

April 29, 2020

Dear Residents, Families and Friends of Villa Guadalupe,

As you may know, after New York and New Jersey the Navajo Nation is the pandemic's hardest hit U.S. population, and McKinley county is New Mexico's worst-hit county.

Therefore it is not hard to understand how, despite our best efforts to keep Covid-19 out of Villa Guadalupe, the virus has crept in. Since last week 12 Residents have become symptomatic and were tested for the virus. Their test results are pending. In addition, all 58 of our staff members, as well as our 7 Little Sisters, were tested yesterday.

We have begun to receive test results. So far, 8 Residents have tested positive; 2 employees have tested positive and 2 tests were inconclusive. It is worth noting that among those found positive, the 2 employees and 2 Residents did not have symptoms. This underlines the need for everyone to be vigilant and continue with hand washing, social distancing the wearing of masks, etc.

Although we have been following all guidelines from the CDC and New Mexico Department of Health since the beginning of the pandemic, now we are increasing our isolation efforts. All symptomatic Residents are isolated or sharing a room with another Resident who is symptomatic, and all Residents without symptoms are being encouraged to remain in their rooms. Full PPE is being worn when caring for all Residents.

From now on we will have testing kits on site, allowing us to test anyone who begins to show symptoms — Residents, staff or Sisters. Everyone at Villa Guadalupe will be retested in one week.

Many of our Residents are blessed to have hobbies that keep their spirits up during this difficult time. We have also been blessed with many donations. Recently a number of individuals donated part of their stimulus check to us; families are dropping off care packages for their loved ones; and our Jeanne Jugan Associates have offered to sew isolation gowns for our devoted staff.

As Little Sisters living and working here in Navajoland we are conscious of how committed young Native Americans are to learning their culture from their elders, and thus how important it is to them that we protect their elders from harm during this pandemic. We want to assure you that we are fully committed to protecting all of our Villa Guadalupe Residents and to ensuring that they continue to live life as fully as possible for as long as possible.

Thank you for your support. Please continue to pray for us!

Sr. Sarah and all the Little Sisters