



June 22, 2020

Today we share with you the good news that during the past week, all of our Sisters have officially come out of COVID-19 isolation, with no active cases in our convents. We continue to wear masks and to social distance in our convents, and to limit errands outside the convents to essential medical visits and other tasks.

We also continue to mourn and recover from what has been a deeply stressful public health journey in all of our convents, and most particularly in our larger convents in Livonia, Michigan, and in Lodi, New Jersey, where a number of our sisters dealt with serious symptoms of the virus and remain on a gradual path to recovery.

With revision of guidelines for evaluating cases in which persons were not tested or even tested COVID-negative, we now believe that 42 Sisters throughout the continent had confirmed or suspected cases of coronavirus. Of these, 13 passed to their eternal reward and 29 survived.

We thank God, and each of these survivors, for the courage, determination and willpower to move through their suffering and coping with the virus, each in her individual way. Some continue with a slow recovery including prolonged muscle weakness and lack of energy, both physical and emotional, and need to be patient with themselves as they walk this road. We offer our thanks to the other Sisters, employees, families and friends who have supported them and us throughout the crisis.

We reflect now on a series of yearnings and learnings that we have experienced.

The yearnings, throughout the pandemic, were to be with our dying Sisters and hold our traditional services, funeral Mass and burial, to comfort each other, and now, to pray and dine together as we are accustomed to, to return to our normal ministries and such daily tasks as getting our hair cut, shopping and visiting places meaningful to us.

The learnings include a great deal about infection control, including the value of wearing a mask consistently, washing hands frequently and properly or using hand sanitizer, and social distancing faithfully.

While cases in states in which our convents that have experienced COVID-19 are situated are generally dropping, 21 states are reporting increases in COVID-19 cases, 10 of them significant. Therefore, we must continue to pull back from fully returning to our communal way of living, of sharing Rosary, common morning and evening prayer, Mass and dining as we are accustomed to, because of the ongoing presence of the virus in our countries, states and areas.

These are continuing times of sacrifice, of patient endurance, of walking forward in baby steps toward full health and being whole on a spiritual, physical, emotional, communal and ministerial level.

We do this as our contribution to the goal of enhancing the health of the public, another stance of our upholding the banner of pro-life – to minimize our chances of exposure and to maintain life for ourselves, our Sisters, our employees and all others with whom we come into contact.

As we continue to walk together through this unknown landscape, may Mary, Our Lady of Hope, fill us with hope for a cure for the virus and healing for all those affected in any way by the pandemic.

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