

# Media Release

30 October 2020

## All Souls' Day

Honouring loved ones and friends who've passed away during this pandemic has been heartbreakingly difficult for many. Restrictions on funerals have meant some people have missed out on saying goodbye, and worshippers have missed the ability to attend services at their respective faith communities.

For residents within aged care, the pandemic has been particularly challenging. The fear of contracting COVID-19, missing visits from loved ones, and the general negative stigma around aged care has been difficult for many.

With this in mind, our Pastoral Care teams have worked incredibly hard to ensure people are able to stay connected to their faith and have found innovative ways for residents, loved ones and staff members to remember and honour loved ones passed.

**November 2 is All Souls Day – an important holy date set aside for honouring the deceased.**

Across VMCH aged care residences, Masses and funerals have been streamed online with residents participating individually in their rooms, and Pastoral Care practitioners have prepared prayers and reflections for quiet times of worship.

At Bundoora Aged Care Residence, a memorial wall has been created in lieu of the traditional, annual memorial service. Families were invited to send photos and some words about their loved ones, and staff and residents also encouraged to take some time to remember residents who had touched their lives.

"I was delighted by the responses I got back and encouraged by families grateful for the acknowledgment and also the opportunity to contribute," said Pastoral Care Practitioner Sr. Kate Mannes. "Residents have really loved it and a number of the staff have also spoken to me of the value. There is also a book for residents and staff to add someone's name they would like to remember, perhaps a family member or friend."

VMCH General Manager of Mission Bridget O'Shannassy described honouring the life of those who had lived in our care as "special and sacred".

"I am very grateful for the many ways our aged care residential teams acknowledge the lives of those who have been part of our VMCH community. This year our volunteers have also made beautiful felt hearts that remind us that little by little we let go of the loss, but never the love in our heart."

### Media enquiries

**Cassie Zlonzak**

Communications Adviser

M: 0402 422 852

E: [cassie.zlonzak@vmch.com.au](mailto:cassie.zlonzak@vmch.com.au)

W: [www.vmch.com.au](http://www.vmch.com.au)