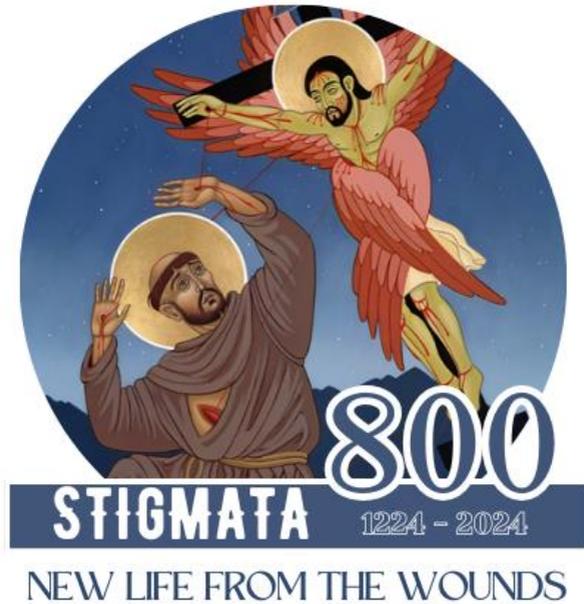


CELEBRATION OF THE STIGMATA OF SAINT FRANCIS

Triduum & Feast Day Prayers



"The stigmata shone forth exteriorly in his flesh, because interiorly that deeply set room was sprouting forth from his mind"

(2Cel 211)

OFM Franciscans India
St. Thomas Fraternity – Provincialate
St. Anthony's Friary
85 Hosur Road, Bengaluru

Day 1: Bearing the Wounds of Jesus Christ

Hymn & Introduction

Antiphon 1:

While he was praying on the side of the mountain, he beheld a Seraph having six wings, flaming and resplendent, coming down from the heights of heaven.

Psalm 1:

Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked,
nor stands in the way of sinners,
nor sits in the seat of scoffers;
but his delight is in the law of the Lord,
and on his law he meditates day and night.

He is like a tree planted by streams of water
that yields its fruit in its season,
and its leaf does not wither.
In all that he does, he prospers.

The wicked are not so,
but are like chaff that the wind drives away.
Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment,
nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous;
for the Lord knows the way of the righteous,
but the way of the wicked will perish.

Antiphon 2:

When in his swift flight he had reached the space of air near the man of God, there appeared between the wings the figure of a Man crucified, with His hands and feet stretched out in the shape of a cross and fastened to a cross

Psalm 22:

My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?
Why are you so far from helping me, from the words of my groaning?

O my God, I cry by day, but you do not answer;
and by night, but find no rest.

Yet you are holy, enthroned on the praises of Israel.
In you our fathers trusted;
they trusted, and you delivered them.
To you they cried and were rescued;
in you they trusted and were not put to shame.

But I am a worm and not a man,
scorned by mankind and despised by the people.
All who see me mock me;
they make mouths at me; they wag their heads;
"He trusts in the Lord; let him deliver him;
let him rescue him, for he delights in him!"

Yet you are he who took me from the womb;
you made me trust you at my mother's breasts.
On you was I cast from my birth,
and from my mother's womb you have been my God.

Be not far from me, for trouble is near,
and there is none to help.
Many bulls encompass me;
strong bulls of Bashan surround me;
they open wide their mouths at me,
like a ravening and roaring lion.

I am poured out like water,
and all my bones are out of joint;
my heart is like wax;
it is melted within my breast;
my strength is dried up like a potsherd,
and my tongue sticks to my jaws;
you lay me in the dust of death.

Canticle

Antiphon 3:

**My God, I am filled with a great and wondrous love for you;
I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus.**

Praise be to You, O Lord, most high,
For Your boundless suffering love,
You who bore the cross in agony,
For our redemption from sin's cruel grip.

O Christ, in Your sacred Passion,
You embraced the crown of thorns,
Each thorn a piercing reminder
Of the sins You bore for us.

In Your suffering, we find our healing,
In Your wounds, the balm of salvation,
For You, our Savior, were beaten,
That we might be reconciled with the Father.

Blessed be Your holy Name,
For You have shown us the path of love,
Through the cross and Your sacrifice,
You have redeemed us from darkness.

Glory be to You, O Christ,
For Your Passion and Your love,
May Your suffering be a beacon
Guiding us to eternal life.

Reading: 1Cel 94-95

94. While he dwelt in the hermitage which, from the place in which it is situated, is called Alverna, two years before he gave back his soul to Heaven, he saw in a vision of God a man like a seraph having six wings, standing over him with hands outstretched and feet joined together, fixed to a cross. Two wings were

raised above his head, two were spread out for flight, and two veiled the whole body. Now, when the blessed servant of the Most High saw this, he was filled with exceeding great wonder, but he could not understand what this vision might mean. Yet he rejoiced greatly and was filled with vehement delight at the benign and gracious look wherewith he saw that he was regarded by the seraph, whose beauty far exceeded, all estimation; but the crucifixion, and the bitterness of the seraph's suffering smote him altogether with fear. Thus he arose, so to speak, sorrowful and glad; and joy and grief alternated in him. He anxiously pondered what this vision might portend, and his spirit labored sore to come at the understanding of it. And while he continued without any clear perception of its meaning, and the strangeness of the vision was perplexing his heart, marks of nails began to appear in his hands and feet, such as he had seen a little while before in the Man crucified who had stood over him. [This form of divination was extremely common in the Middle Ages.]

95. His hands and feet seemed pierced in the midst by nails, the heads of the nails appearing in the inner part of the hands and in the upper part of the feet, and their points over against them. Now those marks were round in the inner side of the hands and elongated on the outer side, and certain small pieces of flesh were seen like the ends of nails bent and driven back, projecting from the rest of the flesh. So also the marks of nails were imprinted in his feet, and raised above the rest of the flesh. Moreover his right side, as it had been pierced by a lance, was overlaid with a scar, and often shed forth blood, so that his tunic and drawers were many times sprinkled with the sacred blood. Alas! how few were found worthy to see the sacred wound in his side while the crucified servant of the crucified Lord was yet alive! But happy was Elias who was found worthy to see it somehow while the Saint was living; not less happy Rufino who touched it with his own hands.⁵⁸ For once, when brother Rufino had put his hand into the most holy man's bosom that he might scratch him, his hand (as it often chanced) slipped down to Francis' right side, and he happened to touch that precious scar, at which touch the Saint of God was not a little distressed, and, pushing the hand away, he cried to the Lord that he might forgive him (Rufino). For he concealed the stigmata most diligently from strangers, and from those about him he hid them so carefully that even the brethren at his side and his most devoted followers were for a long time unaware of them.

Short Responsory

Hymn: We adore you O Lord Jesus Christ....

Magnificat: St. Francis, bearing in his body the wounds of Christ, glorified God through his life of humble service and love.

Intercessions:

V. For the Church, that she may be a living witness of Christ's Passion and Resurrection, we pray: **R.** Lord, hear our prayer.

V. For all Franciscan friars, that they may live out their calling with the same fervor and devotion as St. Francis, we pray: **R.** Lord, hear our prayer.

V. For the poor and marginalized, that they may experience the compassion and care of the Church, we pray: **R.** Lord, hear our prayer.

V. For those who are suffering, that they may find comfort in the wounds of Christ, we pray: **R.** Lord, hear our prayer.

V. For our community, that we may grow in our commitment to renewal and conversion, we pray: **R.** Lord, hear our prayer.

V. For all who have died, that they may be welcomed into the eternal joy of the Father's house, we pray: **R.** Lord, hear our prayer.

Our Father

Closing Prayer by all:

Cel: Let us Pray.

All: O St Francis, stigmatized on La Verna,
the world longs for you, that icon of the crucified Jesus.
It has need of your heart, open to God and to others;
of your bare, wounded feet, of your pierced hands raised in supplication.

It longs for your voice so frail,
yet forceful with the power of the Gospel.
Francis, help the people of this age to recognize the evil of sin and to seek
purification from it in penance.

Help them to become free from the very structures of sin
that oppress today's society.

Rekindle in the consciousness of those in government
an urgent need for peace between nations and peoples.
Instill in young people your freshness of life
that is capable of withstanding the snares of the many cultures of death.

To those injured by every type of evil
teach, O Francis, the joy of being able to forgive.
To all those crucified by suffering, hunger, and war,
reopen the doors of hope. Amen.

Day 2: The Stigmata in Francis' Life and Experience

Hymn & Introduction

Psalm 51 (50):

Antiphon: Two wings were raised above His head, two were spread forth to fly, while two hid His whole body. Beholding this, Francis was mightily astonished, and joy, mingled with sorrow, filled his heart

Have mercy on me, God, in your kindness.
In your compassion blot out my offense.
O wash me more and more from my guilt
and cleanse me from my sin.

My offenses truly I know them;
my sin is always before me
Against you, you alone, have I sinned;
what is evil in your sight I have done.

That you may be justified when you give sentence
and be without reproach when you judge,
O see, in guilt I was born,
a sinner was I conceived.

Indeed you love truth in the heart;
then in the secret of my heart teach me wisdom.
O purify me, then I shall be clean;
O wash me, I shall be whiter than snow.

Make me hear rejoicing and gladness,
that the bones you have crushed may revive.
From my sins turn away your face
and blot out all my guilt.

A pure heart create for me, O God,
put a steadfast spirit within me.
Do not cast me away from your presence,
nor deprive me of your holy spirit.

Give me again the joy of your help;
with a spirit of fervor sustain me,
that I may teach transgressors your ways
and sinners may return to you.

O rescue me, God, my helper,
and my tongue shall ring out your goodness.
O Lord, open my lips
and my mouth shall declare your praise.

For in sacrifice you take no delight,
burnt offering from me you would refuse,
my sacrifice, a contrite spirit,
a humbled, contrite heart you will not spurn.

In your goodness, show favor to Zion:
rebuild the walls of Jerusalem.
Then you will be pleased with lawful sacrifice,
holocausts offered on your altar.

Psalm 130 (129):

**Antiphon: Francis rejoiced at the gracious aspect wherewith he saw
Christ, under the guise of the Seraph, regard him, but His
crucifixion pierced his soul with a sword of pitying grief.**

Out of the depths I cry to you, O Lord,
Lord, hear my voice!
O let your ears be attentive
to the voice of my pleading.

If you, O Lord, should mark our guilt,
Lord, who would survive?
But with you is found forgiveness:
for this we revere you.

My soul is waiting for the Lord.
I count on his word.
My soul is longing for the Lord
more than watchman for daybreak.
(Let the watchman count on daybreak
and Israel on the Lord.)

Because with the Lord there is mercy
and fullness of redemption,
Israel indeed he will redeem
from all its iniquity.

Canticle

Antiphon: Francis marvelled exceedingly at the appearance of a vision so unfathomable, knowing that the infirmity of the Passion doth in no wise accord with the immortality of a Seraphic spirit.

O Praise to the Most Holy Eucharist,
The sacred Body and Blood of Christ,
Where Heaven and earth are united,
In the sacrament of divine love.

O Bread of Life, sent from Heaven,
You nourish our souls with grace,
In the mystery of the altar,
You are present, a living sacrifice.

In the solemn breaking of the bread,
We partake of Your divine nature,
A pledge of our eternal salvation,
In this sacred and holy feast.

Let our hearts be filled with awe,
As we approach Your holy table,
For in this sacrament of love,
We encounter the Lord of all.

Glory be to You, O Eucharistic Lord,
For the gift of Yourself in the sacrament,
May our lives reflect the grace received,
And may we dwell forever in Your love.

Reading: (Cf LM 13, 4)

Now the servant of Christ perceived that the stigmata thus manifestly imprinted on his flesh could not be hidden from his intimate friends. Nevertheless, fearing to make public the holy secret of the Lord, he was set in great strife of questioning, to wit, whether he should reveal what he had seen or keep it silent. Therefore, he called some of the Brethren and, speaking to them in general terms, set before them his doubt and sought their counsel. One of the Brethren, named Illuminato, who was illuminated by grace and perceived that he had beheld something marvelous, as he seemed almost stricken dumb with amazement, said unto the holy man: “Brother, thou knowest that at times the divine secrets are shown unto thee, not only for thine own sake but for the sake of others also. Therefore, thou wouldst have reason to fear lest thou shouldst be judged guilty of hiding thy talent if thou keep hidden that which thou hast received, which would be profitable unto many.” At this speech, the holy man was moved. Although at other times he was wont to say “My secret to me,” he did then, with much fear, narrate in order the vision aforesaid, adding that He who had appeared unto him had said some words which, so long as he lived, he would never reveal unto any man. Verily, we must believe that those utterances of that holy Seraph, marvellously appearing on the Cross, were so secret that it was perhaps not lawful for a man to utter them.

Short Responsory

Hymn: We adore you O Lord Jesus Christ....

Magnificat: The Lord revealed to Francis, that he might have foreknowledge that he was to be wholly transformed into the likeness of Christ Crucified, not by martyrdom of body, but by enkindling of heart.

Intercessions

For the Church: that, inspired by the example of St. Francis and his bearing of the stigmata, we may embrace our own crosses with faith and hope, finding strength in Christ's suffering. **Response:** "Lord, hear our prayer."

For all religious communities: that they may live the spirit of penance, humility, and devotion exemplified by St. Francis, and be faithful witnesses to the Gospel. **Response:** "Lord, hear our prayer."

For those who suffer in body, mind, or spirit: that they may experience the comforting presence of God and find solace in the hope of resurrection, as St. Francis did. **Response:** "Lord, hear our prayer."

For our own fraternity: that we may be deeply moved by the stigmata of St. Francis to live our vocation with renewed zeal, compassion, and authenticity. **Response:** "Lord, hear our prayer."

For those involved in the alleviation of suffering and injustice: that their efforts may bring about healing and transformation, reflecting the love and sacrifice of Christ as seen in St. Francis. **Response:** "Lord, hear our prayer."

For all who are in leadership roles within our Church and communities: that they may guide us with wisdom and courage, drawing inspiration from the example of St. Francis and his spiritual journey. **Response:** "Lord, hear our prayer."

Our Father

Closing Prayer by all:

Cel: Let us Pray.

All: O St Francis, stigmatized on La Verna,
the world longs for you, that icon of the crucified Jesus.
It has need of your heart, open to God and to others;
of your bare, wounded feet, of your pierced hands raised in supplication.

It longs for your voice so frail, yet forceful with the power of the Gospel.
Francis, help the people of this age to recognize the evil of sin and to seek
purification from it in penance.

Help them to become free from the very structures of sin
that oppress today's society.

Rekindle in the consciousness of those in government
an urgent need for peace between nations and peoples.
Instill in young people your freshness of life
that is capable of withstanding the snares of the many cultures of death.

To those injured by every type of evil teach, O Francis, the joy of being able
to forgive. To all those crucified by suffering, hunger, and war,
reopen the doors of hope. Amen.

Day 3: Embracing the Cross: The Transformative Power of Christ's Wounds

Hymn & Introduction

Psalm 122:

Antiphon: The Vision left in Francis' heart a wondrous glow, but on his flesh also it imprinted a no less wondrous likeness of its tokens. For forthwith there began to appear in his hands and feet the marks of the nails, even as he had just beheld them in that Figure of the Crucified..

I rejoiced when I heard them say:
"Let us go to God's house."
And now our feet are standing
within your gates, O Jerusalem.

Jerusalem is built as a city
strongly compact.
It is there that the tribes go up,
the tribes of the Lord.

For Israel's law it is,
there to praise the Lord's name.
There were set the thrones of judgment
of the house of David.

For the peace of Jerusalem pray:
"Peace be to your homes!
May peace reign in your walls,
in your palaces, peace!"

For love of my brethren and friends
I say: "Peace upon you.
For love of the house of the Lord
I will ask for your good.

Psalm 63

Antiphon: For his hands and feet seemed to be pierced through the midst with nails, the heads of the nails showing in the palms of the hands, and upper side of the feet, and their points showing on the other side.

O God, you are my God, for you I long;
for you my soul is thirsting.
My body pines for you
like a dry, weary land without water.
So I gaze on you in the sanctuary
to see your strength and your glory.

For your love is better than life,
my lips will speak your praise.
So I will bless you all my life,
in your name I will lift up my hands.
My soul shall be filled as with a banquet,
my mouth shall praise you with joy.

On my bed I remember you.
On you I muse through the night
for you have been my help;
in the shadow of your wings I rejoice.
My soul clings to you;
your right hand holds me fast.

Canticle

Antiphon: The heads of the nails were round and black in the hands and feet, while the points were long, bent, and as it were turned back, being formed of the flesh itself, and protruding therefrom.

O Lord, we adore Your holy wounds,
Each one a testament to Your great love,

For through Your wounds, we find healing,
And through Your pain, we are redeemed.

In the sacred marks of Your passion,
We see the depth of Your love revealed,
The nails, the spear, the stripes, and thorns,
All bear witness to the sacrifice of love.

O Stigmata of our Savior,
You are our refuge and our hope,
In Your wounds, we find our peace,
And in Your blood, our salvation.

Blessed are the wounds that bring us life,
For they remind us of Your infinite mercy,
Through Your suffering, we are saved,
And in Your love, we find our true home.

Glory to You, O Wounded Christ,
For Your love that knows no bounds,
May we always cherish Your holy wounds,
And follow You with hearts renewed.

Reading: Mirror of Perfection 44

From the beginning, as a foundation of humility, Saint Francis, in his conversion, desired that all the brethren of the Blessed Francis emulate God's humility. As a wise builder, he laid his foundations upon a firm rock, specifically the exceeding great humility and poverty of the Son of God. He named his Religion that of the "brethren Minor" out of his profound humility. Consequently, at the initiation of the Religion, he instructed the brethren to remain in the hospitals of the lepers to serve them, establishing the foundation of holy humility. As both gentle and simple individuals joined the Order, they were informed that they must humbly act as servants to the lepers and dwell in their houses. This is detailed in the first Rule: "Willing to have nought under heaven save only holy poverty, whereby they are nourished in this world by bodily

and spiritual food, and in the world to come shall obtain their heavenly heritage." Saint Francis founded himself, as well as others, upon an exceeding great humility and poverty, choosing to be an underling not only in the Church but even among his brethren, despite his esteemed position in the Church of God. May this lowliness in his thought and desire be his highest exaltation in the sight of God and man!

Short Responsory:

Hymn: We adore you O Lord Jesus Christ....

Magnificat: ... Now after that the true love of Christ had transformed His lover into the same image, and after that he had spent forty days in solitude, as he had determined, this angelic man, Francis, descended from the mountain, bearing with him the likeness of the Crucified...

Intercessions:

1. Most High, glorious God, You who are the source of true Light, enlighten the hearts of those hardened by hatred, indifference, and selfishness, who sow discord, war, and division in the world; may they be touched by Your Grace and become artisans of fraternal relationships.

Res: By your grace alone, may we make our way to you, Most High.

2. Most High Glorious God, You who are the root of our fidelity, grant to those who profess to be Christians the ability to know how to grasp your living and active presence in history, so that each one may bear witness to the Good that You do in the life of each one of us, in our families, in our fraternities and the Church. **Res: By your grace alone, may we make our way to you, Most High**

3. Most High Glorious God, You who fulfill Your promise of Salvation, ignite in the hearts of those who are discouraged, disoriented, and disappointed a surge of optimism, vitality, and certainty. May they experience that You never leave us alone on life's journey but rather, care

for each of Your creatures. **Res: By your grace alone, may we make our way to you, Most High**

4. Most High Glorious God, you who, from the heights of the Cross, revealed Your unconditional love for humanity, ignite the hearts of those who have chosen to follow You more closely. May they, by embracing Your love each day, become a visible sign of Your mercy and tenderness for the Church and the world. **Res: By your grace alone, may we make our way to you, Most High**

5. Most High and glorious God, You who are the source of Wisdom and Intellect, give the young people of our time the ability to recognize in their own history the signs of Your presence, which calls every man and woman to the fullness of life and to communion with You. Drawn by Your love, may they respond generously and courageously to the insights of the Spirit who speaks in the intimacy of their hearts. **Res: By your grace alone, may we make our way to you, Most High**

6. Most High and Glorious God, you who are the origin of all goodness, pour into the soul, mind, and heart of every creature the desire to love You above all things and to love their neighbor as themselves. May Peace, Brotherhood, and the Joy of the Gospel spread throughout the world. **Res: By your grace alone, may we make our way to you, Most High**

Our Father

Closing Prayer by all:

Cel: Let us Pray.

All: O St Francis, stigmatized on La Verna,
the world longs for you, that icon of the crucified Jesus.
It has need of your heart, open to God and to others;
of your bare, wounded feet, of your pierced hands raised in supplication.

It longs for your voice so frail,
yet forceful with the power of the Gospel.

Francis, help the people of this age to recognize the evil of sin and to seek purification from it in penance.

Help them to become free from the very structures of sin that oppress today's society.

Rekindle in the consciousness of those in government an urgent need for peace between nations and peoples. Instill in young people your freshness of life that is capable of withstanding the snares of the many cultures of death.

To those injured by every type of evil teach, O Francis, the joy of being able to forgive. To all those crucified by suffering, hunger, and war, reopen the doors of hope. Amen.

17th September

Feast

STIGMATA OF OUR HOLY FATHER FRANCIS

Invitatory ant. Christ renewed his wounds in the body of Francis: come let us adore the Lord.

OFFICE OF READINGS.

Ant. 1 The Lord's hand was upon me, and he led me up a high mountain.

Ps. 20

O Lord, your strength gives joy to the king; *
how your saving help makes him glad!
You have granted to him his heart's desire; *
you have not refused the prayer of his lips.

Your saving help has given him glory. *
You have laid upon him majesty and splendour,
you have granted your blessings to him for ever. *
You have made him rejoice with the joy of your presence.

The king has put his trust in the Lord: *
through the mercy of the Most High he shall stand firm.
O Lord, arise in your strength; *
we shall sing and praise your power.

Ant. 1 The Lord's hand was upon me, and he led me up a high mountain.

Ant. 2 I saw a great vision and my whole appearance was transformed.

I

Psa.

91

It is good to give thanks to the Lord *
to make music to your name, O Most High,
to proclaim your love in the morning *
and your truth in the watches of the night,
on the ten-stringed lyre and the lute,
with the murmuring sound of the harp.

Your deeds, O Lord, have made me glad: *
for the work of your hands I shout with joy.
O Lord, how great are your works! *
how deep are your designs!
The foolish man cannot know this *
and the fool cannot understand.

Though the wicked spring up like grass *
and all who do evil thrive,
they are doomed to be eternally destroyed; *
but you, Lord, are eternally on high.
See how your enemies perish; *
all doers of evil are scattered.

Ant. 2 I saw a great vision and my whole appearance was transformed.

Ant. 3. The glory of the Lord appeared as a burning fire on top of the mountain.

II

To me you give the wild-ox's strength; *
you anoint me with the purest oil.
My eyes looked in triumph on my foes; *
my ears heard gladly of their fall.

The just will flourish like the palm-tree *
and grow like a Lebanon cedar.

Planted in the house of the Lord *
they will flourish in the courts of our God,
still bearing fruit when they are old, *
still full of sap, still green,
to proclaim that the Lord is just. *
In him, my rock, there is no wrong.

Ant. 3. The glory of the Lord appeared as a burning fire on top of the mountain.

V. Your arrows have sunk deep in me.

R. Your hand has come down upon me.

First Reading*Gal. 5:24-26; 6:2-5, 7-10, 14-*

18

A reading from the Letter of St Paul to the Galatians

You cannot belong to Christ Jesus unless you crucify all self indulgent passions and desires. Since the Spirit is our life, let us be directed by the Spirit. We must stop being conceited, provocative and envious. You should carry each other's burdens and so fulfil the law of Christ. It is the people who are not important who often make the mistake of thinking that they are. Let each of you examine your own conduct; if you find anything to boast about, it will at least be something of your own, not just something better than your neighbour has. Everyone has their own burden to carry. Don't delude yourself into thinking God can be cheated: where a person sows, there they reap: if we sow in the field of self-indulgence we will get a harvest of corruption out of it; if we sow in the field of the Spirit we will get from it a harvest of eternal life. We must never grow tired of doing good because if we don't give up the struggle we shall get our harvest at the proper time. While we have the chance, we must do good to all, and especially to our brothers and sisters in the faith. As for me, the only thing I can boast about is the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom the world is crucified to me, and I to the world. It does not matter if a person is circumcised or not; what matters is for us to become altogether new creatures. Peace and mercy to all who follow this rule, who form the Israel of God. I want no more trouble from anybody after this; the marks on my body are those of Jesus. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen.

Responsory

R. I carry about in my body the dying state of Jesus * so that the living power of Jesus may be manifested in my body too.

V. God has destined me from the first to be moulded into the image of his Son.

* So that the living power ...

Second Reading*Legenda**Minor XIII, 1-4**A reading from St Bonaventure on the sacred stigmata.*

Two years before his death, Francis faithful servant of Christ, was led by divine providence to a high mountain called La Verna, where he could be alone. There he began a forty-day fast in honour of St Michael the Archangel,

as was his custom, and he soon experienced an extraordinary in-pouring of divine contemplation. He was all on fire with heavenly desires and he realised that the gifts of divine grace were being poured out on him in greater abundance than ever.

The fervour of his seraphic longing raised Francis up to God and in an ecstasy of compassion made him like Christ who allowed himself to be crucified in the excess of his love. Then one morning about the feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross, while he was praying on the mountainside, Francis saw a seraph with six fiery wings coming down from the highest point in the heavens. The vision descended swiftly and came to rest in the air near him. Then he saw the image of a man crucified in the midst of the wings, with his hands and feet outstretched and nailed to a cross. Two of the wings were raised above his head and two were stretched out in flight while the remaining two shielded his body. Francis was dumbfounded at the sight and his heart was flooded with a mixture of joy and sorrow. He was overjoyed at the way Christ regarded him so graciously under the appearance of the seraph, but the fact that he was nailed to a cross pierced his soul with a sword of compassionate sorrow.

As the vision disappeared, it left his heart ablaze with eagerness and impressed upon his body a miraculous likeness. There and then, the marks of the nails began to appear in his hands and his feet, just as he had seen them in the vision of the man nailed to a cross. His hands and feet appeared pierced through the centre with nails, the heads of which were in the palms of his hands and on the instep of each foot, while the points stuck out on the opposite side. His right side seemed as if it had been pierced with a lance and was marked with a livid scar which often bled.

True love of Christ had now transformed his lover into his image, and when the forty days which he had intended spending in solitude were over and the feast of St Michael had come, St Francis came down from the mountain. With him he bore the representation of Christ crucified which was not the work of an artist in wood or stone, but had been reproduced in the members of his body by the hand of the living God.

Responsory

R. As for me, the only thing I can boast about is the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ * through whom the world is crucified to me, and I to the world.

V. The marks on my body are those of Jesus. * Through whom ...

Te Deum

CONCLUDING PRAYER: *As for Morning Prayer*

MORNING PRAYER

Ant. 1 With Christ I hang upon the cross, and yet I am alive; or rather, not I; it is Christ who lives in me.

Psalms and canticle of any Sunday a.m. found in the Appendix

Ant. 2. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things so that I may gain Christ, and know the power of his resurrection, that I may share his sufferings, becoming like him in his death.

Ant. 3 Christ will be exalted through my body; for me, life means Christ

Scripture Reading

Gal. 6:14,

17-18

As for me, the only thing I can boast about is the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom the world is crucified to me, and I to the world. The marks on my body are those of Jesus.

Short Responary:

R. Your arrows have sunk deep into my flesh; your hand has come down heavily upon me. *Repeat R.*

V. My heart throbs, my strength is spent. **R.** Glory be .. **R.**

Benedictus ant. O Francis because you longed for martyrdom the Dawn from on high came to visit you and renewed in your body the marks of our redemption.

Intercessions

Christ our Lord established the Church with his own blood, and has graciously called us to be followers of Francis; let us pray to him, saying: **R.** *Keep us faithful in your service.*

- Jesus, our Brother, grant us some share in that deep and burning love for you which made Francis a living shrine of your cross and passion. *R.*
- Grant to the Seraphic Order a desire to spread your word to those whose lives we touch so that Love may be loved. *R.*
- Father, we thank you for gift to us of Christ, the Lord of glory, who became our Brother. May we, like Francis, follow him daily in the Gospel way of life we have professed. *R.*
- Wisdom of the Eternal Father, enlighten our minds – so that we may live the truth in love, and that all our thoughts may be enlightened by truth and holiness. *R.*
- Christ our Saviour, you did not disdain to work with your hands; direct the work of our hands – so that all may see our good works and give glory to the Father. *R.*

Our Father.

CONCLUDING PRAYER:

Good and gracious God,
 you renewed the marks of the sufferings of your Son
 in the body of our holy Father Francis,
 in order to inflame our hearts with the fire of your love.
 Through his prayers may we be made conformable
 to the death of your Son and thus share also in his resurrection.
 We make our prayer ..

PRAYER DURING THE DAY

BEFORE NOON

Scripture Reading

Gal. 2:20-21

The life I now live in this body I live in faith: faith in the Son of God who loved me and who sacrificed himself for my sake. I cannot bring myself to give up God's gift.

V. When cares increase in my heart.

R. Your consolation calms my soul.

MIDDAY

Scripture Reading

Rom. 6:4-5 As Christ was raised from the dead by the Father's glory, we too shall live a new life. If in union with Christ we have imitated his death, we shall also imitate him in his resurrection.

V. If anyone would come after me, let them deny themselves

R. Let them take up their cross and follow me.

AFTERNOON

Scripture Reading

Rom. 6:8-11

We believe that having died with Christ we shall return to life with him: Christ as we know, having been raised from the dead will never die again. Death has no power over him any more. When he died, he died, once for all, to sin, so his life now is life in God; in that way, you too must consider yourselves to be dead to sin but alive for God in Christ Jesus.

V. Loving hearts are set on fire.

R. As they celebrate the marks of Francis' wounds

EVENING PRAYER

Ant 1. God has used Blessed Francis to show forth in many ways the mystery of the cross.

Ps. 14

Lord, who shall be admitted to your tent *
and dwell on your holy mountain?

He who walks without fault; *
he who acts with justice
and speaks the truth from his heart; *
he who does not slander with his tongue;

he who does no wrong to his brother,*
who casts no slur on his neighbour,
who holds the godless in disdain, *

but honours those who fear the Lord;

he who keeps his pledge come what may; *
who takes no interest on a loan
and accepts no bribes against the innocent. *
Such a man will stand firm for ever.

Ant. 1 God has used Blessed Francis to show forth in many ways the mystery of the cross.

Ant. 2 I had no thought of bringing you any other knowledge than that of Jesus Christ, and of him as crucified.

Ps 111

Happy the man who fears the Lord, *
who takes delight in all his commands.
His sons will be powerful on earth; *
the children of the upright are blessed.

Riches and wealth are in his house; *
his justice stands firm for ever.
He is a light in the darkness for the upright: *
he is generous, merciful and just.

The good man takes pity and lends, *
he conducts his affairs with honour.
The just man will never waver: *
he will be remembered for ever.

He has no fear of evil news; *
with a firm heart he trusts in the Lord.
With a steadfast heart he will not fear; *
he will see the downfall of his foes.

Open-handed, he gives to the poor; †
his justice stands firm for ever. *
His head will be raised in glory.

The wicked man sees and is angry, †
grinds his teeth and fades away; *
the desire of the wicked leads to doom.

Ant. 2 I had no thought of bringing you any other knowledge than that of Jesus Christ, and of him as crucified.

Ant. 3 In the body I was put to death, in the spirit I was raised to life.

Rev. 15:3-4

Great and wonderful are your deeds,
O Lord God, the Almighty!
Just and true are your ways,
O King of the ages!

Who shall not fear and glorify your name, O Lord?
For you alone are holy.
All nations shall come and worship you,
for your judgements have been revealed.

Ant. 3 In the body I was put to death, in the spirit I was raised to life.

Scripture Reading

Gal. 6:14, 17-18

As for me, the only thing I can boast about is the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom the world is crucified to me, and I to the world. I want no more trouble from anyone after this; the marks on my body are those of Jesus. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen.

Short Responsory

R. Lord Jesus Christ * you have imprinted your servant Francis *Repeat R.*

V. With the marks of our redemption. **R.** Glory be ... **R.**

Magnificat ant. I have died to the world, and my life is hidden with Christ in God. Our real life is Christ, and when he appears, then we too will appear with him and share his glory.

Intercessions

Let us ask the Father, the source of all holiness, to lead us to holiness of life through the example and intercession of our holy Father Francis. Let us pray:

R. Lord, we beseech you, hear us.

- Father, you made your servant, Francis, a perfect follower of your Son – grant us the grace to walk steadfastly in his footsteps and so live faithfully the Gospel of Christ. *R.*
- Father, direct our feet into the way of peace which our holy Father has pointed out to us – so that we may live wholeheartedly in obedience, without possessing anything as our own and in chastity. *R.*
- Father, you cast down the mighty and raise the lowly – grant that we may imitate the profound humility of our seraphic Father. *R.*
- Father, you marked out your servant Francis with the signs of your Son's passion – teach us always to rejoice and glory in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ. *R.*
- Father, at the prayer of Francis, you grant forgiveness to sinners – in your compassion show the light of your countenance to our deceased brothers and sisters. *R.*

Our Father

CONCLUDING PRAYER: *As for Morning Prayer*