



May 18, 2020

Watching the sun's warmth grow and spread, we continue to celebrate the Resurrection and trust in the hope we have been promised. As we have examined possibilities for stepping down coronavirus restrictions in our convents, we have been reminded about the need to use caution as we make changes.

During the past week, one case of COVID-19 was discovered in an employee, in a convent that had previously had no cases; another is pending. We also lost two Sisters – including the oldest Sister in the province – to deaths that were non-COVID-related.

We are continuing to test all Sisters in convents where COVID-19 is present, and are encouraged that there are more negatives than positives among the test results.

We realize the need to make changes slowly and judiciously, so we are implementing directives that provide the most freedom of movement for individual Sisters while protecting the common good.

A new protocol has been developed for our convents, using a matrix that is dependent upon whether the virus is present, and whether or not the Sister herself has (or has had) the virus. The protocols are dependent on whether:

- The virus is present in any Sisters on the floor on which the Sister resides, or not.
- The Sister herself is currently COVID-positive, or has been COVID-positive, has no symptoms and has completed 28 days of isolation, which the Province has determined is a safe duration for a Sister in a large-convent setting.
- As cities reopen, there is potential for another wave of infection, so we will continue to limit staff/Sister interactions.

We now permit Sisters to be present in the chapel up to 30 minutes per day, whether at Mass, if the archdiocese or diocese allows, or to choose a time of private prayer and be electronically present at Mass. We continue to observe social-distancing guidelines and use of masks, and are strictly following archdiocesan or diocesan guidelines in respect to when Mass may resume in our convents, as well as distribution of the Eucharist to Sisters who choose to attend Mass in our chapels if they can do so independently.

So as the environment in each convent changes, we are supporting quality-of-life changes as strongly as we are able, keeping the health and safety of all in mind.

Thank you again to all of you who continue to support our ministries as they serve those most affected by the pandemic, helping to provide food and other means of support. We are celebrating them with stories on our website and sharing their news on social media.

May our patroness, Our Lady of Hope, fill us with hope for a cure for the virus and healing for all those affected.

Sister Mary Christopher Moore, Provincial Minister
and the Provincial Council Members
Felician Sisters of North America