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Letters relating to the Fifth Crusade, the Crusade of Frederick II and to the Crusader States during the Pontificates of Honorius III and Gregory IX

(1) Pope Honorius III writes to Conrad, *scholasticus* of Mainz concerning the urgent need to provide reinforcement for the Crusade currently in Egypt and informing him that Frederick II has taken the Cross (sent from the Lateran on 27th November 1220).

To Conrad, *scholasticus* of Mainz and our penitentiary.

Our venerable brother the Bishop of Albano, legate of the Apostolic See, ¹ as well as our beloved sons the entire army of the Christians remaining at Damietta in the service of Jesus Christ have informed us by envoys and letters that the Holy Land now stands in need of greater and prompter assistance than has ever been needed [before] since with many from those parts having returned home the Christian army is much weakened, so that, unless it is speedily reinforced with new warriors not only will they not dare to attack the land of the Saracens but they will indeed barely be able to defend themselves. Hence they also fear that they will be left in the hands of the enemy, which will be a long-lasting reproach to all the faithful of Christ and will lead to the permanent loss of the small portion of land overseas which is still held by the faithful of Christ. In response to this, so that you may rejoice with us and hear others rejoicing, you should know that our dearest son in Christ Frederick, the illustrious Emperor and King of Sicily, who has recently received from our hands, in all peace and tranquillity, on the Sunday which precedes the first Sunday in Advent, ² the imperial crown, has with every sign of devotion publicly fixed upon his shoulders the sign of the Cross, and has through the inward fervour of his mind corporally pledged on oath that he will with the help of God sail on the next passage in the coming month of August to assist the Holy Land. Our venerable brother the Bishop of Metz, the imperial chancellor, and our beloved sons the noblemen [Ludwig] Duke of Bavaria and the steward Werner of Boland, ³ as well as many other margraves, counts and

¹ Pelagius, a Spaniard who was a Cardinal deacon from c. 1206 and Cardinal bishop of Albano from 1213, the legate who accompanied the expedition to the east (d. 1230). For his career, see Werner Maleczek, *Papst und Kardinalkolleg von 1191 bis 1216* (Vienna 1984), pp. 141-6.

² 22nd November.

³ Leopold [VI] of Babenberg, Duke of Austria 1198-1230, whose daughter was to marry the emperor's son Henry in 1225, and who did indeed sail to Egypt in May 1221, and led the abortive advance from

barons of Germany and Apulia, more than forty [in all], and with them a numerous multitude of knights and infantry, having publicly received the sign of the Cross, have vowed that they will sail in the next passage in May for the assistance of the aforesaid land. Because of this it is necessary that those signed with the Cross and those to be signed (*crucesignati et crucesignandi*) hasten to make the crossing without any delay, so that setting out with united forces they are able, so we hope, with the help of the Lord to overthrow the enemies of the name of Christ.

Dated at the Lateran, on 27th November, in the fifth year of our pontificate.

[MGH *Epistolae Saeculi XIII e Registris Pontificum Romanorum Selectae*, ed. C. Rodenberg (3 vols., Berlin 1883-94), i.104-5 no. 146]

(2) Pope Honorius III writes to Frederick II concerning the defeat of the Fifth Crusade in Egypt, for which many people blame both the pope and the emperor, because of the latter's delay in coming to its assistance. He urges him to make recompense for this by devoting all his efforts to the Crusade, and to encourage this he is sending a legate to him (sent from the Lateran, 19th November 1221).

To Frederick, illustrious Emperor of the Romans, always Augustus, and King of Sicily.

We are forced to send to you a letter full of lamentation, since a sword sharp with grief has pierced our heart; and we are still suffering continuously from wound after wound. For the lamentable situation of the army of Christ has wounded us with intolerable grief, not only because the effort and expense which we have devoted without cease for the last five years has been completely wasted, or because of the losses in both person and property which the Christian people have suffered, but also through the harm done to the Christian name and the injury inflicted upon Jesus Christ himself, who has suffered blasphemy by reason of our sins.⁴ Behold, we now been wounded by a new source of grief, for all Christian people are complaining against us and blaming us for the destruction of the aforesaid army. It continues to be widely

Damietta that was defeated in late August of that year. Werner of Bolanden was an imperial knight (*ministerialis*), whose family had become extremely wealthy serving the Staufer.

⁴ The Christian army in Egypt had surrendered to the Sultan al-Kamil and agreed to evacuate Damietta on 29th August 1221, James M. Powell, *Anatomy of a Crusade, 1213-21* (Philadelphia 1986), p. 190.

charged that we have brought shame upon the whole Christian world because, as you are aware, we did not compel you to sail to the help of the Holy Land – your guilt is thus completely transferred onto us. This is not completely undeserved, since in fact while we were being very indulgent towards you we left the Christian army in a dangerous situation, something which we now bitterly regret. Let us recount our guilt from the beginning. You know that although you had already been signed with the Cross for many years,⁵ and we were kept in hope, awaiting your setting out, we granted you a delay at your request, to avoid the promotion of your majesty, which we very much wanted, being delayed by our other actions.⁶ Finally, at your insistent request, we granted you a [further] delay in this, on condition that we would excommunicate you and the other crusaders from Germany if you did not set off with them to the support of the Holy Land with the time limit that had been fixed for you and them. Every time you have requested us to extend that deadline, we have acceded to your wish, as we are well aware and which your prudence should not ignore. Furthermore, at your coronation you solemnly and publicly promised that you would set forth to assist the said army, something which both those on this side and on the other side of the sea know. Hence, in expectation of your assistance, which you had promised to the army in your letters, the agreement through which the city of Jerusalem would be restored to the religion of Christ was refused, and as a result of this the whole of Christianity has suffered turmoil and shame, something which is impossible to forget. Is it therefore surprising that the people of Christ are indeed complaining about both you and us, for it is believed and said that we gave you permission to remain [here]? Because of this, we are blamed for the disaster which has taken place, and Christians continue to attack the Roman Church with unheard of and wounding insults because of you. Certainly if you have thought about this in the proper spirit, you will realise that you have been in danger of grave sin, and nor should you rejoice in having done something for which you ought to be seen to make satisfaction to both God and men. Wake up, most serene prince, wake up, and devote all your strength and your whole heart to avenging the injury to Christ and to the Christian name! Think on those great benefits which God has granted to you, and

⁵ Frederick had taken the Cross on the day after his coronation as king of Germany at Aachen, on 25th July 1215, *Reineri Annales*, MGH SS xvi.673.

⁶ This clause is obscure, but seems to refer to Frederick's imperial coronation, which took place in November 1220, although the pope may also have had in mind the consolidation of Frederick's authority in Germany.

strive, insofar as it is possible for a human in this situation, to repay Him for all those things which he has granted to you. Assuredly, if you treat your obligation with respect, you will find nothing which binds you more closely to the Lord, since He will do more for you than anybody. If you think upon your chance to serve Him in this matter, you will find the opportunity greater [for you] than anyone else, for you have been furnished more generously than others with the resources necessary for this business. You are powerful on land and sea, and you rejoice more than others in riches, both in persons and in property, which are suitable for acting upon the injury done to Christ in this place. Furthermore, if it is glory that you seek, what can be held more glorious than by a Christian than a victory over the enemies of the Christian name? What can be more glorious than a victory which not only grants earthly glory but promises an eternal reward? Therefore hurry, assume a purpose worthy of your high rank, and show your devotion to God, whom to serve is truly to rule, knowing that if you decide to pursue this matter energetically, we shall devote our attention to promoting this and with the help of the Lord we shall give it our best efforts. And indeed we hope in the Lord that if you undertake this business with proper devotion, He will make this prosper in your hands more easily than one might expect, since even in this new project the outlook for our enemies is not favourable, for it is indeed the case that they are completely exhausted, and have suffered a vast loss of people and goods. Because of this, should they see a new war being waged upon them from our side, and you personally taking charge of the army sailing against them, they may at the least, unless we are much mistaken, easily be persuaded to make an agreement through which we may regain our holy places, and the Christian people who are now thrown into shameful confusion may once again rejoice in glory. We do not, however, wish you to shirk this enterprise; hence if you are roused neither by zeal for the Christian faith nor by our encouragement, and show yourself lukewarm in the aforesaid matter – may this not be the case – we shall not indulge you further. We shall not give you preference over our own salvation nor over the benefit to all the people of Christ – we shall rather solemnly pronounce you excommunicate, as one who has failed to fulfil his vow, and we shall have this publicly announced to your discredit all over the Christian world. Therefore, as a wise man and a catholic prince, listen carefully to what we are saying, and take care not to lead yourself into trouble in this business, from which you will not be able easily to extricate yourself. We are, therefore, sending to you our venerable brother Bishop Nicholas of Tusculum as

legate of the Apostolic See, a man who is notable both for his wisdom and for his religion, and who is, even among our other brothers, particularly dear to us through his good qualities.⁷ We know him through clear evidence to be devoted and faithful to you, and so we ask and urge your excellency to receive him with due devotion, as if indeed he was us, and pay attention to his wise advice and humble and gentle counsel, so that through your devotion in carrying out this work so that we may be able to continue to display, and properly increase, that sincere love with which we embrace your highness.

[MGH *Epistolae Saeculi XIII Selectae*, i.128-30 no. 183].

(3) Frederick II writes to Honorius III concerning preparations for his Crusade, but also explaining that he is currently detained in Sicily by the settlement of the Muslim rebellion and that Crusading recruitment elsewhere has not so far been successful (sent from Catania, 5th March 1224)

Frederick, by the favour of Divine clemency, Emperor of the Romans, always Augustus, and King of Sicily, to the most holy father, and his lord, Pope Honorius.

Since we acknowledge that all that we are and can be is divinely protected, by Him through whom kings reign and princes rule,⁸ and we are not ungrateful for the benefits that we have received, not knowing how we shall recompense the all-Highest for all that He has granted and given back to us, for we have not lacked benefits granted by Him from whom the plenitude of all good things comes. Thus in our overflowing gratitude we have given ourselves to the service of the Holy Cross, pledging our property, and the wealth and kingdoms that He has granted to us, to Him and to the aid of the Holy Land. On your urging, and following your paternal admonition and instruction, and also on the advice and request of your brothers the cardinals, both individually and as a body, we have sworn to take as our wife the daughter of the illustrious king of Jerusalem, the hereditary lady (*domina*) of that land, with the Holy Roman Church acting as bridesmaid, and with you standing as guardian, so that we may be seen to have taken on the business of the Holy Land, and

⁷ Nicholas of Chiaromonte was a Cistercian who had been appointed as Cardinal Bishop of Tusculum by Honorius in 1219. He died on 25th September 1227. A. Paravicini Bagliani, *Cardinali di Curia e Familliae' Cardinalizie dal 1227 al 1254* (Padua 1972), p. 11.

⁸ Cf. *Proverbs* 8: 15

that we may more easily be able to succeed in this. Through this, so we believe, the burden ought to be passed over along with the bond of marriage, so that the endeavour and the union are indissolubly linked together in the prosecution of this matter. We shall not fail to carry out the promises made in front of so many witnesses concerning the business of the Holy Land. We request as a necessary and suitable wedding gift from the Church and from your brothers your continuous and indefatigable assistance, and we confidently entreat you to act as our agent and principal assistant in these matters, for just as we are held to our promise, so the dignity of the Apostolic See asks and requires this from you.

For as God, the observer of hearts who sees into the minds and the interior of men, knows, we are devoting our single-minded attention to this business of the Holy Land; so let it be known to all that we have decided to have one hundred galleys prepared in the ports of our kingdom at our own expense, if this shall be needed. We have [also] ordered fifty *huissiers* to be newly built throughout our kingdom, each of which will carry forty knights and an equal number of war horses; and we have appointed two brothers of the house of the Teutons and other experienced men from our kingdom, through whose efforts we believe that these same *huissiers* can be completed next summer. Through these galleys and *huissiers* more things can be done in the time up to the agreed deadline, as will seem advantageous, and this is in addition to the ships and the vast number of other vessels which we shall be able to muster in quantity from both the kingdom and elsewhere.

Moreover, Brother Herman, Master of the Teutonic Order,⁹ has come into our presence, and has suggested and insistently urged that it seems to be your opinion, and very much in your and his interest, that we speak personally to the princes of the empire concerning this difficult business of the Holy Land, and that we should go in person to those regions. Although this was very much in accordance with our opinion, and we were intending to make immediate preparations to travel to those lands, there then came to Catania our marshal, whom we had appointed to take charge of our campaign against the Saracens of Sicily, bringing with him caids and lords of the Saracens from all the mountains of Sicily, who had been sent as envoys to our

⁹ Herman of Salza, Master of the Teutonic Knights 1210-39, who was one of Frederick's closest advisors.

presence on behalf of all of these men, and through them all the others explained that they were [now] prepared to obey our orders and to fulfil our wishes. As a result of this, we had discussions with the great men of our court as it would be best to do, and it seemed to everyone the wiser course of action in these circumstances for us not to leave Sicily, in case the Saracens take advantage of our departure or absence to retract their surrender, and it makes it easier for them to gather their crops. Once these crops have been harvested, it will be very difficult to make them submit. Hence we have sent the Master to the princes to explain our plans and intention to each of them individually, while we are busy with the task of securing the surrender of the Saracens while they are of a mind to do this. Because of this it seemed to us necessary to burden this same Master with this difficult business, enjoining him to go as our envoy to the princes, and entrusting him with letters to the duke of Austria, the landgrave of Thuringia ¹⁰ and to each of the rest of the princes, as well as to the king of Hungary and his magnates, promising them that if they would take passage to assist the Holy Land, we would generously furnish them with food, money and other necessities in our kingdom. We have despatched this same Master first to your presence, where he will explain to you everything in detail. Through him you will also be well aware that the illustrious king of Jerusalem has recently written to us telling us of his plan to return [there] from these parts, because he can do little here to advance the business of the Holy Land. For the preachers who are preaching the word of the Cross are held in such contempt by everyone, both because they are seen as inferior persons and because they have no authority nor power to grant indulgences, as is customary in these circumstances, hence nobody listens or pays attention to them. Rather this is ascribed and blamed on someone's negligence. Hence letters have come to us from great and powerful men from various parts of the world, and it seems to them that both we and the church have handled this important matter badly. ¹¹ For the magnates of the kings of France and England, as we understand from the communication of the aforesaid king, seem to have no wish to undertake the matter of the Cross, unless, as is appropriate, a lasting truce for a long period can be settled between these two kings, to enable them to go and to return in safety. There are indeed many of the most

¹⁰ Leopold [VI] of Babenberg, Duke of Austria 1198-1230, who had taken part in the Fifth Crusade [see note 1 above], and the emperor's cousin Ludwig IV, Landgrave of Thuringia 1217-27.

¹¹ Following the emendations to these sentences in the text of Huillard-Bréholles, *Historia*, ii(1).412, suggested, after study of the manuscript of *Reg. Vat. 12*, by Powell, *Anatomy of a Crusade 1213-1221*, pp. 203-4.

powerful men in England who could benefit from the service of Jesus Christ and who had once assumed the sign of the Cross, but they [now] pretend that they have been absolved by you from the service to the Cross, and so there are few or none throughout all those provinces through which the said king is alleged to have travelled who wish to prepare themselves for the service of the Cross. Therefore, led on by our zeal for this great matter, we have sent a letter to the aforesaid king to persuade him to remain longer in these parts. He would in addition be encouraged to remain there to promote the business of the Cross by an Apostolic letter. For his departure, and particularly if as he plans to sail to the lands overseas next summer, would cause great difficulty and inconvenience to the service of the Crucified one.¹² We have indeed commissioned him by our own letters patent diligently to persuade all those whom he can and who would be of value for the business of the Holy Land, promising passage to all those both already signed with the Cross and those who will be signed [in future] and that they will be generously provided in our kingdom with food and whatever else they need. For indeed, as the whole of the East acknowledges, we have an unshakeable determination to fulfil the promise of marriage that we have made, and properly to take up the burden of that land as we have received [it]; and so we have decided to send James, the venerable Bishop of Patti, our beloved subject and *familiaris*,¹³ by the next passage in March to Acre, to seek and hear the consent of the king's daughter, in the presence of your representatives, that she will in the future, with the help of God and in accordance with your instructions, be our consort and undertake the ceremony of marriage. It will be therefore for your holiness to send a sufficient number of suitable persons to Germany, Hungary and the neighbouring kingdoms, as well as into France, England and the other parts of the world, provided with authority there to offer remission and indulgence, which offers ought to be heard and respected and serve to advance the business of the Cross.¹⁴

¹² Here Frederick was being disingenuous, for as Guy Perry points out, it would have been much more difficult for Frederick to deprive him of this throne after his own marriage of John's daughter if John had been back in the Holy Land, and actually ruling the kingdom, Guy Perry, *John of Brienne, King of Jerusalem, Emperor of Constantinople, c. 1175-1237* (Oxford 2013), pp. 124-5.

¹³ James was Bishop of Patti c. 1220-5, and subsequently Archbishop of Capua 1227-42/3. He was nominated as archbishop in September 1225, while he was in the Holy Land, but his installation was delayed by the disputes between Frederick and the pope, Norbert Kamp, *Kirche und Monarchie im staufischen Königreich Sizilien* (4 vols., Munich 1973-82), i.121-8, iii.1083-5.

¹⁴ This indeed Honorius did, announcing the appointment of Crusade preachers, and of Cardinal-Bishop Conrad of Porto as legate, in letters to the German clergy and to the metropolitans of Germany in late March or April 1224, MGH *Ep. Saeculi XIII Selectae*, i.174-7 nos. 247-8.

[J.L.A. Huillard-Bréholles, *Historia Diplomatica Friderici II* (6 vols. in 12 parts, Paris 1852-61), ii(1).409-13]

(4) Gregory IX's encyclical letter to the bishops announcing the excommunication of Frederick II (10th October 1227)

Gregory, bishop, servant of the servants of God, to the bishops of Marsia, Valva, Chieti, Penne, Aprutium and the other bishops established in these lands.

The bark of Peter is afloat in the wide expanse of the sea, or rather it is exposed to the raging storms, which shake it with winds and waves together, so that its steersmen and oarsmen can barely manage to breathe amid the torrents of waves swamping them. For if when the sails filled with a favourable wind are carrying it to port, a sudden wind rushes against them, and stricken by this wind, whose 'breath kindleth coals', ¹⁵ the ship is snatched from the turbulent depths of the ocean and rises high in the sea. It plunges into the waves that surround it, but it is not submerged, since the Lord resides within it, and finally, roused by the cries of his disciples, he puts the storms to flight; he commands the wind and waves, and there is calm. ¹⁶

There are indeed four particular storms that rock this bark. Thus the treachery of the pagans tries wickedly to hold on to that special land consecrated by the blood of Christ. The rage of tyrants seizing temporal property destroys justice and tramples ecclesiastical liberty underfoot. The madness of heretics strives to rend the tunic of Christ and to overturn the foundation of the faith, while the cunning perversity of false brothers and sons shakes it from within and attacks its mother from the flank. And so, 'without were fightings, within were fears', ¹⁷ the sword kills from the outside and death similarly threatens from within the house, and it frequently happens that the Church of Christ is beset with a host of worries, for while it tries to raise its children it nourishes fire, serpents and little tyrants in its breast, who strive with blast, bite and flame to lay it all waste. Hence to destroy monsters of this sort, fight against the enemy ranks and to calm the raging tempests, the Apostolic See at this time raised a certain ward with great care, namely the Emperor Frederick, taking him on its lap as

¹⁵ *Job*, 41: 21.

¹⁶ Cf. *Mark*, 4: 37-9.

¹⁷ *II Corinthians*, 7:5.

though from his mother's womb, giving him milk from its breasts, carrying him on its shoulders, and frequently snatching him from the hands of those who sought his life. It took care to raise him at great labour and expense, until he could be brought to the fullness of manhood, and it raised him to the dignity of royal rank, and eventually to the height of the imperial throne, believing that he would be a rod for its defence and a staff for its old age.

However, after he had travelled to Germany to obtain rule over the empire, the prospects so it was believed were favourable, but in fact he threw darts at those who looked on from his mother. For voluntarily, and without advice, unknown to the Holy See, he attached the Cross to his shoulders, solemnly vowing that he would make the journey to assist the Holy Land. Then he pledged that he and the other Crusaders [*crucesignati*] would be excommunicated if they did not set off within a set time; but it happened that he sought and received absolution [from this], after having taken an oath to be obedient to the commands of the Church concerning this. The Apostolic See poured out its overflowing grace upon him, and so that he might set off the more speedily to the assistance of the Holy See, contrary to custom it summoned him to his coronation, although it was usual not to invite someone but rather for this to be requested through repeated requests and high-status envoys. And so he has succeeded in his own affairs the more fully and completely under the banner of the cross up to the present time.

At last, after he had received the imperial crown from our predecessor Pope Honorius of happy memory in the basilica of St. Peter, he once more took the Cross, from our own hands, we being then appointed to a lesser office, and renewed his vow in public. He influenced many others to receive the Cross in the hope of receiving his assistance, and he was given a clear deadline for making the voyage. Thereafter he had a meeting with the Roman Church at Veroli, and there he publicly swore that within a time set by the Roman Church he would set off, as was proper for an emperor.¹⁸ Then in another meeting, at Ferentino,¹⁹ he chose and fixed for himself a term of two years within which to make his journey, and he solemnly promised and

¹⁸ 12th April 1222.

¹⁹ March 1223, the results of which were announced by Pope Honorius in a circular letter to the rulers of Europe at the end of April of that year, MGH *Ep. Saeculi XIII Selectae*, pp. 152-5 no. 225.

took an oath to sail there, and that he would take a noble woman, the daughter of our dearest son in Christ the illustrious King John of Jerusalem, the heiress to this kingdom, as his wife, adding that through this he was binding himself in perpetuity to the service of the Holy Land, not as other pilgrims but like a Hospitaller or Templar. However, as the aforesaid deadline approached, he started to put forward all sorts of excuses, claiming that he was not ready for the voyage, and he offered great services to the Holy Land, with correspondingly great obligations, in order to gain for himself a further term of two years. The whole enterprise was borne upon the shoulders of this prince, the most important one after the Roman Church, and to avoid it collapsing, with great efforts wasted and energy expended to no purpose, the Apostolic See took the advice of many bishops and other trustworthy men, omitting nothing that might be relevant, and he sent our venerable brother Bishop Peter of Albano, and John, cardinal priest of St. Martin, of good memory, to confirm those things which the emperor had of his own free will promised for the service of the Cross. They met at S. Germano, along with many princes from Germany, and the emperor swore with his own hand that in two years time, in the next August sailing season [*passagium*] to take place, he would abandon all his excuses and delays, and set sail. He would support a thousand knights there at his own expense for the service of the Holy Land, and he would despatch a hundred thousand ounces of gold there in the next five sailing seasons, entrusting this money to reliable persons.²⁰ The aforesaid cardinals then, with the agreement of the emperor and in his presence, with the princes and people standing around, publicly pronounced a sentence of excommunication with the authority of the Apostolic See if he should fail to fulfil any of the aforesaid conditions. The emperor agreed to this. Furthermore, the emperor pledged himself to lead a hundred *chelandia* and fifty galleys,²¹ and to keep them beyond the sea for two years, and that within a set period he would subsidise the passage of two thousand [more] knights, having an oath sworn on his behalf that he would fulfil these pledges that we have described above, and willingly agreeing that both he himself and his kingdom would suffer the sentence if these conditions were not observed.

²⁰ The *uncia* was a nominal accounting sum, worth 30 *tari* in the currency of the kingdom of Sicily. The *tari* was the equivalent of an Islamic quarter-dinar coin.

²¹ *Chelandia* were large war galleys, sometimes with a double set of oars, 'galleys' (*galea*) were smaller and faster vessels.

How he fulfilled this, you may perceive. In response to his frequent demands many thousands of crusaders were forced by the threat of excommunication to hasten within the designated time period to the port of Brindisi, since the emperor had withdrawn his grace from almost all the [other] cities designated as ports. This same man was frequently warned by our predecessor, and by us, that he should diligently and faithfully prepare everything that he had promised to provide, but he paid no attention to all the promises that he had made, both to the Apostolic See and those that he had given in writing to the [other] crusaders for the provision of the passage, of food and [other] supplies, nor did he consider his own salvation. He delayed the Christian army for a long time in the summer heat in an insalubrious climate until many died, not only a great part of the common pilgrims, but not a few nobles and magnates, from pestilence, thirst, and from many other afflictions. Among those who passed away were that noble man, the Landgrave, and the Bishop of Augsburg.²² No small part of the army, laid low by illness, left and now scattered along the roads and hid itself in the forests, mountains, plains and caves. Those who were left could not obtain the emperor's permission to leave, while the galleys, *chelandia* and ships in the numbers required for the carriage of victuals, men and horses, which he had promised, were not there. However, on the feast of the Nativity of the Virgin,²³ when the time was fast approaching when ships would start to return from overseas, they set off to plough through the billows, risking the dangers for the sake of Jesus Christ, and thinking that the emperor would follow closely in their wake. He, however, was contemptuous of all his promises, and he broke the chains by which he was held bound, trod the fear of God underfoot, thinking nothing of ecclesiastical censure. He abandoned the Christian army, left the Holy Land open to the infidels, wasted the devotion of the Christian people, and went back home, to his own shame and that of the whole of Christendom, giving way to and allured by the customary pleasures of his kingdom, and making, so it is said, frivolous excuses of illness for the spinelessness of his heart.

Wait and see if there is grief like the grief of the Apostolic See, your mother, so cruelly and completely deceived in its son, in whom it had placed its trust and hope

²² Ludwig IV, Landgrave of Thuringia 1217-27, and Siegfried [III] of Rechenberg, Bishop of Augsburg 1208-27.

²³ 8th September.

in this matter, and on whom it had heaped up an abundance of benefits, while at the same time, lest he take the opportunity to prevent help going to the Holy Land, ignoring the exile of prelates, the plundering, imprisonment and innumerable injuries that he imposed upon churches, members of religious orders and clergy, and listening to the complaints of countless poor people and nobles from the patrimony of the Church crying out against him, which we believe have entered into the ears of the Lord Sabaoth. And although the Roman Church laments that the son who was raised with such diligence and raised up on high, should now have been shamefully vanquished without a fight and without being laid low by the enemy, overthrown so ignominiously and with such confusion and disgrace. It mourns no less the destruction of the Christian army, which has been defeated not by the swords or valour of the enemy, but has been wiped out by such a wretched disaster. It also laments that what is left of the warriors has been exposed to the perils of the sea and the storm-tossed waves without its leader, and is led by a commander or prince whom it does not know, and its journey will be of little use to the Holy Land, for we cannot provide, in accordance with our vow, the comfort of appropriate consolation and the assistance of timely reinforcement from those who are now suffering the raging storms of the sea and the anxiety of the [present] time. Furthermore, the Church [also] laments the loss of the Holy Land, which we were hoping would by now have been snatched from the hands of the pagans, as once, so it is claimed, the Christian army would have recovered it in exchange for Damietta, had it not been forbidden to do this, not once but several times, by imperial letters. Also, the army would not have been trapped by the pagans, had the help of the emperor's galleys then arrived, as had been promised on his behalf and which could have been provided, nor would Damietta have been lost, which, so it is claimed, was surrendered by his envoy, and under the banner of the imperial eagles it was that day cruelly betrayed by its own men, shamefully abandoned and wretchedly handed over by these men to the infidels. It is indeed forced to renewed sighs and once again bursts into floods of tears, when thinking of this loss of Damietta described above, for which there had been so much effort, such monetary expenditure, so many of the faithful had died, and on which so much time had been wasted; nor is there any one who gives it consolation from all its woes and wipes the tears from its cheeks. ...

... Therefore we beg you in the Lord, my brothers, and order you through this Apostolic letter, that you faithfully explain this to the clergy and people entrusted to you, and persuade these same persons to turn their minds to prepare to put these measures into effect, and you urge them with diligent exhortation to revenge this injury to Jesus Christ, so that when, after more extended persuasion, the Apostolic See will see them roused and find them ready and prepared. Meanwhile, lest, like dumb dogs unable to bark,²⁴ we seem to be influenced by men rather than God, not inflicting punishment on one who has caused so much damage to the people of God, we announce publicly, albeit unwillingly, that the Emperor Frederick, who has neither sailed within the deadline, nor send the agreed sum of money there in the agreed conveyances, nor did he lead there the thousand knights to be maintained for two years at his own expense for the reinforcement of the Holy Land, but rather in these three stipulations he was manifestly wanting, and has thus voluntarily incurred for himself the snare of excommunication, as has been described. We declare him to be excommunicated, and we instruct that he should be strictly shunned by everyone. We order you and the other prelates of the Church publically to proclaim that he has been excommunicated, and that even graver steps will be taken against him if he persists in his contumacy.

[MGH *Epistolae Saeculi XIII Selectae*, i.281-4, 284-5 no. 368].

(5) Frederick II addresses a circular letter to all Crusaders, explaining and justifying his delay to set off on Crusade, complaining about Gregory IX's behaviour towards him and about his excommunication, and announcing that he is preparing to set off in the forthcoming spring (written from Capua, 6th December 1227).

Frederick, Emperor of the Romans and always Augustus, to all Crusaders. We are struck by utter amazement because we are suffering all sorts of attacks and even abuse from one from whom we expected gratitude for many benefits. We speak reluctantly, but we cannot keep quiet those matters about which we have for too long kept silence: that the hopes, which have deceived many, have perhaps deceived us too. We appear to be approaching the end of time, in which charity is seen to grow cold, not only in its branches but in its roots. For not only does people rise against

²⁴ *Isaiah*, 56: 10.

people, not only does kingdom threaten kingdom, not only do pestilence and famine fill the hearts of the living with terror, but charity itself, by which heaven and earth are ruled, is threatened, not just in its streams but at its source. The Roman Empire, ordained by Divine providence as the defender of the Christian faith, has come under serious attack, not by the lowest of the low but by those whom it honours and whom it had considered as fathers. For if a man rose up against us as an enemy, if a persecutor of the Church, or an enemy of the faith, was stirring up the people subject to our empire in hatred against us, we would take up arms in defence, and draw the sword, power over which has been entrusted to us by God for the protection of the faith and the liberty of the Church, and we would begin to fight the good fight for the Lord with all our strength. But when that universal father, the Vicar of Christ and successor to St. Peter, in whom we had placed our trust, moves viciously and unworthily against our person, and appears totally devoted to stirring up hatred against us, who would not be disturbed, and [also] astonished that such fierce wars were being prepared against our innocent person? Nothing except pressing necessity would force us unwilling to resist [him], since we believe that one ought humbly to defer to the Blessed Peter, as the one to whom the Lord has granted the power of binding and loosing on earth,²⁵ because of our respect for the One who has granted that power. So let the world hear and understand that we have for some time been provoked and are being attacked by the letters and envoys of our mother the Church, who is behaving towards us, her son, like a stepmother, and these messages, so we understand, have been sent out against us to every land.

Indeed you have heard that the Empress Constance, our mother of sacred memory, showing praiseworthy concern for us as a son whom she loved, by her final wish entrusted that son by provident arrangement to the bosom of mother Church, that he might not be deprived of maternal assistance, but having lost the consolation of his mother who had recently been taken away from him, he might be compensated more effectively and with more healthful care, to the extent that he could as its ward be provided with assistance through its spiritual and temporal power. Although the holy and Apostolic See ought to have shown praiseworthy solicitude for his protection, the

²⁵ Cf. *Matthew*, 16:19.

ward, however, did not lack danger from the father,²⁶ and his kingdom suffered no little harm. Although we might seem to be telling at too great a length what is already known, our kingdom lay completely open to invaders, and like a ship in a storm without its oarsmen, so without the government of the guardian the inheritance of the ward lay powerless and was split into pieces, and was all but squandered by the gnawing of his enemies. Finally, the rightful interests of the ward were attacked by a nobleman who was a kinsman, although deeply hostile to our house, Otto of Saxony, who owed a great deal, although inappropriately, to the favour of the Apostolic See, in that he was raised to the height of the imperial throne, while it appeared that the position of the ward, reeling because of Otto's power, was about to suffer annihilation.²⁷ Because man sees matters one way, and God another, Divine mercy, though reproaching the intention of the man, with great sympathy permitted this said noble kinsman of ours, although as we have said he was an enemy, arranging everything through his pride, wickedly to plot, not only against us, his enemy, who had been entrusted to the Church, but even against our guardian by whom he had been crowned. After seizing through premeditated evil intention the greater part of our kingdom, which had already been ravaged by him, he viciously turned his aggression on the Apostolic See that had promoted him, inflicting many different persecutions upon it; so that with the bark of Peter wracked by storms, the situation was now even more truly perilous than previously, when the sailors contained therein could call out, 'Lord, save us for we perish'.²⁸ Since no one else was to be found who was willing to assume the offered dignity of the empire in defiance of us and our right, and who would take care of the bark, endangered as it was out of port, the princes summoned us, and to their election we owe the imperial crown. While the Lord was then sleeping in the stern, he was woken by the cries of his disciples, and that man was cast down by us, whom God had miraculously saved in a way that man cannot understand. By overthrowing the proud and exalting the humble, He rebuked, as it were, the wind, and not only saved his bark from the waves, but miraculously placed it in a safer and higher eminence.

²⁶ i.e. the pope, who was as a 'father' to his ward, the young king. Frederick was just short of his fourth birthday when his mother died, leaving Innocent III as his guardian.

²⁷ Frederick's second cousin, Otto IV (1177-1218), the leader of the Welf family, whom Innocent III crowned emperor in 1209, but subsequently excommunicated. Frederick defeated him in the contest for the German throne after 1212.

²⁸ *Matthew*, 14:30; *Mark*, 4:38; *Luke* 8:24; the imagery of this miracle is continued through the rest of the paragraph.

The Almighty knows that coming to Germany recklessly and without assistance we exposed our person to many dangers, and thanks to Divine help and also that of the princes of the empire, through our rule Divine power overthrew that proud man, above all so that the condition of the Church might be reformed, which with the dangers totally removed He foresaw [would come to pass] in our peace. Thinking devotedly on how we would give thanks to the Lord for the many benefits which he had conferred upon us, as soon as we received the royal crown of empire at Aachen, we humbly gave our person and resources to God with a pure and sincere heart, not as a sacrifice but as a pious bestowal, even though this was not an equal recompense to make to the one He had made to us. We persuaded many of the princes and a great crowd of nobles and magnates through our example, promises and gifts to receive the Cross, some of whom we assisted with financial subventions and who went at that time to the aid of the Holy Land. For we enthusiastically undertook this business out of our devoted wish and for zeal in the Divine service alone; and because we intended to journey in person with the rest of the crusaders at a more appropriate time, we requested with great urgency that a deadline be fixed, both for us and the others, under penalty of ecclesiastical censure. We would most willingly have fulfilled this, had not the wishes of the princes and evident necessity hindered what we desired, since the disturbances within the empire had not yet been fully put to rest. Taking advantage of this delay, our good intentions were then given an evil interpretation, although they deserved praise and approval. Once the empire was at peace, we came in response to the Apostolic summons and solemnly received the [imperial] diadem. While our summons was not made known to many people by the Apostolic See, but we made it known to the greatest and best men from the provinces of Italy, which are distinguished by their wealth and the valour of their men. After receiving the imperial crown, we once again reverently received the sign of the Cross from the hand of the reverend Pope Gregory, now the pope, but then bishop of Ostia, bringing nearer the vow of vows and the desire of desires. We then entered with high hopes our kingdom [*of Sicily*], where we found that its property and wealth were ruined through long conflicts, and its strongest citadels and impregnable fortresses had been seized by those who were in rebellion against us, both Christian and Saracen. It was thus necessary to render these once more subject to us; nevertheless, amid these labours and at a time when these disturbances had not yet been stilled, we

did not neglect to provide help for the Holy Land. We sent ahead our beloved princes the duke of Bavaria and the late bishop of Passau, along with many others, to help Damietta.²⁹ We urged through envoy after envoy, and letter after letter, begging and advising the whole Christian army to wait for our fleet and army [to arrive] and not to advance from Damietta, for we were going to arrive there in person very soon. But ignoring our requests and advice, and without the counsel of the more noble and wiser men, and without waiting for the assistance of our fleet, the people rashly set forth and fell into an unexpected lake, or rather a snare. Knowing nothing of this unlooked for event, we sent Anselm of Justingen, at that time the marshal, with a force of knights and a supply of foodstuffs, and in his wake we despatched our faithful subject Count Henry with forty galleys to reinforce that land on a fine and admirable scale.³⁰ He arrived at Damietta safely, but did not find the army there. Since he had received orders from us to contact and prepare the legate of the Apostolic See, who was then in command of the army until our happy arrival [for this], he hastened to the army up the river with his galleys, where he met the envoys of the legate, namely the Masters of the Knights of the Temple and the house of St. Mary of the Teutons,³¹ and the count of *Percy*,³² ordering him on behalf of the legate to retire. He retreated along with those who had come with him, in order to return the city to the Sultan to secure the release of the prisoners, and it was in this way that the city was lost. This did not occur because, as has been recently and untruthfully claimed, we had sent instructions by letter forbidding the exchange of Damietta. It is not to be credited that we who have laboured to free the Holy Land, with great care and at vast expense, would send orders to him [*the legate*] forbidding an exchange through which the end that we wanted, and for which we had been working, might have been achieved.

After we had heard the unfortunate rumours about the loss of Damietta, we sent envoys to the Apostolic See so that we might find appropriate solutions for this terrible setback, and we decided to meet with the reverend Pope Honorius of happy memory at Veroli to plan for a rearranged expedition [*passagium*]. But in the gathering at Veroli it was decided that unfortunately there were hindrances [to this]. A

²⁹ Ludwig of Wittelsbach, Duke of Bavaria 1183-1231, and Ulrich II, Bishop of Passau 1215-21.

³⁰ Count Henry of Malta, the Genoese admiral of Frederick's fleet.

³¹ Peter of Montaigu, Master of the Temple 1219-1230/2, and Herman of Salza, for whom see above note 9.

³² Unidentified: there may be a transcription error here.

period of two years had elapsed when the matter became urgent and we met with this same pope at Ferentino. In response to his encouragement and Apostolic admonishments with regard to those matters that he considered important, we inclined our majesty joyfully to take the lady heiress of the kingdom of Jerusalem as our wife. A deadline was established there for departure, while Bishop Conrad of Porto of pious memory was sent to Germany and other preachers to various kingdoms to convey Apostolic warnings and decisions.³³ Finally, after obtaining our promise, King John and the Master of the Order of the Teutons were able to induce a few people, albeit of low estate, who were appalled at the recent loss of Damietta, to undertake the Cross, while to avoid the business being delayed for any reason and to omit nothing that was relevant, we met at S. Germano with those venerable men Pelagius, Bishop of Albano, and Guala of pious memory, cardinal priest of S. Martino, and so that everyone be encouraged by our gifts and promises, the deadline for the expedition was postponed for two years.³⁴ We promised to make the crossing in person and to lead a thousand knights and to maintain them for two years at our expense in the service of the Holy Land, to send within the aforesaid term 100,000 ounces to the lands beyond the sea, in five instalments to be consigned to specified persons, furthermore to provide a hundred *chelandia* and fifty galleys, and to arrange the voyage for two thousand knights within the specified time. After these matters had been formally agreed, we sent the Master of the Order of the Teutons to hire troops, but gave him the power at his discretion to select valiant men and to promise them wages in accordance with their personal merits. Furthermore, with others about to make the passage, we made an agreement with the noble prince, our relative, the Landgrave of Thuringia, with regard to the March of Meissen, that he might assume the Cross and come with us.³⁵ We allowed him to hold by right of the empire this same march, worth more than 20,000 marks of silver a year, and we even added to this five thousand marks from our chamber, preferring to neglect our own interest rather than the service of the Cross. Following the example of this same landgrave,

³³ Conrad of Urach, a Cistercian, Cardinal bishop of Porto from 1219, who died on 2nd October 1227. Paravicini Bagliani, *Cardinali di Curia*, p. 12.

³⁴ Pelagius [see note 1]; Guala Bicchieri, from Vercelli, cardinal deacon from 1204, cardinal priest of S. Martino 1211-27, legate to England 1216-18, who had died shortly before in the summer of 1227 (he dictated his will on 29th May), Maleczek, *Papst und Kardinalkolleg von 1191 bis 1216*, pp. 166-9.

³⁵ The March of Meissen had long been ruled by the Wettin family, but Margrave Henry, whose father had died in February 1221, was only a small child (he came of age in 1230): Ludwig of Thuringia, his maternal uncle, was thus given the right of administration.

and from that of the duke of Limburg and other princes whom we persuaded to take the Cross through gifts and promises,³⁶ a great multitude took the sign, while seven hundred knights were hired by the Master at our expense.

We also instructed masters to be gathered from the various parts of our kingdom to build the *chelandia*, of whom eighty were eliminated either by death or illness through the unhealthiness of the air. As a result not all the vessels were completed, although the majority were built. At length, with departure becoming imminent, we had the *chelandia* and fifty galleys prepared and brought to the departure ports, which were not chosen by us but were those chosen through long usage, particularly Brindisi, the main departure point, was always the customary meeting place. We went in person to meet the Landgrave of Thuringia of distinguished memory and the other princes who were coming. On their arrival and while we were returning to the expedition, we were visited on the journey by grave illness from the Lord, which struck us down so fiercely that the doctors urged us to make a delay, but to ensure that our absence did not prevent the passage taking place, we ignored the persuasion of the doctors, and we did hesitate to ride in the summer heat towards Brindisi, where we had ordered the ships and *chelandia* to be assigned to the princes and other pilgrims, and for our seven hundred salaried knights, who were paid as was appropriate, each according to the scale of their equipment and the number of persons [in their following]. For eight days the ships were loaded with water and other provisions, with the wind favourable for sailing in safety. With the help of God, the time was now ready for the ships in which our chamber and household were received after the eighth day to set sail, within eleven days.³⁷ We had such a large fleet of ships that for lack of pilgrims many vessels remained in port. Through the corruption of the air that harmed the pilgrims, through which divine Providence, which cannot be foreseen by man, punished by secret judgement the various parts of the world and especially of our kingdom, nobody was more severely troubled and injured than were we. For we experienced in our own person what we lamented in others. Although our convalescence was not yet completed, along with our beloved relation the landgrave we boarded the galleys, to follow in the wake of those who had gone on before. But then we were both suddenly struck with such

³⁶ Henry IV, who had become duke of Limburg on the death of his father Walram in July 1226.

³⁷ Presumably within eleven days of loading having commenced.

illness that we fell into a much worse state than before, and after our arrival at Otranto the landgrave was sadly taken from our midst.³⁸ His death made us even more deeply upset and we suffered greatly. The princes and other distinguished persons from the eastern regions who were present had come to us to discuss the plan for our sailing. After seeing us and realising what state we were in, and the various problems with which we were surrounded, they did not think that they could advise us to travel. Since it would be a savage blow to lose us, when the life and safety of many people depended upon us, our own voyage was delayed so that we might resume our convalescence; but, the Lord permitting, it was not abandoned, for our enthusiasm for this enterprise will not be extinguished by any setback while there is life in our body. Furthermore, we entrusted the supervision of the entire Christian army to our beloved prince and blood relative the duke of Limburg for the time being, until we could safely make the crossing. We ordered that the fifty galleys that were laying ready in the port for our voyage be assigned to the venerable father the Patriarch of Jerusalem, the Master of the Teutonic Order and other magnates who were about to sail, of whom we wished no less than twenty to be taken on board for the journey. Being still determined to reinforce those whom we had sent on in advance and to aid the Holy Land, we ordered further preparations to be made on other ships and *chelandria*, intending to set sail with a larger force the next summer, round about the middle of the next May, when the time would be more appropriate and conditions more favourable for putting to sea.

We sent two of the judges of our *magna curia*, our faithful subjects, as envoys to explain all this in the presence of the pope. Although we hoped to be granted by the father of fathers the remedy of paternal consolation and the comfort and assistance of gentle compassion, the lord pope refused to receive or to hear these envoys of ours. Rather he would not allow anyone to examine or pass judgement on the request from our envoys, would not investigate the inevitable consequences of our illness, would not consider the payment of the aforesaid money nor think upon the knights who had already been sent at our expense. We had not done this without some anxiety of mind, but he denounced us with regard to these same three issues, and he was pleased to claim that these had not been fulfilled, although they had been, namely that we did not

³⁸ Ludwig IV died on 11th September 1227.

personally set sail, that we had not sent the 100,000 ounces, and that we had not despatched a thousand knights for the assistance of the Holy Land, to remain there for two years at our expense. When the pope summoned a provincial council of various prelates from all over Italy to discuss this matter, we responded by sending solemn envoys to the Apostolic See, namely the archbishops of Reggio and Bari, the duke of Spoleto and Count Henry, our *familiares* and faithful subjects, appointed as our representatives in this matter,³⁹ to explain in the presence of everybody how illness, which was manifest and of which traces still remained, had presented our journey in person; and how at the present time we are maintaining more than a thousand of our knights in the lands overseas at our own expense for the service of God. These comprise seven hundred knights from north of the Alps, recruited by the Master of the Teutonic Order and paid at our expense; two hundred and fifty knights from the *regno*, recompensed in the past year from the money of the Church, but whom we have maintained there for a second year with our own money. There were also more than a hundred knights, split between our own household and other knights from the kingdom, who had accomplished the sea passage at our expense, and furthermore there were the four hundred knights promised by the Lombards through the mediation of the Church. We have therefore arranged to be sent for this same service more than we were committed to by our promise, unless the Church itself conspires to delay and hold back those whom it ought rather to encourage to hasten.⁴⁰ We have also fulfilled the terms with regard to the 100,000 ounces. We sent first in three instalments 60,000 ounces. For the fourth deadline the Master of the Order of the Teutons, who is one of those appointed to guard that money, sought to be assigned our customs revenues at Brindisi for the payment of the fourth instalment of 20,000 ounces, and he received this and its revenues in lieu of payment. If indeed the lord pope has remembered, on the vigil of St. Martin,⁴¹ in the presence of his brothers and all the prelates, with our envoys also present, as we have heard from them, the said Master received absolution on our behalf [for this sum]. The remaining 20,000 ounces, which we retained to be carried with us when we sailed, we have sent on ahead with our chamber, and our

³⁹ Lando of Anagni, Archbishop of Reggio 1218-32, Marinus Filangieri, Archbishop of Bari 1226-51 (for whom Kamp, *Kirche und Monarchie*, ii.585-92, 926-30), Rainald of Urslingen, Duke of Spoleto and Count Henry of Malta.

⁴⁰ Here Frederick was correct in his suspicions: Honorius III had written to the Lombard cities on 5th January 1227, saying that if Frederick did not go in person to the east, they would not be bound to send the 400 knights they had promised, *Epistolae Saeculi XIII Selectae*, i.250-1 no. 331.

⁴¹ 10th November.

envoys and procurators were prepared fully to pledge their faith concerning this. These men ought to have received a hearing before the prelates discussed the matter. However, he postponed consideration of our business, and virtually denied them admission; for first of all each prelate was consulted individually, and then they were all warned, so it is said by means of a general recommendation expressed in writing, that they were not to disagree with the policy formulated in advance in any way whatsoever. Only then did the pope grant an audience to our envoys and procurators. There was thereafter no further discussion with the prelates, nor did he admit our envoys any further, nor accept their justifiable explanations and reasoned arguments. He closed the doorway of justice, which at the Apostolic See ought to be available to everyone and in every case, to these same envoys and procurators of ours, and repeated his denunciation just as he wanted [to do].

Furthermore, as soon as the people of Rieti, who are subjects of the Church, to which they were granted through our generosity, were informed that we had boarded the galleys at Brindisi, invaded the frontiers of our kingdom in warlike array. They did this through the instigation of men who, if they remembered the benefits [they had received] from the empire ought to have prevented the action, for without their permission the Rietini would not have attempted this. They sought to defeat our faithful subjects who were closely besieging a man who had recently been in rebellion against us.⁴² But through the action of the right hand of God they were defeated and put to flight by our men, and fell into the pit which they had dug.⁴³

We wish for all this to come to universal notice: this is a true account of the series of events that took place, and we proclaim before Heaven and earth that we are entirely guiltless, that each and everyone may understand fully the manifest injury [that we have suffered] and we [also] issue complaint about the injustice brought upon those who have provided so much service and expense, from whom we and the whole world hoped would come the longed-for assistance in the cause of the Cross. However great the accusation that burns from the wounded Church, we trust rather than fear the justice of God, since we have a pure conscience. As Scripture says of those who curse

⁴² It is probable that some words are missing at this point: the rebel was almost certainly Rainald of Bareto, who was besieged at Antrodoco in the Abruzzi by imperial forces led by Rainald of Urslingen, Duke of Spoleto.

⁴³ *Psalm*, 7: 15.

unjustly: 'a blessing on your curses'. We shall never desist from the service to Christ that we have begun, which derives not from the mouth but from action driven by genuine feeling, an imperial undertaking that we wish to continue until its desired conclusion, its author being He who is the beginning and the end, provided that even more serious dispute arises (may this not happen) that recalls us, unwilling and by force, from such a holy journey. For we hope that the Divine One has through his mercy delayed our journey for the greater good of the Holy Land and to bring it more help, since the princes and other prudent men who were previously consulted now see that if we had happened to make the crossing with the small force of men who did sail, the truces [in force] could not be breached, but it would have been necessary for us, who have obtained rank and power beyond that of other Christian princes, and whose reputation strikes terror into barbarians, to await the help of others, which would have been a matter of lasting shame to the empire and to the whole Christian name. We therefore request all of you, we earnestly advise and exhort you, that the general vow to undertake the business of Christ does not grow cold, but that the greater the urgency that threatens the more ardently it burns. In the meanwhile you should prepare yourselves, both those who have already taken the Cross and those whom we move with zeal for the voyage, to come in good time so that in the middle of the next month of May we may successfully make the crossing with a strong force and arm raised on high. Everybody should know for certain that we shall make generous provision for those who set sail, both in the passage and in other things. Moreover, it is our plan before our crossing to hold a conference in Ravenna around the middle of next Lent, both with many princes and with you, so that we may still all the worries in the hearts of our faithful subjects and also to still rancour and restore peace in Italy, pouring out our grace upon all. Thus we strongly advise you all and urge you to make sure that you are represented at this conference through men of diligence as your accredited envoys.

[Huillard-Breholles, *Historia Diplomatica Friderici II*, iii.37-48].

(6) Patriarch Gerold of Jerusalem writes to Gregory IX denouncing the peace treaty that Frederick II has made with the Sultan al-Kamil (26th March 1229).

To the most holy father in Christ and lord Gregory, by Divine providence supreme pontiff, G(erold), through Divine mercy humble and unworthy Patriarch of Jerusalem, [sends] greeting, with the greatest reverence and devotedly kissing his blessed feet. ⁴⁴ Holy Father, we have sent to inform your holiness about the state of affairs in the Holy Land at the present time, so that through a fuller understanding of what is going on, your blessedness may have wider information on particular issues. Your holiness should therefore know that the emperor travelled to Jaffa from Acre around the feast of St. Clement, ⁴⁵ and the Christian army followed him. Once he had arrived there and begun to fortify it, the pilgrims hastened to the surrounding villages to seek out foodstuffs. On hearing this, the sultan, who was nearby with his army, responded badly to the envoys of the emperor, who had previously gone to him from Acre. He said that during the peace negotiations he [*Frederick*] ought not to have come to Jaffa with the intention of constructing fortifications, nor should his villages be harmed, and because of this he sent back the aforementioned envoys with anger and confusion. The emperor [then] had all that the pilgrims had taken from the said villages restored to him, and promised to protect these villages with all [their people], thinking thus to please the sultan. At this time the sultan sent to him certain vile and contemptible equipment that outwardly seemed to be the apparatus of a turcopole and of a barber, saying that his land was full of such things. ⁴⁶ In response, the emperor sent his notary back to the sultan to begin the peace negotiations once again. He was badly received by the sultan, and immediately departed from him. On his return journey he was shamefully treated by the Saracens and despoiled of all his goods. Afterwards, this same notary was sent back again, not without grave scandal and extraordinary amazement among the pilgrims, [with the emperor] sending his own arms to the sultan, namely his cuirass, helmet and sword, and telling him, as we have heard from a reliable report, that he should do as he wished [with these things] from the emperor, since the latter would never bear arms against him again. To this the

⁴⁴ Gerold of Lausanne, Bishop of Valence and formerly Abbot of Cluny, had been appointed patriarch by Honorius III in 1225, Bernard Hamilton, *The Latin Church in the Crusader States. The Secular Church* (London 1980), p. 257.

⁴⁵ 23rd November [1228]; Frederick actually arrived at Jaffa on 15th November.

⁴⁶ Clearly what the patriarch was suggesting here is that the Sultan's gifts were contemptible. A turcopole was a light cavalryman, usually a mounted archer.

sultan made no reply, despising everything that was being done. Meanwhile, one of the sultan's counsellors [*familiars*], who pretended to love the emperor, said to the notary that, if this was pleasing to the sultan, [then] Count Thomas ⁴⁷ should return to [meet] him, and these two might once again negotiate some sort of peace and agreement. The oft-mentioned notary begged the sultan most forcefully that he give his assent to this proposal; and the latter finally granted the favour requested by the suppliant. So therefore the count returned to the sultan, and the peace negotiations that had been abandoned, to the shame of all Christendom, (as described above) were once again begun between him and the aforesaid counsellor, doubling the shame. While they were going on, our wretched pilgrims were being captured or killed indiscriminatingly, and, as we have learned on reliable authority, we lost more than five hundred of our men, while (so we know for a fact) from the time when the emperor entered Syria [up to then] the Saracens had only managed to capture or kill a handful of either his men or those of the Christian army. ⁴⁸ However, one particular man from the army who was captured was immediately set free, clad in fine garments and sent back by the sultan in an honourable manner; but the people from the emperor's side who were escorting him back were, while they were on the way, plundered by the Saracens of all their goods, and were barely able to escape with their lives. Thus those who were attacked by the enemies of the faith lacked the help of [their] prince; but if anybody offended them [*the Saracens*] for whatever reason, he was punished by him – hence fear of the sword constantly threatened our men, both from the enemy and from within [our own ranks]. Nor ought one to pass over in silence what was seen to be permitted, to the [even] greater shame of Christianity. The emperor asked the sultan to have the Christian army guarded by his Saracens, at the emperor's own expense. After the sultan had given instructions for this, and since the wolves were [now] turned into shepherds, many of our men fell under their influence. This is something which we mention with the utmost shame and embarrassment; but the sultan, hearing that the emperor was adopting the style of life of a Saracen, sent him singers (who are called 'dancing-girls') and jesters, people who are indeed not only notorious but ought not even to be mentioned among Christians. This same prince enjoyed with them all sorts of worldly pleasures, drinking and fancy clothing,

⁴⁷ Count Thomas of Acerra.

⁴⁸ Literally 'a penny number': 'the Christian army' is clearly the resident troops from the kingdom of Jerusalem itself, in contrast to those who accompanied the emperor's expedition.

and all in the Saracen manner. The army of Jesus Christ was horrified by such happenings; still, with the Lord's help those who saw these things with their own eyes will tell them to the ears of your holiness at [another] time and place. Thus he showed himself not merely generous to the Saracens but extravagant, as if he wished to buy a peace that he was unable to obtain through force or fear.

Indeed, long before the Nativity of the Lord he [*Frederick*] ordered the *biscottus* to be made ready and the galleys and all [the other] vessels to be prepared; as a result when the Saracens heard [of this], although previously they were not afraid of him, now they regarded him with greater contempt. Thereafter, on Septuagesima Sunday,⁴⁹ wishing to make public the peace treaty, which up until now had been secret, he summoned to him four of the greater men of Syria, and told them that he was now a poor man, that he could not prolong his stay there much longer, since he was now very short of money, so that he looked to them for advice the more easily [to achieve] his objective and desire. However, when he had finished his introductory speech about [his] poverty, he revealed to them that the sultan had offered the Holy City to him, keeping for himself the Temple of the Lord, which must be under the guard of the Saracens, so that Saracens who wished to come there on pilgrimage would be able to enter it freely [and] without payment, and that he could fortify the city. [The sultan had also offered] Bethlehem and two insignificant villages [*casalia*]⁵⁰ which are above the road between Bethlehem and Jerusalem; the villages on the direct road between Jerusalem and Jaffa; Nazareth and two middle-sized villages which are on the direct road between Nazareth and Acre; Toron,⁵¹ with some of its appurtenances, which was not to be fortified; Sidon with [its] plain and two middle-sized villages in that plain. And it was to be known that not one yard of land was to be restored to the Patriarch outside the city, nor to the house of the Lord's Sepulchre, nor to the Hospital of St. John, nor to the abbots of the Latins, Jehosophat, the *Templum Domini*, the Mount of Olives, nor of Mount Sion; so, to put it briefly, nothing was to be restored outside the city apart from those things that are named above; that however does not include the villages belonging to anyone from within the city, apart from the house of the Temple, to which some of those places between Jerusalem and

⁴⁹ 11th February 1229.

⁵⁰ A *casale* was an unfortified village.

⁵¹ The MS. says Tyre, but this was a scribal error, since Tyre had remained in Christian hands after 1187.

Jaffa belong. Indeed, the villages that are claimed to have been restored are few in number, nor are they reckoned to be of any great value.

The aforesaid nobles replied to this, that they would not dare to criticise him for the circumstance that he was so poor that he was unable to remain there any longer, provided that he was able to hold and fortify the city [of Jerusalem]. The Masters of the houses ⁵² were thereafter summoned and asked about this. They replied, along with the bishops from England, that they could not really say anything without our advice, saying that our counsel was the most useful and should be sought, both on account of the status of the patriarchate and because in particular we held the office of Christ's legate in these parts and for [that] business. To this the emperor responded that he neither had, nor needed, our advice about this matter. So therefore the emperor, in the presence of the sultan's envoys but with nobody from [this] land present, secretly swore that he would observe what was contained in a certain sealed document that had never been read or revealed to any pilgrim nor any [native] of that land, nor read out by this emperor to the barons or the masters, nor [been] made public by the sultan. And the sultan was happy with the oath of the prince alone, nor was any further safeguard required about this, since the emperor knew well that, if this security should happen to be required from somebody else, then it was customary that the one from whom it was required would wish for every clause to be carefully explained to him, before he swore. But since the emperor was acting badly, he refused the light of reason in everything. Then the emperor summoned his Teutonic [Knights], who sought nothing except that they might be able to visit the [Holy] Sepulchre. The emperor began to claim, and the Master of the Germans after him, how he was exalted through them, and how much the Lord honoured him in that business, not through his [own] merits but through their prayers. Even if everybody else criticised this, he reckoned that he was happy with their approval, asking them to rejoice in his honour, and they sang a chant as a sign of exaltation and joy. This one nation alone raised a chant and made light; everybody else thought what had been done was folly, since many now fully realised their trickery. After this had taken place, the Master of the Germans, Count Thomas and the lord of Sidon went to the Sultan of Babylon, in order to receive an oath from him concerning these agreements. After receiving this, the

⁵² That is, the Masters of the Military Monastic Orders.

lord of Sidon went to the Sultan of Damascus, so that he might similarly receive an oath from him. But this same sultan now realised that the Sultan of Babylon and his [other] uncle Seraphius [*al-Ashraf*] intended to disinherit him completely, and divide his land among themselves, and because of this he took himself to Damascus, mustered his men [there], and attempted to resist them stoutly. He was in no way ready to swear to this truce, saying that his uncle the Sultan of Babylon ought not to, nor could not rightfully, return land belonging to him to the Christians without his consent.

Amid all this, the Master of the Germans, to increase his influence,⁵³ sent to us, advising and requesting, that we come [to join] the army in person, to make a solemn entrance to the holy city with the pilgrims, that in future they should be guided by our advice in everything, and that the emperor was eagerly expecting our arrival. The master took great pains on this same matter, [sending messages?] to our friends and counsellors in the army, earnestly entreating that they persuade us to come ...⁵⁴ We advised all those who had received and read these letters to take note and consider the matter carefully, because the emperor intended to spread all sorts of lies,⁵⁵ and one would expect that the truces and agreements that he had dishonestly and maliciously concluded with the sultan would lack all real truth and permanence, nor could such wicked madness be hidden for long. For he was on the point of leaving this land, nor could the land that he claimed to have gained be kept through his effort; rather he thought himself to be without responsibility for any of this burden. After his departure he would leave [this] to us, whatever the situation, whether it be the acquisitions that he claimed to have made, or the continuance of the work at Jaffa. If subsequently some emergency forced us to leave Jerusalem or to abandon the work incomplete, then he would say: ‘I gained the Holy City, which the Patriarch and legate of the Roman Church has [now] lost; I began the fortification of Jaffa, and it has been lost by the same man’, and indeed it would not just be us who was blamed for this, but also the Church. Although, Holy Father, we were well aware of the evil intent of the emperor and the deceit and deception of the master on this issue, we let this pass for the moment and intentionally replied to what we had been told, writing back to the

⁵³ literally, ‘to make his voice greater’.

⁵⁴ Some words have been omitted here.

⁵⁵ Literally, ‘the borders of his falsity’.

master, asking that he send us a word-for-word copy of the truce and of every part of the agreement, so that we might give it the proper consideration that it deserved and could then more confidently and safely put it into effect. For it was not safe for us, rather it was utterly foolish, that we should trust ourselves to the hand of the sultan, without us being certain of the nature of the truce from him. On reading this, the master immediately sent the above-mentioned copy to us, via brother W[alter] of the Order of Preachers, our confessor.⁵⁶ We have retained this and diligently studied it, we have noticed among the other extraordinary things contained within it, which we have decided to send to your Holiness word-for-word, leaving to your blessed self to inspect and pass judgement upon the proven evildoing of this prince.

From the contents of the treaty document, since we sought [to have] nothing else, we therefore decided what policy to pursue from then on, and how we ought to proceed on this whole issue. What was apparent to us from the first was that the sultan had given the Holy City to the emperor and his representatives to hold and fortify, with no mention either of the Church or of [other] Christians. So, it was decided that we did not wish to take our station in that fortress, for after the emperor's departure, the sultan would be able to say; 'Leave, I have no agreement with you', while the Sultan of Damascus, with whom we had no truce, would be able seriously to harm us. Furthermore, the wording of the treaty said expressly that the Saracens would as before retain the Temple of the Lord in their hands, and that only their law would be proclaimed there in its usual way. Since the whole city would not be restored to the Christian faith, and especially since the Sultan of Damascus, on whom the said restitution was being imposed by force, had not sworn to (keep) the treaty, and thus it seemed likely to be of short duration, we took the advice of wise men and forbade the cleansing of, and the celebration of Divine service in, the holy places there, because on this issue the advice and consent of your Holiness would be required. And since we have seen that in all these matters the emperor has acted treacherously and with evil intent, we have refused permission for any pilgrim whatsoever to enter Jerusalem and to visit the Sepulchre, saying that decrees on this issue have been promulgated [both] by you and by your predecessors, and since from such an entry and the afore mentioned visit no little harm would follow, as well as danger to individuals, we did

⁵⁶ Cf. Matthew Paris, *Chronica Majora*, ed. H.R. Luard (7 vols., Rolls Series 1872-4), iii.177.

not believe that what had been done could be acceptable to you, nor that because of this you would revoke the prohibition above. And since the right to give absolution from this sentence did not pertain to us, we had it publicly announced to them through preachers that it would be necessary to obtain the blessing of this absolution from your Holiness.

But behold, on Holy Saturday,⁵⁷ when the *Oculi mei* was chanted, they all as one made entrance to the city with the prince, who at first light on that day of the Lord entered the Sepulchre, and clad in royal robes placed a crown on his head. After that, the Master of the Germans rose up and commenced a long and prolix sermon to the nobles and people, first in German and afterwards in French, and (so we have been told), not just exonerated but praised the prince, and saving his grace laid many accusations against the Church. At the end of his sermon, he asked the nobles to support the work for the fortification of the city. The emperor [then] had secular knights receive the offerings made to the Holy Sepulchre and to the other churches, to be used for the aforesaid work, even though the canons were unwilling and were ejected. After lunch he left the city. He had the venerable Bishops of Winchester and Exeter⁵⁸ summoned to him, along with the Master of the Hospital of St. John and the preceptor of the knights of the Temple – the Master of the Temple being absent – and on the advice of the Master of the Germans, and through that master, he first of all requested their assistance in constructing these fortifications. They replied that they wanted some time to discuss this issue. Secondly, on the master's advice, and [again] through this same master, he sought their opinion as to whether it would be to his advantage to carry out the said work. They replied that they would make their response to him on this matter tomorrow (Sunday) morning. But when morning came, he and his whole household left the city in haste, to everybody's astonishment, having decided to set off on the journey home. Hearing of this, those who were supposed to be making a response to his words that day, hastened after him. The brothers of the Temple responded as one that if he wanted to fortify the city, as he had promised, they would do their best to help him accomplish this, for the house of the Temple would receive commendation from both God and men for this meritorious work. He [then]

⁵⁷ 17th March 1229.

⁵⁸ Peter des Roches, Bishop of Winchester 1205-38, and William Brewer, Bishop of Exeter 1223-44, both of whom had taken part in Frederick's Crusade.

replied that he wanted to have fuller discussion about this issue on another occasion. And so he abandoned them, and without any ceremony in the city he set off in haste that same day for Jaffa, so fast that he found scarcely anyone who could follow him. Seeing this, the pilgrims, who thought that he was on their side, were troubled; hearing among other things the proclamation of the law of Mahomed solemnly and loudly repeated, they were doubly covered with confusion, as though by a cloak, and now that they realised his evil doing they all left the city and followed him to the port for his embarkation, because it was not to be hoped that any Christian should remain there. The emperor arrived in Acre in the middle of Lent, hurrying to embark in whichever way was possible. He tried to drag the Teutonic knights away with him, but he was unable to get his own way in this matter, since they feared a sentence of excommunication, and from this time on did not have great faith [in him]. Meanwhile some pilgrims were killed as they travelled to the Sepulchre; as a consequence it eventually seemed to those making the journey that there was no security from this sort of evildoing. What took place thereafter, we shall take care to inform your holiness faithfully and diligently as quickly as we can. We shall be sending this letter by several different messengers, so that at least one of these documents will arrive.

[MGH *Epistolae Saeculi XIII Selectae*, i.299-304 no. 384]

(7) Pope Gregory IX writes to Duke Leopold of Austria (and other prelates and rulers), denouncing Frederick II's treaty with al-Kamil (18th July 1229)

To the noble man, the Duke of Austria,⁵⁹

Among the other crimes by which the so-called emperor, Frederick, has harmed and betrayed the faith of the Christian name, you ought to take note of four in particular, to be deplored in a four-fold manner, that have been faithfully reported to us by the Patriarch of Jerusalem, the legate of the Apostolic See, and are clearly shown in the content of a treaty that has been concluded with the pagans. First, having taken the power of the sword from the altar of St. Peter, assigned to him by Christ through his vicar for the punishment of evildoers and the encouragement of the good,

⁵⁹ Leopold [VI] of Babenberg, Duke of Austria 1198-1230, for whom see above note 3.

through which he might strengthen the peace of Christ and defend the faith of the Church, he has most shamefully surrendered the arms of Christian knighthood to the Sultan of Babylon, the enemy of the faith and the adversary of Jesus Christ, announcing to him that he may do with this as he wishes, and asserting that he is unwilling to take up arms against him further – this from he who received the dignity of imperial rank that he might fight loyally as a warrior of the faith. From this it is clearly shown that he has freely renounced both his honour and the imperial dignity. Since he has abandoned the use of the sword against the enemies of the faith in a disgraceful agreement and with unheard-of presumption, he disqualifies himself from the exercise of power and rank and for this reason he renders himself [only] a private person, because he promised and swore that he would be charitable towards others; for someone who has abused the power that has been granted to him deserves to lose his privileged position. Secondly, and even more disgraceful and to be abhorred and greeted with astonishment, he has impudently and irreverently ejected that same [faith] from the Temple of God, in which Christ was given and where he established his first cathedral seat when he sat in the midst of the doctors, replying to them, and in His seat he has placed that lost man Mahomed, allowing his evil doctrine and law to be preached and proclaimed in the Temple of God. He has imposed silence on the herald teaching the truth, and entrusted guard on that temple and the keys of His enclosure to the Saracens. He has decreed that no Christian shall enter it, unless having first been questioned from the Temple mount he shall reveal his faith to a pagan. From this it is manifestly clear that it is left to the judgement of a Saracen whether a Christian ought to enter the Temple of God. The third thing is that he has exposed Antioch and the province of Antioch, and also Tripoli and those places near it, the castle called Crac, Chastelblanche and Margab, to occupation by the pagans, when he excepted those places from the coverage of the truces. Rather, if it should happen that they were to be invaded by the pagans, not only has he agreed that he should deny all help to them, but he has bound himself by a most wicked oath to prevent and hinder all those bringing help. As if it was not sufficient that with unheard of tyranny and treacherous decree to make the Temple of God subject to the power of the enemies of the faith and to be profaned by the impurities of the pagans or to have Christ shamefully cast out from his seat, he has also through this oath taken by him served the first seat of the Prince of the Apostles, His vicar, badly. He has exposed [it] to the enemies of the Christian faith, clearly showing that he [has been] unfaithful to

the head [of Christianity] and not just to one member [of it], and should be cast out of the whole body [of the faith]. Fourth, he has ranged himself against the whole Christian people and by open alliance with the pagans, whence therefore he has damnably pledged himself, that he shall be obliged on oath to wage war, at his own expense with his army, to the utmost of his power, against all those who wish in any way to obstruct what has been agreed in these negotiations between them. From this it is clear that if the Christian army wants to revenge the injury done to its Redeemer, and to drive the filthiness of the pagans from the Temple of God and the Holy Land, he will be obliged openly to oppose himself against the Christians.

Does not your zeal consider this to be unworthy, that Christ should with impunity be driven out from His seat and His kingdom, or will you, with eyes closed to the Christian religion, approve the action of a prince who is a Christian in name only, through which the Temple of God is granted to Mahomed? Let it not happened that you should be an accomplice or accessory of someone who is guilty of this treason! If someone by whose action or deceit a city or province is betrayed to the enemy is guilty of this crime, how much greater is he guilty of this same crime who has contrived wicked plots with the enemies of the faith of Christ against the king of Heaven and eternal ruler, so that his throne should be transferred to the enemy? If according to the laws of secular princes this crime is to be punished with such a severe and frightful penalty that revenge will be meted out not just to those responsible for this wickedness but also to the accomplice of the condemned, and one guilty of this crime shall be deprived not just of [his] *honor*⁶⁰ but his life, and his sons shall be condemned to perpetual infamy, so that they will thereafter be appointed to no *honor* nor [be allowed] any sacrament, so that death will be a comfort to them and life will be turned into a torment, by how much greater a penalty does he merit who offends our Lord, Jesus Christ the Son of God, by so many and so great acts of impiety, since it is far more serious to give offence to the eternal rather than earthly majesty? Hence, we ask your nobility, and advise you in the Lord, begging through the shedding of the blood of Christ, that you rise up to avenge the injury to God our Saviour in such a way that, when you shall be required by us, the Church your mother shall find you ready to expunge the infamy of the enemies of the Cross of Christ and

⁶⁰ *honor* = lordship or property, not 'honour' in our sense, although this is also implied by the sentence as a whole.

to wipe away the stain of such great infamy from the glorious name of Christ.⁶¹ We have recently received letters concerning these matters from the patriarch, the first on the Sunday after the feast of the Apostles, and the other on the Saturday following,⁶² in which, among other matters, we have read that after the said Frederick left the city of Jerusalem, he besieged the patriarch and the brothers of the Temple in Acre for five days, and launched a fierce attack on them and those who were with them, intending to plunder their house of all its goods. But since the Lord defeated his wicked attempt, he was unable to achieve what he intended, he has had the crossbows and other weapons that had been left there, both by our most beloved son in Christ King John of Jerusalem and by other pilgrims, and kept safe for a long time for the defence of that land, transported in secret to his ships. Some of these he has taken away with him, others he has sent to that enemy of the faith the sultan, while the galleys that should have been left there to guard the land have been destroyed. He has abandoned the city in secret and with great haste on the feast of the Apostles Philip and James [*1st May*], and thus leaving the land deprived of men and its forces, arms and defences, has exposed it to occupation by the enemies of the faith.

Dated at Perugia, on 18th July, in the third year of our pontificate.

Identical letters have been written to the Archbishop of Rouen and his suffragans, the Archbishop of Sens and his suffragans, the Archbishop of Rheims and his suffragans, the Archbishop of Bourges and his suffragans, the Archbishop of Bordeaux and his suffragans, the Archbishop of Tours and his suffragans, the Archbishop of Embrun and his suffragans.

[And] to the Archbishop of Compostella and his suffragans, the Archbishop of Toledo and his suffragans, and to the Archbishop of Narbonne and his suffragans, to the Archbishop of Canterbury and his suffragans, and to the Archbishop of York and his suffragans, to the Archbishop of Cologne and his suffragans, the Archbishop of Trier and his suffragans, the Archbishop of Bremen and his suffragans, the Archbishop of Mainz and his suffragans, the Archbishop of Magdeburg and his suffragans, the Archbishop of Salzburg and his suffragans, the Bishop of Speyer, the

⁶¹ Literally 'from the glory of the name of Christ'. Note also the word play: *exprobandum obprobrium*.

⁶² Thus on 1st July and 7th July 1229.

Bishop of Passau, the Bishop of Regensburg, to the Bishop of Modena and legate of the Apostolic See, to O[tto] [cardinal deacon] of S. Nicola in Carcere Tulliano, legate of the Apostolic See, ⁶³ the Archbishop of Cracow (*Colocensi* ?) and his suffragans, the Archbishop of Estergom (*Strigoniensi* ?) and his suffragans, the Bishop of Prague, the Patriarch of Aquileia and his suffragans, the Patriarch of Grado and his suffragans, the Archbishop and Podestà of Genoa, the rectors of Lombardy, the Marches and the Romagna, the people of Parma, Alessandria and Cremona, the Archbishop of Tarantaise and his suffragans, the Archbishop of Auch (*Aquensi* ?) and his suffragans, the Archbishop of Upsala and his suffragans, the Archbishop of Nidaros and his suffragans, G[offredo]. Cardinal priest of S. Marco, legate of the Apostolic See in Lombardy. ⁶⁴

To the Kings of Portugal, Leon, Castile, Navarre, Aragon, France, England, Scotland, Denmark, Hungary, King Bela, the King of Bohemia, King Coleman, Brother Guala, [and] to the Duke of Bavaria and Carinthia, the Duke of Austria, ⁶⁵ the Duchess of Austria, the Duke of Norway, the Doge of Venice, and to the Landgrave of [Thuringia?].

[MGH *Epistolae Saeculi XIII Selectae*, i.315-17 no. 397]

A peace agreement between Pope Gregory and the Emperor was eventually concluded after lengthy negotiations, and largely through the mediation of several German princes, at S. Germano in south Italy in July 1230. For the next few years he attempted to make peace between the contending groups in the Holy Land, and to protect those whom the emperor considered to have been disloyal to him from his sanctions.

⁶³ Ottone da Tonengo, created cardinal deacon in September 1227, formerly a cathedral canon of Ivrea in Piedmont, papal envoy to England in 1225, papal legate to Germany and Denmark 1229-31, and subsequently to the British Isles 1237-41. He was promoted to be Cardinal Bishop of Porto in 1245, and died at Lyons during the winter of 1250/1. Paravicini Bagliani, *Cardinali di Curia*, pp. 76-91.

⁶⁴ Goffredo Castigliano, from Milan, nephew of Pope Urban III, created Cardinal priest in September 1227, elected pope 25th October 1241 as Celestine IV, died after a pontificate of 17 days, Paravicini Bagliani, *Cardinali di Curia*, pp. 32-40.

⁶⁵ The scribe clearly forgot to whom the model for this letter was addressed.

(8) Pope Gregory IX instructs the Master of the Temple not to break the truce in the Holy Land (26th February 1231)

To the Master of the Knights of the Temple at Jerusalem. ⁶⁶

The wise man considers the situation along with his [own] concerns, so that neither of them harms himself, but rather that they mutually assist each other, for otherwise he will not escape from danger. This should be seen not just as a matter of prudence, but also as one of [good] fortune. ⁶⁷ Our dearest son in Christ Frederick, illustrious Emperor of the Romans, always Augustus and King of Sicily, has sent a serious complaint to us, that ignoring the various dangers that inevitably threaten the Holy Land from warfare, you strive against the peace agreement to violate the truce, and against the prohibition of his *bailli* to stir up conflict in the kingdom of Jerusalem [and] by taking away many knights, [while] some of the pilgrim knights whom he had brought there have been wretchedly made captive by [their] enemies. Hence it seems that the way is opened and made wider for the king of the Persians ⁶⁸ [to work] for the destruction of these regions. Therefore, even though you desire to fight against all the enemies of Christ, for which virtue you should be commended before God and men, since the situation at this time does not favour this, but rather forbids it, we strongly advise and urgently entreat you, sending categorical instructions to you by this Apostolic letter, that you do nothing at all through which any danger might threaten the Holy Land or those visiting it, since this might easily rebound to the confusion of the whole people of Christ. Furthermore, should you attempt [to do] anything in defiance of our order, we shall not be able to bear this patiently; thus we shall punish your offence with the appropriate penalty.

Dated at the Lateran, 26th February, in the fourth year of our pontificate.

[MGH *Epistolae Saeculi XIII Selectae*, i.345-6 no. 427]

⁶⁶ Probably Peter de Montaigu, Grand Master 1219-c.1231, rather than his successor Armand de Périgord (Grand Master c. 1231-45).

⁶⁷ In the sense of 'self-interest'.

⁶⁸ The Kwarizmian ruler Jalāl-ad-Dīn.

(9) Gregory IX, on the same day, urges Frederick II to return the confiscated property of the Military Orders (26th February 1231)

To Frederick, Emperor of the Romans and always Augustus, King of Sicily.

If indeed you truly desire, as you ought, that the business of the Holy Land be not disturbed, but rather advanced, it is necessary that you do not harass or attack the Hospitallers and the Templars, through whom that land has in the past been protected from many dangers. You should rather treat them with the grace of generosity, acting in such a manner that will [also] be in your own interests, so that you acquire incomparable merit for yourself before God, and a good name among men. Indeed, to refrain our being quiet about something for which we have been bitterly reproached, and [also] to avoid appearing to treat the property of these men, which were [declared] restored to them by us, as a trifling matter, we cannot now ignore the bitter complaint and accusation of these men, [who are] lamenting that they have recently been despoiled [of these] and other things, when they neither wish nor are able to turn down recourse to the law. What is not to be doubted is that if the Holy Land should be threatened by [the need for] heavy expenditure when they are labouring in poverty and lack resources, then as a result they will be unable to defend that land in the customary manner. We therefore ask your imperial highness that you should take heed of your own conscience, as well as for both your and our reputation, and we advise and encourage you in the Lord, that you choose rather to yield to pious mercy, to which the other virtues do not consider it unworthy to surrender, than to be known for harsh justice. You should have all that has been confiscated from the said Hospitallers and Templars restored to them, so that you avoid an offence towards God, and that we shall rightly be able to commend your gentleness, rather than you seeming to try our patience through all sorts of harassment. That we may also explain our view on this issue more fully to you, we have entrusted our words to the mouth of our beloved son the abbot of Casamari.⁶⁹ We wish that you pay heed to these [words] without delay.

Dated at the Lateran, 26th February, in the fourth year of our pontificate.

⁶⁹ A Cistercian abbey near Veroli in the south of the papal states, and very close to the border with the kingdom of Sicily.

[MGH *Epistolae Saeculi XIII Selectae*, i.346-7 no. 428]

(10) Gregory IX warns John of Ibelin to make peace with Frederick II (7th August 1234)

To the noble man John of Ibelin, [wishing him] the spirit of wiser counsel.

You will know that it has come to our ears that, influenced by evil influence, you have gravely offended our dearest son in Christ, Frederick, Emperor of the Romans [and] always Augustus, illustrious King of Jerusalem and Sicily. You have not deferred to his imperial majesty, nor have you been mindful of him, so that you might have avoided the problem of this sort of difficulty. Since therefore one should provide suitable medicine for this wound, we advise your nobility and earnestly entreat and counsel you in good faith, that when the matter is considered more carefully, you make satisfaction to him without being violently coerced, through suitable envoys whom you should not delay in sending to him; [and] you should offer satisfaction to him of your own accord for the harm and the injuries inflicted. For we shall take steps to provide with paternal solicitude for your safety and that of your people, and that you be restored to his [good] grace, as opportunity shall allow. Because if any doubt shall have perhaps restrained you [hitherto] from [heeding] our advice, [now] trusting in our instruction[s], you may at least, of your own free will, make satisfaction to the aforesaid emperor, as the Roman Church has told [you] should be done. Otherwise, since we cannot, nor also ought we not, to be lacking in [that] justice to him, for which we are indebted to others, we shall be forced to exercise against you the rigour of justice, in accordance with the office entrusted to us by God, and you will only have your own stubbornness to blame for the dangers that will then face you.

Dated at *Arronis* [Narni?], on the 7th August, in the eight year [of our pontificate].

[MGH *Epistolae Saeculi XIII Selectae*, i.480-1 no. 593]

(11) Pope Gregory IX to the barons of the Kingdom of Jerusalem and the citizens of Acre, ordering them to observe the peace (8th August 1234)

To the noble men, the barons of the kingdom of Jerusalem and the citizens of Acre.

We remain unceasingly anxious and worry without pause about the liberation of the Holy Land, as we contemplate its wretched state, thinking on suitable plans for its welfare. Thus, having recently consulted with our brothers the venerable patriarchs of Constantinople, Antioch and Jerusalem, with the bishops and many other prelates of churches found at the Apostolic See, and with the presence and agreement of our dearest son in Christ, Frederick, Emperor of the Romans [and] always Augustus, illustrious King of Jerusalem and Sicily, we have taken steps for widespread assistance to be brought to that sacred land from the Christian people everywhere. So it is particularly necessary for that enterprise that peace treaties and truces must be observed. For indeed that land lies in great danger as a consequence of strife, because on this account effort of this sort would be useless if that [place] does not have peace, and it might easily happen that the few remaining parts of it that are left would be lost: as a result this plan has been set forth. Inasmuch as we are unwilling, nor ought we, to suffer its annihilation, we have decided to send to your parts our venerable brother the Archbishop of Ravenna, as legate of the Apostolic See, whose qualities of discretion and trustworthiness encourage us to entrust to him with confidence [the task of] acting in our stead in these difficult negotiations. We advise and earnestly entreat all of you, begging [you] through the shedding of the blood of Jesus Christ and enjoining you in the remission of sins, that you observe absolutely the peace which formerly the aforesaid Patriarch of Antioch and [our] beloved son the Master of the House of the Teutons were at pains to make between the emperor on the one hand and you on the other, accepting it without [making] any difficulties – even though since letters [about this] did not arrive for us at an appropriate time, it was not [formally] confirmed by the Apostolic See.⁷⁰ Thus with the Lord being propitiated, there exists no obstacle to prevent the Church calling the Christian people to your assistance, as it intends. In addition, as we are unwilling that justice should be denied to the aforesaid

⁷⁰ Here Gregory's chancery let him down, since in fact he had confirmed this peace five months earlier, on 22nd March 1234, MGH *Epistolae Saeculi XIII Selectae*, i.471 no. 578.

emperor, whom we are obliged to sustain in his affairs in more abundant affection as a special son of the Church, we have by letter enjoined that archbishop whom you have received with due honour as a legate of the Roman Church, humbly receiving his advice and instructions, that in making peace he restore by our authority all those matters which pertain to the right of possession and property to that state in which they are understood to have been, before discord arose between the imperial marshal and yourselves.

Dated at Spoleto, 8th August, eighth year [of our pontificate].

[MGH *Epistolae Saeculi XIII Selectae*, i.481-2 no. 594]