

## *Sr. Sylvestra (M Bestall)*

Sr. Sylvestra of the Department of Fine Arts is remembered fondly to this day. She was a simple but very charming and endearing person. Her face was always lit with a smile and her lips were always in prayer. An Austrian by birth, India held a special significance for her and she identified herself with our country till her death in April 1996. She was very orderly and meticulous in her work. Her paintings were crafted with great dexterity and exquisite detail.

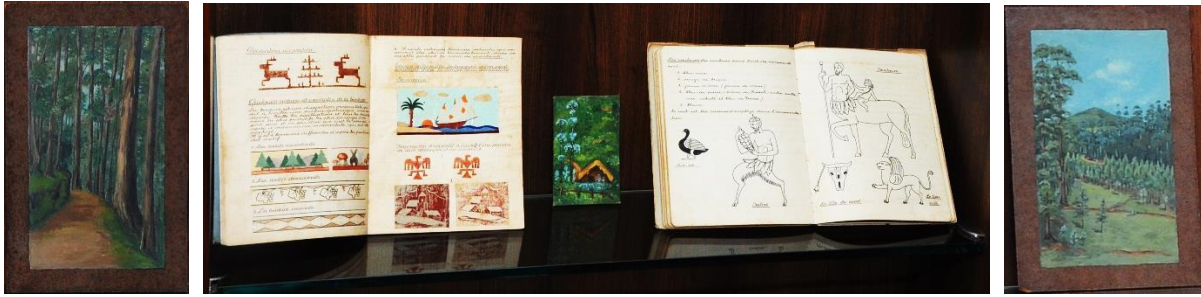
Her painting of the Immaculate Heart of Blessed Virgin Mary, that adorns the Stellarchives presently, retains its glow to this day. Her skill in calligraphy was known to those to whom she wrote. Even lengthy letters retained an overall sense of design and harmony. Her inner person was harmonious and she possessed a kind of heightened piety. Her warm humanity was particularly evident in a truly Franciscan love of animals. She would go without food herself rather than see animals starve.



**Immaculate Heart of Blessed Virgin Mary**



**Sr. Sylvestra with her students 1954**



Her meticulous craftsmanship, skill in calligraphy and deep faith conjure up a picture of the medieval monk – only those men walked through Cloisters in the distant past and are mere handed down images for us. But Sr. Sylvestra was a very vivacious and spontaneous person who worked with students in the recent past. Even her absence is a powerful presence.

