

9 nuns in QC convent succumb to COVID-19

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Nine elderly nuns of the Religious of the Virgin Mary (RVM) have died due to a COVID-19 outbreak at their convent in Quezon City.

The RVM Secretariat said the nine nuns who passed away were all from the St. Joseph Home, a separate building inside the RVM compound on N. Domingo Street that houses the elderly and the infirm, are all in the age range of 70 to 98 years, and with comorbidities. The first COVID-related death inside the convent was recorded on Sept. 13 and the most recent was on Sept. 21.

The RVM compound has been on lockdown since Sept. 15 after 62 nuns and 52 lay personnel tested positive for the coronavirus.

“Among the 62 Sisters afflicted, two are already fully recovered, 38 are experiencing mild/moderate symptoms, and 13 are considered severe,” CBCP News quoted the statement of RVM.

The affected nuns and personnel, according to the RVM, are being monitored and treated. The Congregation has appealed for understanding in their request for privacy for the patients “and enable us to focus time and attention on their complete healing and full recovery.”

At the same time, the RVM has warned the public against “fraudulent solicitation drives” using the name of the congregation.

“We take this opportunity to caution the public on the reported proliferation of fraudulent solicitation drives on behalf of the RVM Congregation,” the RVM Secretariat said in a statement.

The Congregation said those who wish to send donations or assistance should coordinate directly with the RVM Secretariat through the following numbers: (02) 8723-4414 and 0920-4181981.

Meanwhile, Quezon City Mayor Joy Belmonte condoled with the families of the RVM nuns who succumbed to COVID-19.

“On behalf of the city government, I would like to express my sincerest condolences to the whole RVM community for losing some of their sisters to COVID,” said Belmonte.

She said they had yet to receive official information from RVM but she assured that the city government remains committed to extending support and assistance to all closed and long-term care facilities in the city to control the transmission of the virus.

She has tasked the City Health Department (CHD) to prioritize vaccinating all individuals working and living in closed and long-term care facilities.

“We are working closely with the city’s vaccination team so inoculation can be done at the soonest possible time,” City Epidemiology and Disease Surveillance Unit (QCESU) chief Dr. Rolando Cruz said.

This, after the CESU inspected 13 facilities in which out of 1,027 employees and clients, 594 have yet to receive a dose of the COVID-19 vaccine.