

February 12, 2021

Hello everyone,

Today was vaccination day #2 for our Home! The theme this time was Chinese New Year, with a dragon cart going around the house in the morning, the traditional red envelopes with \$2 bills being given out in the afternoon, and a delicious Chinese meal prepared by our kitchen in between.

This celebration drew in our extended family as well. The funds for the \$2 good luck gift came as a donation in memory of one of our Residents who died in early 2020. The rice for our meal came from a Buddhist charitable group, Tzu Chi, who have been generous donors of PPE for us throughout the past year.

We had hoped to be able to announce today that we would be moving into Phase 2 of reopening, which would mean the possibility of inside family visits (in a designated place within the Home), small group activities, limited communal dining and Mass attendance, and the long-awaited reopening of the beauty shop. Our Home was COVID-free for two full weeks and so this would have been the next step. However, we had a positive test result come back for one of our employees this morning, so we are required to now wait two more weeks before moving forward.

God allows everything for a reason, and so we want to embrace this delay as an opportunity to prepare so that we can do a better job when the day comes to make these steps. I think most all of us find it hard to believe that we are closing in on one full year of our current COVID way of life.

Last year at this time I received news that I would be leaving Chicago to take on the role of Provincial Superior for our Province of Chicago. Of course, COVID made that transition impossible, but now the time is coming near for my departure. I won't start any goodbyes or reflections yet; there is still time for that. Please just know how grateful I am to have had these past 20 months here in Chicago.

Keep warm this weekend, stay safe, and know of our prayers for you.

God bless,
Mother Julie, Isp