

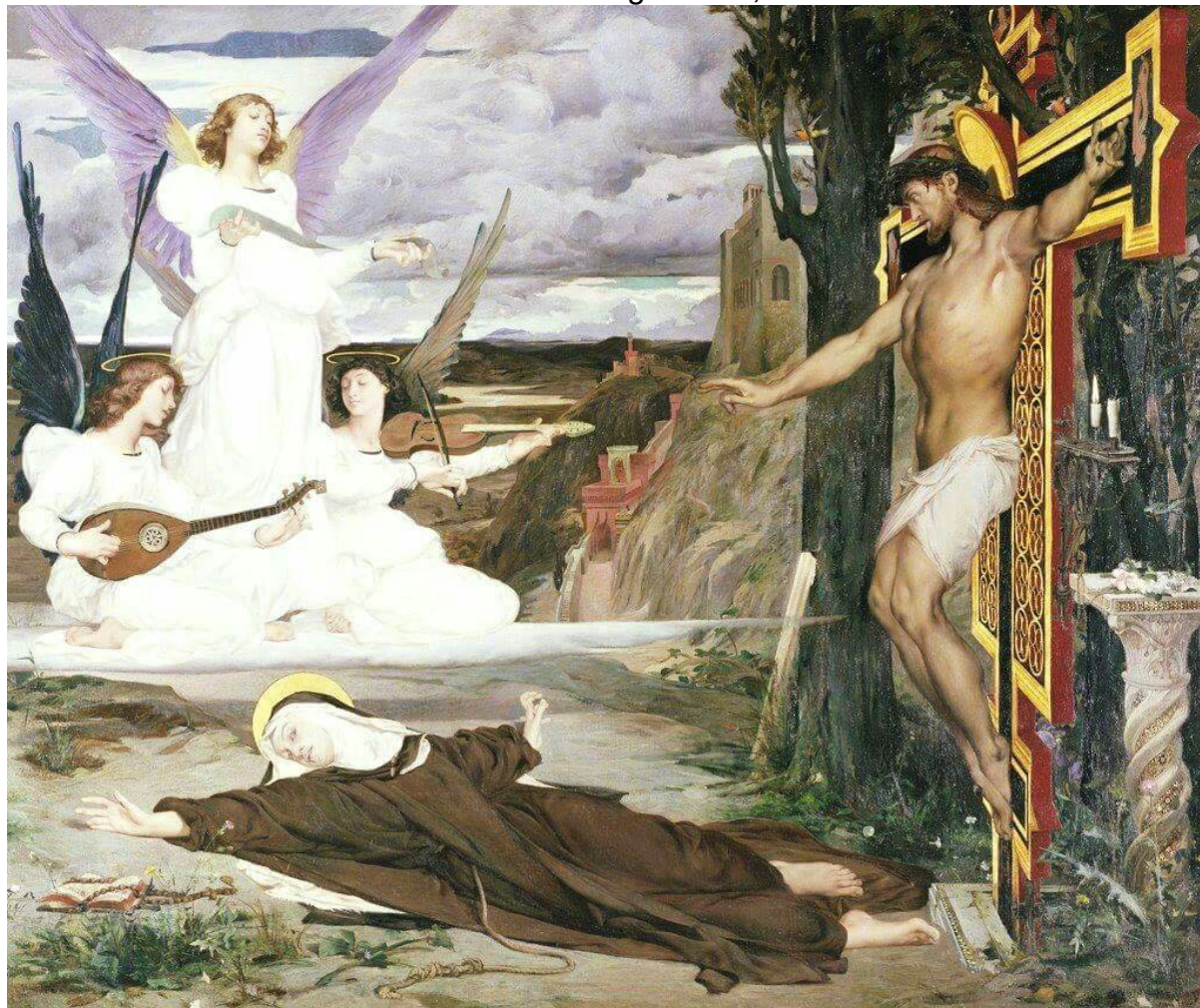
## Devotion to the Holy Wounds

OFS Monthly Formation

April 2023

### **Franciscan tradition:**

As we are about to enter into Holy Week and the Easter Triduum it seems fitting to focus on a very ancient Franciscan tradition, that of devotion to the holy wounds of our dear Lord. In Saint Clare of Assisi's 'Devotions in Honour of The Five Wounds', with reference to the wounds in our Lord's right hand, it states:



“Praise be to Thee, O my Lord Jesus Christ, for the most sacred wound in Thy right hand. By this adorable wound, and by Thy most sacred passion pardon me all the sins I have committed against Thee in thought, word, and deed, with my negligence in thy service and the sensuality of which I have been guilty, whether in sleeping or watching. Grant me a devout remembrance of Thy most merciful death, and of Thy divine wounds; grant me the grace to mortify my body and thus offer to Thee a token of my gratitude, who livest and reignest for ever, and ever. Amen. Our Father, Hail Mary.” (*The Franciscan Tertiary Manual and Prayer Book*, p. 266).

### **The San Damiano Cross:**

It is to be noted that on the San Damiano Cross, which depicts the five sacred wounds of Our Lord, it is our resurrected Lord who appears, with the wounds still showing. They still call to us, with their message of sacrificial love and suffering, but a suffering that is redemptive, wounds that lead to healing and resurrection from all

suffering and pain. Thus, it is a message of power over evil, victory over sin, hope over despair, resurrection over crucifixion, and love over death, for they are salvific wounds.



The San Damiano cross above the altar at Saint Francis by the Sea Church, Hibiscus Coast.

### **A scriptural reflection:**

Isaiah 53:4-5. “Surely He has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed Him stricken, struck down by God, and afflicted. But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; upon Him was the chastisement that made us whole, and with His stripes we are healed”. Such was our Saviour’s love for us and such was Saint Francis’s love for the Saviour in his devotion to the holy wounds, that St. Francis bore those wounds in his body too.

### **Contemplate the words of our resurrected Lord to St Thomas, in terms of Gospel to life devotion:**

John 20:27 “...‘Put your finger here, and see my hands; and put out your hand, and place it in my side’”.

**Let us pray:** In St. Francis, “the impression of the Stigmata, shows the force of his heart’s fervour outwardly through his limbs. O Crucified One, grant that we may be conformed in our mind and actions to the pattern of the Cross. Make us benefit from the fruit of the Cross in the kingdom of light where we may rejoice with the heavenly one”. Amen.

(The above quote is taken from select verses of the “*Corda Pia*” meaning pious or loving hearts, a Franciscan Conventual devotion in honor of Our Lords Wounds and the Stigmata of St. Francis, which was traditionally prayed during the Fridays of Lent).