

2787: *To the Royal Government of Upper Bavaria*

Munich
January 2, 1859

J! M!

Royal Government of Upper Bavaria!
(Department of the Interior)

Acceptance of Girls from Africa

Reference to Royal Government Resolution No. 11776/17227 of December 31,
1858

In response to the resolution regarding the above, the respectfully undersigned wishes to express her gratitude for the royal government's gracious consideration and benevolent social care. She also submits her reply that God intervened with regard to the African children by taking one after the other from this vale of tears through death.¹

Our physician attributes their early deaths to tuberculosis, which developed during the journey from the tropical climate and across the sea. In any case, there is no thought of sending any more children to us.

Respectfully yours,

Mar. Theresa of Jesus

Letters of Mary Theresa of Jesus Gerhardinger, translation and notes by Mary Ann Kuttner, SSND, vol. 4, *Vigorous Growth, 1853-1858* (Elm Grove, Wisconsin, 2009), 242-244.

1. Due to the children's traumatic experiences, the change in climate, and illness, about 300 of the 810 African girls died soon after their arrival in Europe. See Zunker, *Mohrenkinder*, 493-494.

One of the children, Helene (Adelaide) Vanda, survived to adulthood and stayed with the Poor School Sisters for the rest of her life. She was very skilled in fine needlework, helped with the boarders, took care of the front door, and soon became well-known in Munich as *Black Helene*. On March 28, 1882, Helene died of a prolonged lung disease at the age of 34. See Schindlbeck, *Vom Orden*, 209.