

***MISSION MOMENT***

***CELEBRATION OF FOUNDER'S DAY ~ NOVEMBER 10<sup>TH</sup>***

***Appropriate for Board, Staff, Faculty Meetings***

**Our IHM Congregation celebrated 175 years of Mission and Ministry to God's people in 2020. We were founded by a Redemptorist priest, Fr. Louis Florent Gillet, in Monroe, Michigan in 1845. Our founder, Mother Theresa Maxis, along with two other young women formed the first community of sisters. The three lived in a small log cabin along the Raisin River in Monroe. For the first two years this new little community was known as Sisters of Providence. In 1847, the name of the community was changed to Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary to reflect the Sisters' desire to imitate the Blessed Mother in her openness to grace and readiness to serve.**

**That first winter of 1845 was very harsh for these first three IHM Sisters. Their first convent and school consisted of two leaky log cabins. The kitchen was actually a little shed, and next to the cooking stove there was an old cupboard where dishes were kept. On rainy days the Sisters had to go with an umbrella to take out the dishes, and they would often be sprinkled with rain in the small dining room. Kitchen utensils like forks and spoons had to be shared since there weren't enough to go around and not one of the Sisters was really a good cook. Even with all these inconveniences and real**

**experiences of poverty, the Sisters were very happy and light-hearted, displaying the special virtues of the IHM congregation: Humility, Simplicity, Self-forgetfulness, and Devoted Charity.**

**After 175 years, the legacy of grace and undaunting trust in Divine Providence that we see in the lives of these first Sisters continues in the lives of each IHM sister on mission. IHM's celebrate this legacy of grace each year on Founder's Day. Perhaps we can use the opportunity provided by this celebration to reflect on the story of these first IHM Sisters and how it demonstrates the CREATIVE HOPE that is one of the Charism graces of the Congregation.**

**(Pause for brief reflection followed by sharing in the group.)**

**And so, we conclude this Mission Moment with this traditional IHM prayer: "For all that has been, and for all that will be" we say, "Praise, Love, Thanksgiving our God to thee!"**