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| hs The Community of the Resurrection of Our Lord

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P.O. Box 72 (0 Gs 27th April, 1988.
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Ms Elza Miles,
3a Main Road East,

2092 ae Z | oP S Les

Dear Ms Miles,
re: Ernest Methuen Mancoba

Thank you for your letter of the 22nd April in which you ask for information regarding an African Madonna carved by Ernest Mancoba for St. Mary's Chapel at Grace Dieu, Pietersburg. I am afraid I can give you very little help in this matter. Our Sisters remember the Madonna in the Chapel, but our Community departed from Grace Dieu in 1953 and left everything behind (including all the Chapel furnishings) for the use of the Order of the Holy Paraclete Sisters who were taking over from us. If you were to contact the O.H.P. Sisters in Johannesburg they might be able to give you some information regarding the carving, as presumably they stayed on until the Training College was handed

over to the Government in 1957. As the Training College was a Diocesan institution belonging to the Diocese of Pretoria, the Diocesan records should surely have a record of what they handed over to the Government when they relinquished-the Training College.

The altar front carved by Ernest Mancoba is in our Community Chapel here in Grahamstown, and was dedicated in August 1935. Quoting from our records:-â\200\234Altar: The front is the work of Ernest Mancoba, an African student at Grace Dieu, who had had his first lessons in this art from Sister Pauline. Quote from "Occasional Letter" of October 1935: â\200\230It has been a great joy to him to do this work for the Sisters' Chapel, as he has been taught and helped by so many Sisters that he sometimes likes to describe himself as a â\200\230son of the Communityâ\200\231

. While doing this work he has been studying for his B.A. degree, with much valuable help from Professors at Rhodes University. The design of the carving...worked out by Sister Margaret, represents the Vine and the Branches.... St. John xv...- the Gospel for the Birthday of the Community, St. Mark's Day." (Mother Cecile's Clothing Day). â\200\234In the centre of the design is a cross, round which the vine-stems twist, forming themselves at its foot into a chalice the cup-shape being carried out by the leaves and fruit. In the centre of the chalice is seen the Sacred Heart. Round the arms of the cross is a ring, with a pattern of flames carried out beyond the ring by rays. This circle is intended to suggest the Sacred Host, for the central panel sets forth the thought of the Eucharistic Life as springing from union with the Vine. Over the cross broods a dove. On each side of the central panel are five smaller panels, divided by knotted vine stems springing from

the same root. These are the branches â\200\230abiding in the Vine'. These branches, twisted together with those springing from the cross, form with their leaves and fruit a wide curve that goes from side to side of the Altar."

I am sorry that this is all the help I am able to give you, and hope that you will be able to track down the African Madonna either through the Diocese of Pretoria or the O.HeP. Sisters.

With kind regards,
Yours sincerely,

Value, OR

Mother Superior