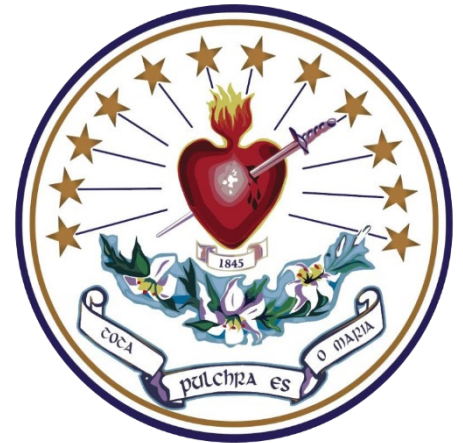


## Mission Moment

### Community Seal

Today, let us consider the IHM community seal - something we see so often but perhaps may not understand its significance. I am sure you would agree that a family “coat of arms” has significant meaning and symbolism for each family and this is true, as well, for the IHM Sisters and the official seal of the congregation.



This seal is symbolic of our royal heritage as adopted children of God and spouses of Christ, the King. The immaculate Heart of Mary, pierced by a sword and surrounded by three lilies, is the focal point, representing the total dedication of self by the vows of chastity, poverty and obedience and the acceptance of God’s Will as the price of redemption of souls for Christ.

The words “*Tota Pulchra Es, O Maria*”, (You are beautiful, O Mary) refer to the Old Testament *Song of Songs*, and indicate fidelity. The rays emanating from Mary’s heart point to a crown of stars that illustrate a reference to Chapter 12, verse 1 of the book of Revelation: “...a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet and on her head a crown of twelve stars.”

The year of the foundation of the community, 1845, is tied inseparably within a double circle, symbolizing our vowed commitment to strive for holiness and to serve the needs of the people of God. May this seal be a reminder to all of us that the work we are about is rooted deeply in our faith and our history!