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The Alleluia: A Thirteenth-Century Peace Movement

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Since the advent of atomic weapons, Christians like everyone else have begun to re-examine their positions on war. This reappraisal by now has taken on proportions of a movement and is no longer a series of isolated witnesses. With the Catholic Faith—especially since Pope John XXIII issued *Pacem in terris*—the movement has adopted many forms. Pope Paul VI added impetus and urgency to this movement with his dramatic visit to the United Nations in 1965. The Second Vatican Council added another dimension, issuing *Gaudium et spes*, even with its equivocations. The American Catholic bishops, too, carried the public discussion forward with their forceful and provocative pastoral letter *The Challenge of Peace*. The 1986 multi-faith assembly for the feast of St. Francis at Assisi has underscored the urgent need to find the deepest sources of peace within every religious tradition and to insure that religion not be a cause of war.

Scholarship, too, has begun to re-examine the past to investigate earlier Christian positions on war. Whether it has been the refurbishing of Cecil John Cadoux' somewhat oversimplified picture of early Christian pacifism[1] or a correction to that position,[2] scholars have been busy asking new questions of well-known material.

With more sophisticated work on the pre-Constantinian period already beginning to achieve something of a consensus, it was only a matter of time before scholars asked new questions of the medieval world as well. Thus one can find scholars attempting to recast the doctrine of the just war to make it serviceable in the twentieth century

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[1] Cecil John Cadoux, *The Early Christian Attitude to War* (London: Headly Bros., 1919). Roland H. Bainton, *Christian Attitudes Toward War and Peace. A Historical Survey and Critical Re-evaluation* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 1960). John Howard Yoder, *The Original Revolution: Essays on Christian Pacifism* (Scottdale, PA: Herald Press, 1972).

[2] John Helgeland et al., *Christians and the Military: the Early Experience* (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1985). Louis J. Swift, *The Early Fathers on War and Miltary Service* (Wilmington, DE: Michael Glazier, 1983).

by re-examining its origins in Europe during the Middle Ages.[3] Catholics, too, have considered it important to re-sift their history to find an extensive and responsible stance of opposition to war which antedates by centuries the historical peace churches. It is as part of that tradition that this author has undertaken this study.[4]

The Meeting at Paquara.[5]—The thirteenth century in north-central Italy blazed with war. Occasionally, popular religious sentiment erupted to overcome the penchant for war and peace broke out, even if it was short-lived. One particularly-colorful episode brought together thousands of people, clerical and lay, from the Val Padana to celebrate peace. Paquara, four miles south of Verona on the banks of the Adige, was the designated gathering place. Unarmed and carrying banners "unfolded in the breeze," these warring peoples arrived on Sunday, August 28, 1233.[6]

The size of the gathering staggered contemporary chroniclers as much as did its peaceful intent. One said there were 400,000 people, surely an exaggeration.[7] Another said it was the biggest group ever to

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[3]James Turner Johnson, *Just War Tradition and the Restraint of War: a Moral and Histoical Inquiry* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1984). Paul Ramsey, *The Just War: Force and Political Responsibility* (New York: University Press of America, 1968). Frederick Russel, *The Just War in the Middle Ages* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1979). Michael Walzer, *Just and Unjust Wars: a Moral Argument with Historical Illustrations* (New York: Basic Books, 1977).

[4]Cf. Ronald Musto, *The Catholic Peace Tradition.* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1987). I have recently completed a book-length manuscript on the events of 1233. At the time of this writing it still awaits a publication date.

[5]The Fulbright Program awarded a senior research grant which helped subsidize much of my stay in Italy while working on this subject. I am grateful to all involved, especially to Cipriana Scelba and her staff in Rome. A different version of this paper—shorter and more popular—appeared in the Festchrift celebrating the twenty-fifth anniversary of California State University, Fullerton. Joyce Griffith patiently typed serveral versions of this paper.

[6]Karl Sutter, *Fra Giovanni da Vicenza e l'Alleluia del 1233.* (Vicenza, 1900). While in need of some correction, he tells the story as well as anyone. I cite the Italian translation because it contains several changes from the original, changes he superivsed. Accounts of this meeting and its aftermath can be found in several medieval chronicles. See especially, Antonius Godus, *Chronicae quae exstant ab anno 1194-1240,* in Lodovico Antonio Muratori, *Rerum Italicarum Scriptores [RIS],* VII, 80-1; G. Maursiius, *Historia de rebus gestis Eccelini de Romano ab 1183 ad annum circiter 1238,* in Muratori, *RIS,* VIII, 37-9; Monachus Patavini, *Chronicon de Rebus Gestis in Lombardia praecipue et Marchia Tarvisina ad annum 1270,* in Muratori, *RIS,* VIII, 675; Parisius de Cereta, *Chronicon Veronese ab anno 1117 ad annum 1278,* in Muratori, *RIS,* VIII, 627-8; *Chronicon Parmese ab anno MXXXIII usque ad annum MCCCIX,* in Muaratori, *RIS,* VII, 766; and Rolandinus Patavini, *De factis in Marchia Tarvisina,* in Muratori, *RIS,* VIII, 202-4.

[7]Parisius, *Chronicon Veronense,* 626.

gather in Lombardy.[8] Still another said that *Tanta fuit ibi innumerosa multitudo quod, sicut dictum est, a tempore Yhesu Christi in hoc per alicuius predicacionem tot non fuerunt congregati in unum*. [There was such a large number there that, as it was said, from the time of Jesus Christ until now all have not been gathered together in one place through any one's preaching.][9]

The Alleluia.—The peace movement of 1233, known as the *Alleluia,* began spontaneously and spread quickly and enthusiastically, first as a religious movement and later as a political phenomenon with strong religious overtones. Later, because powerful interest groups rekindled their petty quarrels and reasserted shortsighted goals, and because its leaders lacked political acumen, the movement died almost as quickly as it arose.

It started at Parma during the Easter season. "Benedict the Horn," an illiterate, itinerant, free-lance friar, gathered people around him in the piazzas and churches by blowing his brass cornet. An amiable, shabby fellow, with a long beard and a makeshift religious habit, he started people singing vernacular songs in praise of the Trinity or the Blessed Virgin. Children followed him from place-to-place carrying tree branches and lighted candles in impromptu processions.[10]

The enthusiastic movement spread throughout Italy, effectively interrupting the war-making activity, at least for a while. A young boy at the time, Salimbene of Adam, a native of Parma and later a Franciscan friar, recalled the year in his often-droll chronicle:[11]

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[8]Rolandinus, *De Factis,* 204.

[9]Maurisius, *Historia de rebus gestis Eccelini,* 37.

[10]J. W. Walter, *Benedetto* (Benedictus de Cornetta, Benedictus Cornetus) in *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, VIII (Rome, 1966), 321. Also see *Chronicon Parmense,* 766.

[11]Fuit autem Alleluia quoddam tempus, quod sic in posterum dictum fuit, scilicet tempus quietis et pacis, quoad arma bellica omnino remota, iocunditatis et letitie, gaudii et exultationis, laudis et iubilationis. Et cantilenas cantabant et laudes divinas milites et pedites, cives et rurales, *iuvenes et virgines, senes cum iunioribus.* In omnibus civitatibus Ytalie ista devotio fuit ...Sic etiam veniebant de villis ad civitatem cum vexillis et societatibus magnis viri et mulieres, pueri et puelle, ut predicationes audirent et Deum laudarent; et cantabant *Dei voces et non hominis,* et ambulabant homines in salvatione, ita ut videretur propheticum illud impletum; *Reminiscentur et convertentur ad Dominum universi fines terre. Et adorabunt in conspectu eius universe familie gentiuum.* Et habebant ramos arborum et candelas accensas. Et fiebant predicationes vespere et mane meridie iuxta illud propheticum: *Vespere, mane et meridie narrabo et annuntiabo, et exaudiet vocem meam. Redimet in pace animam meam ab his qui apropinquant michi, quomniam inter multos erat mecum.* Et fiebant stationes in ecclesiis et in plateis, et levabant manus ad Deum ad ipsum laudandum et benedicendum in secula; et a divinis laudibus cessare non poterant, ita erant inebriati amore divino. Et beatus qui plus poterat bene facere et Deum laudare. Nulla ira in eis, nulla perturbatio, nulla

This was the time of the Alleluia, as it was later to be called, a time of happiness and joy, gladness and rejoicing, praise and jubilation, of quiet and peace, with all weapons laid aside. During this time, the people of the city and the country, "young men and maidens . . . the old with the younger" [Ps. 148:12], even the knights and soldiers sang songs and divine hymns. This spirit of devotion prevailed in all the cities of Italy. As I myself saw in my native city of Parma, for example every parish devised a banner to be borne in holy processions, on which was depicted the martyrdom of its own particular saint, as for instance, the flaying of St. Bartholomew on the banner of the parish where his church is situated—and likewise with all the others. Moreover, huge companies of men and women, boys and girls, came to the city from the surrounding villages with their own banners, so that they might be able to hear the preachers and give praise to God. And they sang, "voice of a god, and not of a man" [Acts 12:22], and they walked about as men saved, in fulfillment of the prophetic words: "All the ends of the earth shall remember, and shall be converted to the Lord: And all the kindreds of the Gentiles shall adore in his sight" [Ps. 21:28]. And all men carried about with them tree branches and lighted candles. Furthermore, there was preaching at evening, morning, and noon, according to the prophecy: "Evening and morning, and at noon, I will speak and declare: and He shall hear my voice. He shall redeem my soul in peace from them that draw near to me: for among many they were with me" [Ps. 54:18-19]. And the crowds of people made stops in the churches and in the squares, lifting up their hands to God in praise and blessing forever and ever; truly, they coud not cease from divine praise because they were so inebriated with divine love. And blessed was he who could do the most good works and could best praise God. There was no anger in them, no disturbance, no discord, no rancor. They did all things peacefully and benevolently, so that they might say with the prophet, [Isaiah 65:16]: "Because the former distresses are forgotten, and because they are hid from" our "eyes." And it is no wonder, for they drank from the sweet wine of the spirit of God, which having once been tasted, "everything of the flesh becomes insipid."[12]

Peacemaking.—Opposition to war was not unknown in the thirteenth century. Earlier of course, the Peace of God and the Truce of God movements attempted to manage the ferocity of war, but with mixed results. But now Francis of Assisi and his followers captured the popular imagination, proclaiming *pax et bonum* in the cities and the

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disceptatio, nullus rancor. Omnia pacifice et benigne fiebant ab eis, ita ut illud propheticum dicere possent Ys. LXV: *Quia oblivioni tradite sunt angustie priores, et quia abscondite sunt ab oculis nostris.* Nec mirum. Biberant enim de vino dulcedinis spiritus Dei, quo gustato desipit omnis caro. [Salimbene de Adam, *Cronica.* Edited by Oswaldus Holder-Egger. (Hannover: Lipsiae, 1905-1913, *MGH scriptores),* XXXII, 70. The Franciscan Salimbene, considers the Dominican John of Vincenza, the principal character in much of this paper, a charlatan and ignores much of his activity, including everything that took place at Paquara, surely one of John's most noteworthy accomplishments. Until recently the only English translation was the partially selective and wholly tendentious one of George G.Coulton. Joseph L. Baird, Giuseppe Baglivi and John Robert Kane have recently done another translation, too late to be consulted for this work. (Binghamton, NY: Medieval and Renaissance Texts and Studies, 1986)]. The translation of Baird et al. has been used above.

12 *The Chronicle of Salimbene de Adam,* Ed. and trans., Joseph L. Baird, Giuseppe Baglivi and John Robert Kane (Binghamton, NY: Medieval & Renaissance Texts & Studies, 1986) 47-48.

countryside. Franciscan friars were ideally suited to pursue peace throughout Europe, Africa and Asia. Perhaps naive, but always persevering, they undertook incredible journeys to promote concord among Christians and between Christians and Moslems. Christians resisted the arming of Christianity through opposition to the Crusades.[13] Many lay people, too, freely chose to live the lives of public penitents, a state recognized and protected by the church. Originally people guilty of serious, public sins had to withdraw from public life and live as penitents. Later, out of piety, others freely chose this way of life as a sign of total dedication to God. In a world in which the sword was not only a weapon but a symbol of being a free citizen it was no small thing to pledge never to carry weapons or to be exempt from the obligation of military service, the duty of all free men. Cities maintained lists with the names and occupations of all the penitents exempted from military service, so recognized was their status. In every region of Italy and beyond there was a thirst for doing things differently, including the resolution of conflicts.[14]

Several prominent ecclesiastical figures acted as mediators in settling disputes at this time, too. Appointed by Pope or Emperor, these clerics intervened to reconcile conflicting parties. Others, such as St. Anthony of Padua, preached reconciliation and peace as a matter of course in their ministry. With no brief beyond their own charismatic powers, these popular preachers often achieved remarkable success in eliminating feuds. Resigning quarrels to third parties:

> became a common phenomenon in a Europe where political and military power were widely diffused; where patterns of sovereignty were still uncertain; where the cost of war had become prohibitive; and where disputes were everywhere. The

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[13] Christopher Dawson, *Mission to Asia,* (New York, 1955). Christopher Dawson, *The Mongol Mission: Narratives and Letters of the Franciscan Missionaries in Mongolia and China in the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries* (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1955). John Moorman, A *History of the Franciscan Order* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968). Palmer A. Throop, *Criticism of the Crusade* (Amsterdam: Swets & Zeitlinger, 1940).

[14] Fredégand Callaey, O.F.M., *Le Tiers-Ordre de S. François d'Assise* (Paris: Librairie Saint-François, 1921), p. 21-3, Franco Andrea Dal Pino, *Tersz'ordine e gruppi laici dei Servi ieri e oggi* (Bivigliano, 1969). Franco Andrea Dal Pino, *Rinnouamento monastico-clericale e movimenti evangelici nei sec. X-XII* (Rome, 1973). Robert Davidsohn, *Storia di Firenze II. Guelfi e Ghibellini. Parte I. Lotte Sueve* (Florence, 1956), p. 179. Ida Magli, *Gli uomini della penitenza. Lineamenti antropologici del medioevo italiano,* (Bologna, 1967). Giles G. Meersseman, *Dossier de l'Ordre de la Pénitence au XIIIe siècle* (Fribourg: Editions Universitaires, 1961). Giles G. Meerssman, *Ordo Fraternitatis. Confraternite e Pietà dei laici nel medioevo,* 3 vols.(Rome, 1977). Guido Pampaloni, *"Il movimento penitenziale a Prato nella seconda metà del XIII secolo. Il Terz'Ordine Francescano,"* in *Archivio Storico Pratese* 52 (1976): 31-71.

> custom of resigning quarrels was a creative response in which the society called upon its highest ideals and married them to the actual situation.[15]

Brother John and the Year of the Great Devotion.—Another dimension to the peace movement of 1233, a political one and more penitential in character, led directly to the large peace gathering at Verona. It was largely the work of one man, Brother John of Vicenza, a Dominican friar.

John took the Dominican habit at Padua about 1218, in the same class as Albert the Great, according to one chronicler. Before the spring of 1233 we hear little about him, but by that year he was already a popular preacher and a public figure of some renown. In April the bishop of Bologna and the city council agreed to accept John as the arbiter of a bitter, longstanding dispute over jurisdiction. A few days later "the whole population of Faenza," a town thirty miles to the east, came to hear him and "followed him with banners, praising God."[16]

John came to a Bologna prostrated by a series of natural catastrophes and riven by civil strife. In 1230 the river had risen so high that people had to take refuge in the trees. Two years later a plague of locusts destroyed most of the crops. A serious hail storm devastated what was left. Prices soared. Wine became so expensive that people celebrated weddings with water. The population rioted, burning mills belonging to people suspected of hoarding grain.[17]

Bologna, like most Italian cities, divided itself into armed camps. Historians usually speak about Guelphs and Ghibellines, the former as partisans of the Pope and the latter as partisans of the Holy Roman Emperor. But, as in modern Italian politics, nothing is ever so simple. The rising middle class frequently quarreled with the resistant nobility they were trying to displace. Bishops, jealous of their powers, were often at odds with civic authorities. Powerful extended families, carved out their own domains, looking out only for their own interests; they would barricade themselves in almost impregnable towers when cold war turned hot.

> Then it was counted as glory for men to be armed and at ease on horseback. It was glory for rich nobles to own towers at that time, so much so that every Italian city seemed to be adorned with many towers.[18]

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[15] Rosco E. Balch, *"The Resigning of Quarrels: Conflict Resolution in the Thirteenth Century,"* in Melvio Small et al., *International War: an Anthology and Study Guide* (Homewood, IL, 1985).

[16] Karl Sutter, *Fra Giovanni*, 62.

[17] Ricobaldus Ferrariensis, *Pomerium Ravenmatis Ecclesiae ab anno circiter DCC usque ad annum MCCXCVII.* In Muratori, *RIS,* IX, 128.

[18] RIS, IX. 138.

To rein in these conflicts the Italian city-states instituted the office of *Podesta,* a position that included the functions of a mayor, a foreign minister and a military leader. The *Podesta* had to be from a different city, could serve for only one year and lived virtually as a prisoner, remaining isolated from competing interests. When open conflict developed, the *Podesta* would intervene and, frequently, exile the guiltier party. The exiles would then form coalitions with other exiles, seeking vengeance against their enemies at home and, often, against the *Podesta* who had exiled them and against his family. Every city had sizeable numbers of citizens in exile and hosted exiles from other cities. Just about every year the conditions were ripe for a new war.

John appeared preaching penance and peace, as Francis had done a generation earlier. He railed against usurers and the practice of imprisoning debtors. After one of his sermons the congregation stormed the home of Pasquale Landolfo, one of the more notorious usurers. They sacked his house and manhandled him. He was lucky to escape from town with his life.

Bologna's council handed over the city statutes to Brother John for revision. He quickly consolidated his position and gained new supporters from the grateful families when he freed debtors from prison, granted amnesty to exiles, and gave safe conduct to partisans who had been holed up in towers. He set stiff fines for anyone who had recourse to fighting in settling disputes. In short, his reforms produced euphoria and created a climate that encouraged peace.

Lest anyone think heaven had come to Bologna it should be pointed out that John was also responsible for a statute banning heretics. He railed against women's long hair and said women should all wear veils in public. He even forbade the practice of wearing garlands of roses, during one tirade from the pulpit. John excommunicated the flowers on that occasion!

John put in a very busy month of May at Bologna. For the fourteenth he ordered a procession "like the one in Parma." A considerably more dour figure than Benedict, however, he turned the event into a penitential procession. Two days later, while he was preaching, a glowing cross appeared on his forehead. For his friends this was a sign of God's favor; for others, a charlatan's trick. On the twenty-third he was one of the principal figures at the transfer of St. Dominic's body, with a view toward canonization. Then, on the thirty-first of May, he issued his decision regarding the dispute between the bishop and the magistrates. Exactly what the decision was is not recorded, but his revised decision of a few weeks later clearly finds for the city against

the bishop.[19]

John's success in Bologna was not entirely unique. At that same time throughout north central Italy, Dominican and Franciscan friars held similar authority in cities like Milan, Parma, Modena, Piacenza and Cremona. They reformed statutes, reconciled quarreling factions, freed debtors from prison and returned exiles. They could count on the will of a populace weary of war to support their calls for penance and peace. One commentator even refers to the phenomenon as a pacification campaign.[20] Because Dominican friars were so much involved in these political events as well as an extensive building campaign and the preparation for the canonization of St. Dominic, chroniclers called the collective phenomena *The Year of the Great Devotion.*

John's uniqueness consisted in being able to carry on such activities in several different places. Soon after he had rendered that decision between the bishop and the magistrates of Bologna, he left the city by night. His reputation preceded him to Padua. The Paduans came out to greet him with their *carroccio* ten miles outside the city. He triumphantly entered the city, preaching atop the *carroccio*. Brother Jordan Forzate, a local Benedictine monk and powerful political influence, did not take kindly to John's meddling in affairs Jordan considered his preserve.[21]

John stayed only a short time at Padua, but repeated his religious and civic programs there and at half-a-dozen other cities in the Marches of Treviso. It was always the same tactic: stimulate the desire for peace by means of religious enthusiasm, enlarge the base of support with grateful families by emptying the debtors' prisons and returning exiles. When he came to his native Vicenza, upon his own request the council declared him "Duke and Count" and granted him the power to arbitrate all disputes and replace the *Podesta.* Later he received similar authority in Verona, fifty miles to the west.

Even more than Bologna, this region between Padua and Verona had suffered from war. The powerful Da Romano family of Verona had recently become partisans of Emperor Frederick II, a fact which would change the whole complexion of Lombardy in the next several years. They had sycophants in each city and village and used every weapon at

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[19] Karl Sutter, *Fra Giovanni,* 66ff.

[20] André Vauchez, *Une campagne de pacification en Lombardie autour de 1233. L'Action politique des Ordres Mendicants d'après la réforme des statuts communaux et les accords de paix,* in *Mélanges d'archéologie et d'histoire* 78 (1966) 503-49.

[21] Maurisius, *Historia de rebus gestis Eccelini,* 37; Rolandinus, *De factis in Marchia Tarvisina,* 204.

their disposal to thwart the budding power of the anti-imperial League of Lombard cities. In those days the frontier with Germany was only a day's march to the north. If the Da Romano family ruled Verona all of these northern Italian cities would feel threatened, because Verona was the gateway to Germany and the Emperor's troops. To be sure, Frederick II had other interests, but all of Lombardy felt that such a free passage for him into their heartland meant a continuing menace to their very existence. As a result, Milan, Brescia, Mantua, Faenza and Bologna all massed troops in the vicinity of Verona that summer. War was imminent.

Ezzelino, head of the Da Romano family, was a shrewd politician. He openly accepted the peacemaking initiatives of Brother John and agreed to sue for peace. The people of Verona did not want war, and in fact by mid-July they were enthusiastically hailing John as "Duke and Rector of Verona." The enemy was assembling a powerful army outside the city. Ezzelino could wait. He would choose a more opportune moment for his business, when enthusiasm for Brother John's rule would wane. In the meantime his enemies, too, would be bound to refrain from making war.

John lost no time asserting his power. Verona would see what it meant to have a Dominican Duke and Rector. "It was there that he became a persecutor of heretics."[22] One of his first moves as leader of Verona was to oversee the trial of "sixty of the best men and women of Verona, whom he accused of perverse heresy."[23] He personally found them guilty. For three days beginning July twenty-first, the public pyres glowed. John the peacemaker had become John the persecutor. For him and many of his contemporaries war and heresy both meant deliberate rending of the social fabric, so he saw no contradiction between a call for peace and persecution of heretics.

Paquara.—In late July he returned to Padua where he sent emissaries to all of the places he had visited announcing the general meeting of peace to be held on the plains of the Adige near Verona on the twenty-eighth of August.[24] Not to settle local quarrels only, this assembly was to involve everyone regardless of class or territory. Clearly John was a force with which contend. No one else in the area could command such a response.

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[22] Maurisius, *Historia de rebus gestis Eccelini,* 38.

[23] Parisius de Cereta, *Chroniclon Vermense,* 626.

[24] Rolandinus, *De factis in Marchia Tarvisina,* 204; Gino Sandri, *Paquara e Bigonondone,* in *Atti dell'Accademia di Verona,* vol. 12, 1935, 101-118.

At this time, too, he ordered more than fifty prisoners of war brought before him from a dreadful jail at Conegliano, forty miles to the north. It would not do just to release them. They were told to show up at Padua in chains so that John could publicly set them free in a grandiose gesture of benevolence.[25]

The day of the great peace-gathering arrived. The Veronese set up two wooden bridges across the Adige river to accommodate the vast crowd, and they constructed a sixty-foot tower from which John would preach. Sutter, the German commentator, remarked that "anyone who has ever been present at the sermon of an Italian friar would probably agree that seeing him is equally as important as hearing him."[26]

John chose as his theme Christ's words "Peace I leave with you. My peace I give to you." He then outlined an ambitious plan for a lasting peace. He insisted that each side pardon the other, that exiles had to return home unmolested, that goods stolen during wars had to be returned and that all war debts were to be forgiven, that insults could not be redressed by vendetta but had to be adjudicated by John or one of his agents. To bond the peace all the more he announced the solemn betrothal of Ezzelino's ten-year-old niece with the ten-year-old son of one of his enemies, the Marchese Azzo d'Este. After some further provisions regarding jurisdiction and sovereignty the enemies embraced, shook hands and kissed. The following morning, the Duke and Rector of Verona had the principals before him to sign the documents, making this all official.

The Sequel to Paquara.—The ink was not even dry before grumbling started over the terms of the peace settlement. One city claimed that another had received the better of the deal. Even John admitted later that he had not taken everything into consideration and revised the terms, but at the expense of his credibility. Other people who had been present grumbled that their enemies had come armed and ready to inflict injury.[27]

Within a week of the solemn rally there was a disturbance at Vicenza which John had to resolve in person. People unhappy with John's decisions recalled the *Podesta* whom John had replaced. Banking on his own popularity, John returned to the city. The magic lasted briefly and he was victorious. But he was so busy burning decrees made in his absence and sentencing the rebels, that rebel supporters from outside

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[25] Rolandinus, *De Factis in Marchia Tarvisina,* 204.

[26] Karl Sutter, *Fra Giovanni,* 107-108.

[27] Rolandinus, *De factis in Marchia Tarvisina,* 204.

Vicenza took the city and imprisoned him.[28] He was released quickly but his whole program began to unravel. By late September the situation had deteriorated enough that even Pope Gregory IX sent him a letter of consolation.[29] By year's end John's peace plan was nothing more than a memory. "Nunc guerra gravior undique revivixit solito more."[Now a more serious battle was renewed in a customary way.][30]

It is bitterly ironic that the very plain of Paquara which had been the site of his peace rally in 1233 was the scene of a battle between Imperial and Lombard League forces the following summer. Again, ironically, when peace terms were finally arranged in 1235 they were almost identical to the ones outlined in 1233 by John, even to the proposed marriage.[31]

The Conclusion—The year 1233 was a year of grace and a year of hope. Even though the grace faded and the hope became tarnished, the memory remained alive, a memory that the way things are is not the only way they have to be. Constant warfare came to a halt, for a while at least, because religiously-motivated people made their will felt throughout all of society.

The events of 1233 demonstrated, as did the example of Saints Francis and Dominic and their followers, lay and religious, that religious fervor can have a powerful impact on all of society.

While previous religious and political movements set the stage for 1233, they do not explain the unfolding of the events recounted here. Unique religious events and people blended many previous movements in such a way that they had profound political effects. The joyful Brother Benedict at Parma, the penitential sermons and processions, and the steps leading to the canonization of Saint Dominic, all led to the political events that included the selection of friars to revise city statutes, to reconcile enemies and to establish peace among feuding parties. The religious leaders were able to fire the hearts of the people so that prospects for peace seemed real. But the high expectations, born of religious enthusiasm, died quickly because there was unequal political acumen to match the zealots' ardor. Some very impressive efforts at peacemaking in north-central Italy turned the phenomenon into a "pacification campaign." But because of Brother John's spectacu-

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[28] Antonius Godus Godus, *Chronica,* 80-81; Maurisius, *Historia de rebus gestis Eccelini,* 39.

[29] Antonius Brenond, O.P., ed., *Bullarium Ordinis Praedicatorum,* (Rome, 1729), 60-61.

[30] Maurisius, Historia de rebus gestis Eccelini, 39.

[31] Maurisius, *Historia de rebus gestis Eccelini,* 41.

lar failure to keep the peace of Paquara from falling apart, the lasting results were meager.

Might it have been different if Brother John had not fallen *in tantae postmodum temeritatis prorupit homo hic vesaniam* [in a little while this man fell upon an insanity of such temerity]? Or if he had been more modest or if expurgation of heresy had not been such an integral element of the year's events? Perhaps, but only if all parties had worked out an agreement to which they were fully committed and not one which was imposed and to which they subscribed only half-heartedly. The anonymous seventeenth-century author of the life of Count Richard of San Bonifazio assessed the events of 1233 in the light of the general malaise of his society:

> There were other agreements of this sort, but they were not peace accords. Sometimes by authority and respect, negotiators were able to persuade those who had become defenseless by bearing the brunt of evil deeds and injuries against each other, that they should quit fighting. Laying down arms usually lasted only until lost strength was restored, and they could regain their fighting spirit. Hence, since the root was not pulled up, it was easy that it resprouted immediately, at the earliest opportunity. This, in fact, was just what happened.[32]

As it was, geopolitical events—the controversy between the Hohenstaufen and the Papacy—and the absolute perversion of Ezzelino, which became apparent soon after 1233 would have put almost any solution out of reach. Politically, a long-lasting peace in this region would have been difficult with the personalities involved. The figures on the side of peace were no match for those whose interests were served by force.

In spite of the political failures, the Year of the Alleluia became part of the heritage of religious reformers for generations to come. For at least a century, chroniclers and other authors wrote of the Year of the Alleluia or the Year of the Great Devotion as a year when people lived in harmony, when people were truly favored. Historically they were not entirely accurate. But the Year did engender hope that there were other ways of doing things than the way they had been done before. To engender hope is no small accomplishment.

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[32] *Riciardi Comitis Sanctis Bonifacii Vita, magnam inter ipsum et Eccellinum gestarum partem complectans. Auctore ignotus,* in Muratori, *RIS* VII, 128-129.