



THE JUBILEE CROSS INITIATIVE

**A Pilgrimage of
Reconciliation, Hope, and Renewal**

Jesus Youth UK – Silver Jubilee 2026





INTRODUCTION

As Jesus Youth UK celebrates twenty-five years of missionary presence in the United Kingdom, the Jubilee Cross Initiative stands at the heart of this sacred season of thanksgiving, renewal, and recommitment. Aligned with the Catholic Church's Franciscan Jubilee proclaimed by the Holy Father, this initiative invites every parish, family, and prayer group to walk together as pilgrims of hope, rediscovering reconciliation, forgiveness, and renewed love for Christ and His Church.

The Jubilee Cross will journey across all eight Jesus Youth regions of the UK, visiting churches, households, and prayer gatherings. As it travels, it becomes a visible sign of grace passed from one community to another, uniting the movement in prayer and mission during this Jubilee year. The cross also contains soil collected from pilgrimage spots within each of the eight regions, embedded in the base of the cross.

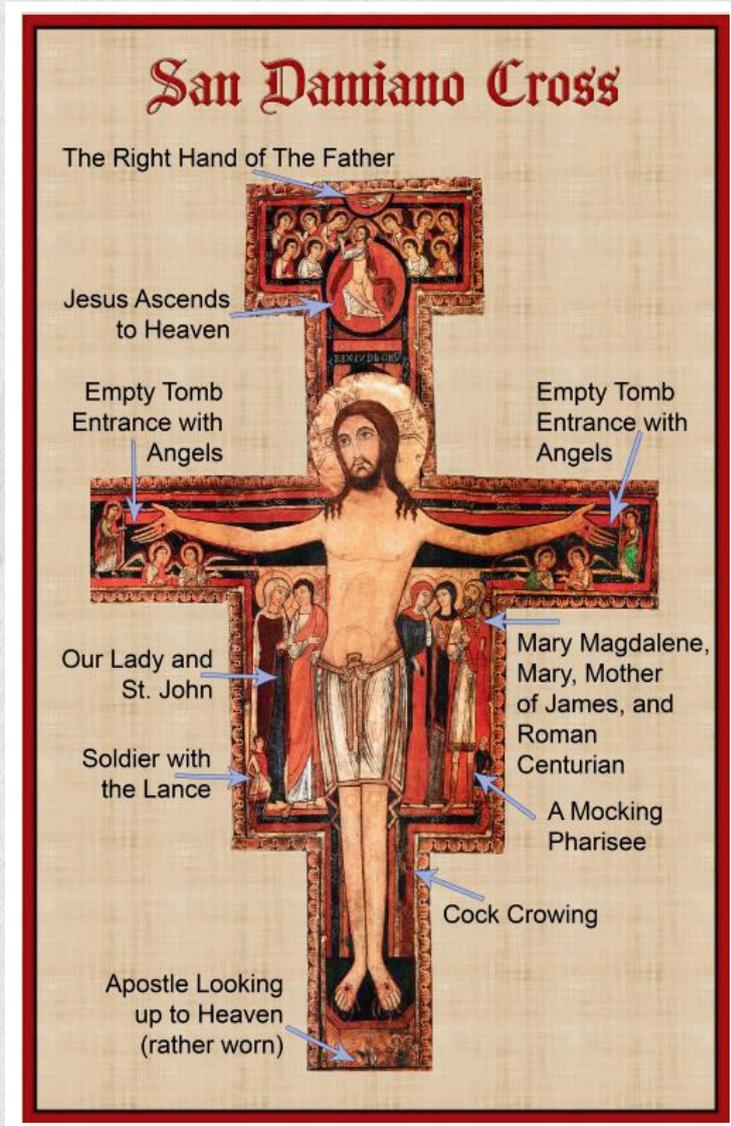
St Francis of Assisi, the patron saint of the Jesus Youth Movement, stands as the inspiration of this initiative. His life of radical discipleship, joyful simplicity, deep prayer, and courageous obedience to Christ continues to inspire Jesus Youth to live the Gospel with humility and missionary zeal. In a striking providence, the Franciscan Jubilee Year was proclaimed after the Jubilee Cross—based on the San Damiano Cross—had already been finalised, an alignment that reflects the work of the Holy Spirit in guiding the movement.





THE SAN DAMIANO CROSS: A LIVING ICON

The Jubilee Cross of Jesus Youth UK is inspired by the San Damiano Cross, the sacred icon before which St Francis of Assisi heard the voice of Christ calling him to “go and rebuild my Church.” Unlike many crucifixes that focus primarily on suffering, the San Damiano Cross presents Christ alive, upright, and victorious, revealing the mystery of the Crucified and Risen Lord as one saving reality.



Christ's eyes are open, His body strong and serene, His arms outstretched in a gesture of welcome. This is not a Christ overcome by death, but the Lord who reigns from the Cross, drawing all people into His redeeming love.

By choosing a San Damiano-style cross, Jesus Youth UK recalls its own calling: to respond afresh to Christ's invitation to rebuild the Church through lives rooted in prayer, humility, obedience, and missionary zeal.

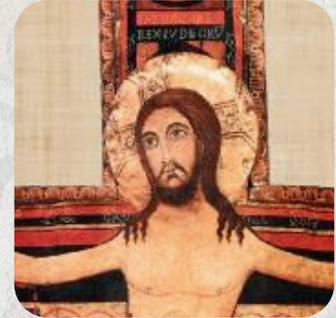


UNDERSTANDING THE ICONOGRAPHY OF THE CROSS

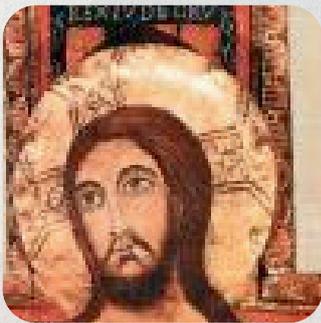
Every detail of the San Damiano Cross proclaims the Gospel visually:

- **Christ at the Centre**

Jesus stands tall and dignified, clothed in a simple garment. His open eyes affirm that He is alive and present. His outstretched arms welcome all into reconciliation and mercy.



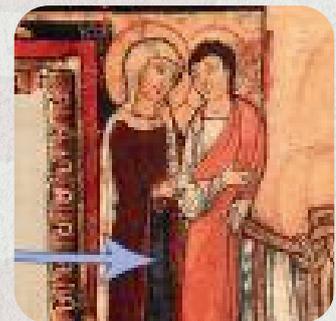
- **The Halo with the Cross**



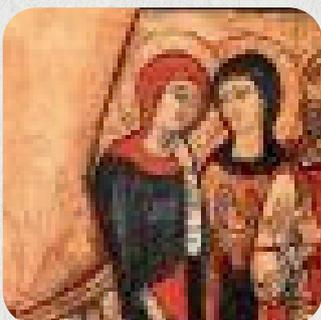
The golden halo marked with the Cross reveals Christ's divine glory shining through His self-giving love.

- **Mary and John**

Standing close to Jesus are Mary, His Mother, and St John, the beloved disciple. They represent faithful discipleship—remaining with Christ even at the foot of the Cross.



- **Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Other**



These figures show the community of believers gathered around the Cross, reminding us that faith is lived together, not alone.



- **The Roman Centurion**

Shown pointing toward Christ, the centurion symbolises conversion—recognising Jesus as the Son of God.



- **The Cock at the Bottom**



The cock recalls Peter’s denial and repentance, a powerful sign of mercy, forgiveness, and restoration.

- **Christ Ascending at the Top**

Above the Cross, Christ is shown ascending in glory, accompanied by angels. This assures us that the path of obedience and sacrifice leads to resurrection and new life.

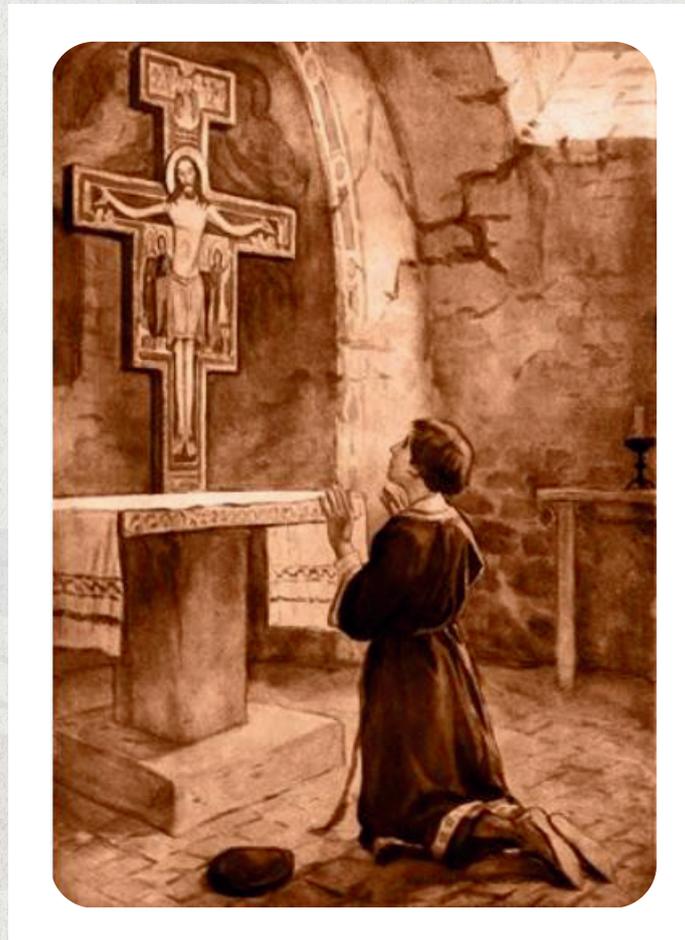


Together, these images proclaim that the Cross is not an end, but a doorway to hope, renewal, and victory.





ST FRANCIS AND THE CALL TO REBUILD



Kneeling before the San Damiano Cross, St Francis of Assisi heard Christ say: “Go, rebuild my Church.”

What began as the physical repair of a small chapel became a lifelong mission to renew the Church spiritually—through humility, poverty, reconciliation, and radical love for the Gospel. Francis learned that true renewal begins within the heart, allowing Christ to transform us before we attempt to transform the world

For Jesus Youth, this call continues today. The Jubilee Cross invites each member, family, and community to listen anew to Christ’s voice and to become instruments of renewal in the Church and society.





RELEVANCE IN THE SILVER JUBILEE YEAR

As Jesus Youth UK marks its Silver Jubilee, the Jubilee Cross stands as a sign of gratitude for God’s faithfulness over the past twenty-five years. It invites the movement to go out into the world with renewed missionary zeal.

Echoing the Jubilee theme of “Renewed in Love and Radiant in Spirit,” the Cross calls us to reconciliation with God and one another, healing of memories, and a deeper trust in God’s grace as we step into the future.

THE PURPOSE OF THE JUBILEE CROSS JOURNEY

As the Jubilee Cross journeys through homes, parishes, and prayer groups across the UK, it becomes a living sign of Jubilee grace being shared. Its pilgrimage calls us to:

- Repentance and reconciliation
- Renewal of personal and communal faith
- A renewed commitment to mission

Every household that receives the Cross is invited to become a living witness of Christ’s love, allowing Him to rebuild hearts, families, and communities—so that the Church may shine more brightly in our time.