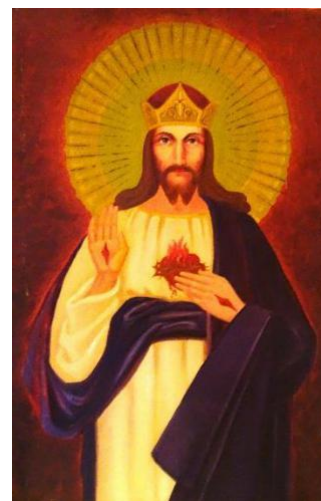


## Exhibition of “old Masters” in the Mother House, Steyl

Our Mother House archivist, Sr. Charlotte Irmeler, and her assistant, Sr. Annemarie Reisch, always make sure that the historical treasures of our deceased Sisters are well preserved and not forgotten. Before they archived the valuable treasures of our artistic Sisters, Sr. Alacoque (1875-1953), Sr. Anzilla Sigmund (1922-2010), Sr. Luciela Brügge (1910-1994) and our recently deceased Sr. Hiltruda Stegmann (1932-2021), they arranged another exhibition of some of the artistic works of these Sisters.

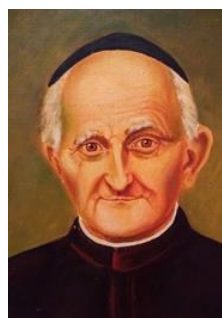
Sr. Alacoque, whose artistic talent was already apparent in her childhood to her mother, went as a junior Sister to study at the Vienna school of painting under Professor Scheffer. He recommended that she go to the Art Academy in Freiburg in Switzerland. Sr. Alacoque, with her bold, strong-willed spirit, set herself a goal that was not an everyday course for a woman: monument painting. Among further studies at the Academy of Arts in Düsseldorf, she undertook the painting of the large Mother House church, a place of worship with considerable heights and surfaces. The art of large-scale painting requires all-round skills: a thorough knowledge of the human figure, a feeling for space, strong talent for composition and above all the independent ability of a truly artistic power of conception and design. Through hard work and tenacious perseverance, Sr. Alacoque created her own style, which found expression in the portrayal of the central mysteries of the Christian faith in the church's murals.



Sr. Alacoque, Herz-Jesu

Through these works Sister Alacoque earned herself a place in the history of Christian art. Her artistic work was duly recognised in both church and artistic circles. Efforts were made to place the church under a preservation order to protect it from destruction. However, later on it unfortunately fell victim to the liturgical renewal after the Second Vatican Council.

At the Academy of Arts in Düsseldorf, Sr. Alacoque studied further areas of art to complete her creative education and to prepare herself to set up and manage an art school. Her first co-workers also received their professional training at the same Düsseldorf art academy. With them Sister Alacoque established the first school of art in the Mother House in Steyl. Over the years the school system was consolidated. After five or six years of study, the Sisters took a theoretical and practical final examination. Soon Sisters were sent with pride and joy to the foreign missions. They took up missionary work in China, Japan, Taipei, New Guinea, in the Americas and in the Philippines. In their mission areas they often had a long and beneficial effect in the fields of art education and arts and crafts, but mainly in the interior decoration of churches and chapels.



Sr. Luciela, Arnold Janssen

Sr. Luciela, one of Sr. Alacoque's students, shared in the painting of the Mother House church. The renovation of the church after Vatican 2, mentioned above, remained her great grief until her death. As an art teacher of the Arnold Janssen High School in Steyl, she dedicated herself with great love, with heart and soul to the artistic training of young women. In the Mother House many of her artistic works still grace the walls.

Yet another student of Sr. Alacoque was Sr. Anzilla, of whom the painting of the Resurrected Lord is shown here. In her sketches she developed her own style which demonstrated her lively interior spirit and enthusiasm. Her great love, however, lay in ceramics art. From her hand stemmed many beautiful ceramic works: holy water fonts, Stations of the Cross, angels, and so on.

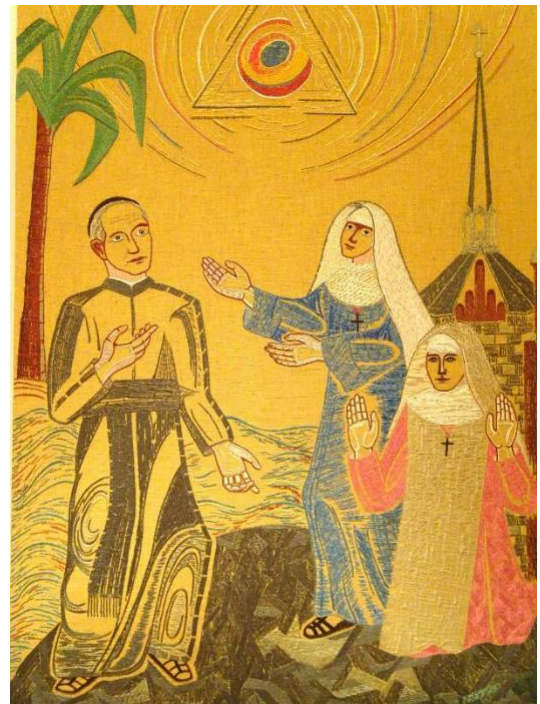


Sr. Anzilla, Risen Christ



Sr. Anzilla, Pentecost

Our archivists exhibited a large, embroidered tapestry, the work of Sr. Hiltruda. It depicts Arnold Janssen with M. Maria and M. Josepha below the Symbol of the Trinity. Sr. Hiltruda composed the image and two other Sisters in the embroidery room stitched it. For a long time this tapestry hung in a corridor of the Mother House. Sr. Hiltruda was a *Paramentics Master*, that is the highest qualification in a handiwork profession in Germany. In addition she was trained in free drawing and painting.



The exhibition was very well received by the Sisters in the Mother House and just as greatly by the confreres from St. Michael's Mission House and our co-workers. The work shown here is only a very small part of the exhibition, and indeed of the much more extensive collection of the "old masters" of our Sisters. We are grateful to Sr. Charlotte and Sr. Annemarie for taking the trouble and giving us great pleasure with this exhibition

Sr. Stefanie Hall SSpS, Steyl