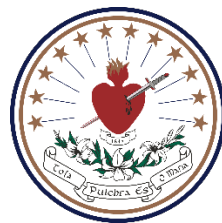


## Mission Moment

VMA – September 28, 2021

### Theresa: The Pilgrim



This year as we observe the building of the Theresa Maxis Student Union Building, I would like to focus our Mission Moment on Mother Theresa Maxis so we can get to know a little more of the woman who has inspired our Congregation and whose life of courage, boldness and trust can inspire our young women at Villa and ourselves for years to come.

My thoughts and reflections are taken from a book written by an IHM Sister on the life of Mother Theresa. The title is: Pilgrim Let Your Heart Be Bold.

In this segment a little of Mother Theresa, the Pilgrim.

Let's consider the specific virtues of a pilgrim: readiness to risk personal mistakes and failures, insecurities and dangers in searching out God and God's Will; caution of "settling down" into familiar and reassuring surroundings; attitude of encouragement and cooperation for those who share the pilgrimage; confidence that the Lord's power and presence are eternal and will be effective in the future as in the past; determination to follow the vision with humble faith and faithfulness, knowing the vision is not yet achieved or even fully defined, ready always to respond to its clearer definition as life unfolds.

Mother Theresa's life prepared her for the role of pilgrim. One example would be her sense of God's call to mission for her, as well as the misunderstandings and difficulties she experienced in life. Perhaps most obviously, her lifetime of constant travel and transplantation reveals the

excitement, the insecurity, frequently the great pain and the fruitfulness of the pilgrim's calling.

Born in 1810 in Baltimore, Theresa was the daughter of a Haitian refugee, Betsy Duchemin and Arthur Howard, a British military officer. Betsy's grandfather, whose name, Maxis, Theresa used, was an African-American slave in Haiti. Theresa's parents were not married; she never knew her father.

Theresa was raised in the African-American community by her mother's guardians, the Duchemin family, who provided education for her as they had for her mother. She attended a school established for Haitian refugee children in Baltimore. In 1829 the three women who conducted the school along with Theresa formed a Religious congregation. The primary work of the Congregation was to teach children from Haitian and African descent. That Congregation, the Oblates of Providence, still exists today and still considers Theresa a founding member.

From her early days Theresa was called to risk personal mistakes and failures; to live with insecurities; to have confidence and faith that the Lord was guiding her into a future still unknown.

In the midst of our own risks today, let us pray for the confidence that Mother Theresa had in God's Providential plan. As pilgrims, along with Mother Theresa, "We walk by faith and not by sight!"