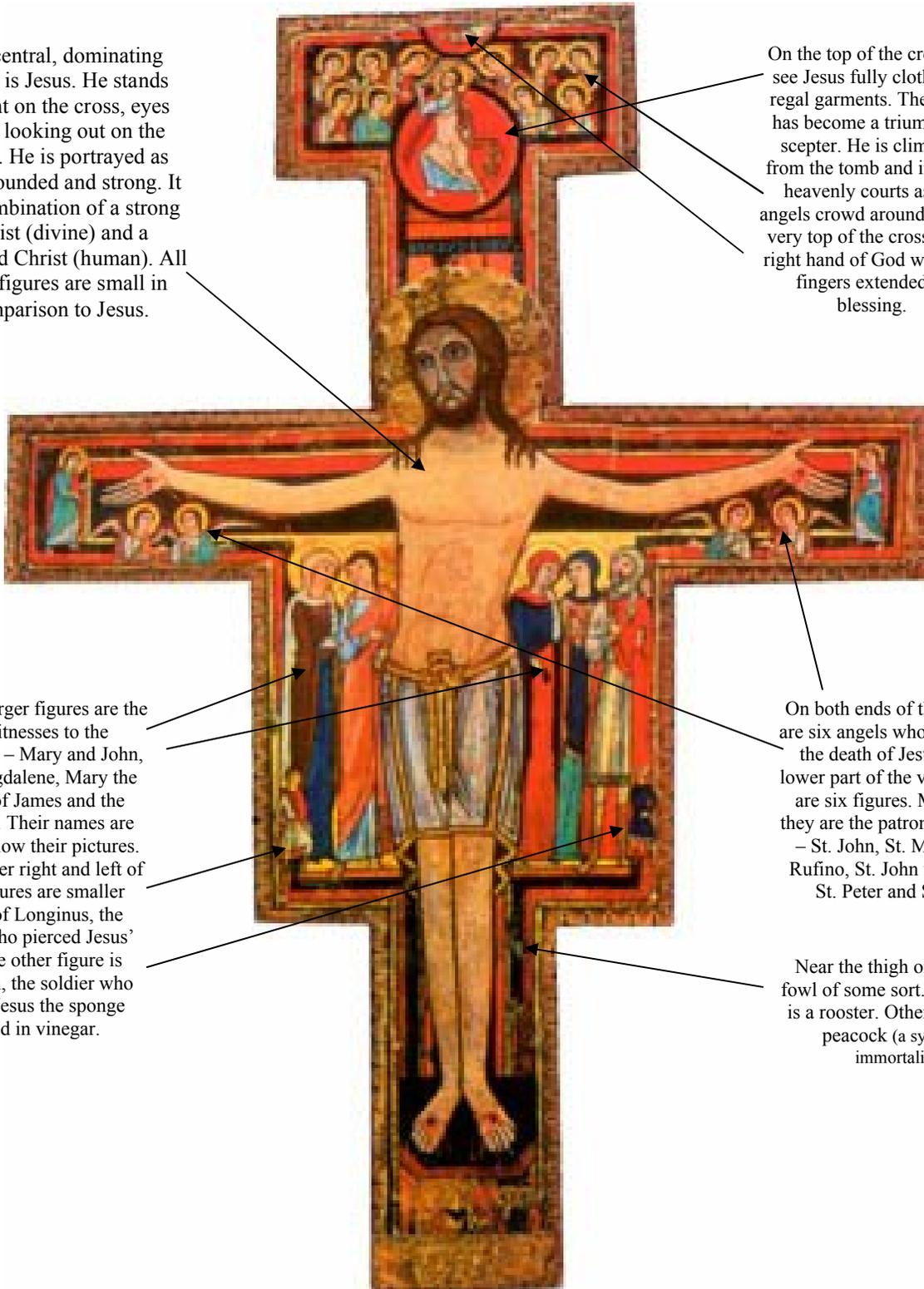


The San Damiano Crucifix

The central, dominating figure is Jesus. He stands upright on the cross, eyes open, looking out on the world. He is portrayed as both wounded and strong. It is a combination of a strong Christ (divine) and a wounded Christ (human). All other figures are small in comparison to Jesus.

On the top of the cross we see Jesus fully clothed in regal garments. The cross has become a triumphant scepter. He is climbing from the tomb and into the heavenly courts as ten angels crowd around. At the very top of the cross is the right hand of God with two fingers extended in blessing.



The next larger figures are the five witnesses to the crucifixion – Mary and John, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James and the centurion. Their names are written below their pictures. To the lower right and left of these figures are smaller figures of Longinus, the Roman who pierced Jesus' side. The other figure is Stephaton, the soldier who offered Jesus the sponge soaked in vinegar.

On both ends of the cross bar are six angels who marveled at the death of Jesus. On the lower part of the vertical beam are six figures. Most likely they are the patrons of Umbria – St. John, St. Michael, St. Rufino, St. John the Baptist, St. Peter and St. Paul.

Near the thigh of Jesus is a fowl of some sort. Some say it is a rooster. Others say it is a peacock (a symbol of immortality).

Most High glorious God enlighten the darkness of my heart and give me correct faith, certain hope, and perfect love, sense and knowledge, Lord, that I may carry out your holy and true command.
“Prayer of St. Francis before the Crucifix” St. Francis of Assisi – Writings for a Gospel Life