

San Damiano and Taize Prayer Cross



San Damiano Cross is the large Romanesque cross that St. Francis of Assisi was praying before when he received the commission from the Lord to *rebuild the Church*. The original cross hangs in the Basilica of Saint Clare (Basilica di Santa Chiara) in Assisi, Italy. Franciscans cherish this cross as the symbol of their mission from God. The cross painted in an icon style. Besides the main figure it contains images of other saints and people related to Christ's crucifixion. The tradition of such crosses began in the Orthodox Church and probably reached Italy via Serbia and Croatia.



Taize Prayer Cross is based on icons that were brought from the Orthodox Church—painted by Br. Eric of the Taize Community. Br. Eric was very gifted as an artist. Through his works—paintings, etchings, stained glass—he was one of the brothers who awakened sensitivity to beauty that is so linked to the vocation of Taizé. His numerous stained glass windows are to be found in countries around the world. In the picture at the left, we can see that it does not contain all the above figures of the San Damiano cross, but only similar in shape.

There is the central figure of Christ crucified along with the Blessed Virgin Mary and Saint John the beloved Apostle at Christ's sides. Other than that there is a figure above the cross which may denote an angel.