everyone is having fun!

Know of our continued prayers. God bless you!

Sincerely,
Sister Celine Thérèse