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Waldensians and Franciscans a Comparative Study of Two Reform Movements in the Late Twelfth and Early Thirteenth Centuries

Stanley D. Pikaart
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WALDENSIANS AND FRANCISCANS
A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF TWO REFORM MOVEMENTS
IN THE LATE TWELFTH AND EARLY THIRTEENTH CENTURIES

by
Stanley D. Pikaart

A Thesis
Submitted to the
Faculty of the Graduate College
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of the
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Stanley D. Pikaart
PIKAART, Stanley David
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INTRODUCTION

Most general histories, in dealing with the reform movements of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, comment on the many similarities between the various reforms, and particularly between the Waldensian and the Franciscan reform movements. In spite of the obvious similarities between the two, however, there have been few detailed studies attempting to analyze the similarities and differences between the two groups. The only such attempt in English is the article of Bernard Marthaler, O.F.M. Conv., which appeared in *Franciscan Studies* in June of 1958. In this study Marthaler points out a few similarities and on the basis of them postulates his theory:

> If it were not for Peter Waldo there would have been no Franciscans. It is the poison which demands the antidote, and as history shows, it is the Reformation which brings forth the Counter-Reformation.

Marthaler's only concern is to prove this theory of cause and effect between the Waldensians and the Franciscans, and he

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1. Wallace K. Ferguson, for example, in *Europe in Transition* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1960), p. 61, remarks: "St. Francis was in thought and act not very different from Peter Waldo...who had sold his goods and given money to the poor and had gone forth to preach the Gospel." Also, Sidney Painter in *A History of the Middle Ages 284-1500* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1953), p. 316, states: "In fact, the origin and early development of the Franciscans are almost exactly parallel to those of the Waldensians."

does not make a complete or detailed comparison between the
two.

In this paper I shall try to objectively relate the
information available on the Waldensians during the life of
Peter Waldo and on the Franciscans during the life of Saint
Francis. I shall arrange this data under four headings com-
mon to both: the life of the founder, the development of
the organization, the concept and practice of the apostolic
life of each, and finally the attitude and relationship of
each toward the institutional Church. From this collection
of material, I shall in the last section of my paper attempt
to draw my conclusions. In my conclusion I shall compare
the two movements on the larger, more general issues, in­
stead of on the many small similarities which are often ob­
vious to one studying the two movements.

The greatest problem in making this comparison is a
bibliographical one. Valid data on the early history of the
Waldensians are very scarce. The Waldensians themselves
wrote almost nothing, and the orthodox writers are almost
always biased against them. The bibliographical material
on the early history of the Franciscans, however, is volum­
inous. There are literally thousands of biographies of
Francis and the Franciscans, along with a good supply of
source materials. Making a comparison forces me to exhaust
the material on Waldo and to gloss over some of the material
on Francis. In order to acquaint the reader with the various
sources referred to in the text, I have included a short bibliographical essay on both the Waldensians and the Franciscans.
CHAPTER I

THE WALDENSISANS

Because the Waldensians have never played a major role in historical writing, the sources concerning them consist primarily of scattered bits and pieces which are included in most general works on heresies. The main sources can be placed into two categories: Waldensian sources, that is, those written by Peter Waldo or his followers, and anti-Waldensian sources, which are writings by orthodox Christians and inquisitors who in most cases were fighting the Waldensian heresy. Both of these groups of sources are biased in their own way.

The Waldensian sources are scarce. The "Profession of Faith," perhaps written by, or at least seen and approved by Peter Waldo, is the oldest. It is very brief and more conciliatory than most Waldensians actually were. Actually, its form was taken from an older profession used by the Church centuries before Waldo.¹ The Latin text is in Gio-

vanni Gonnet, *Enchiridion fontium Valdensium*¹ and an English translation appears in Walter L. Wakefield and Austin P. Evans, *Heresies of the High Middle Ages.*²

The *Liber antiheresis*, written between 1190 and 1207, is by far the most valuable Waldensian document. It was written by a follower of Waldo, Durand of Huesca, who was present at a debate between some Waldensians and Cathari held at Narbonne in 1190. The book is his account of that debate. In it he attempts to logically show how all of the Waldensian beliefs were Scriptural and orthodox in comparison with the heretical beliefs of the Cathari. There are two manuscript copies of the book, one at Paris (M.S. 13446) and one at Madrid (M.S. 1114). Kurt-Victor Selge has edited the complete text, about 270 pages, in *Die ersten Waldenser II, Der Liber Antiheresis des Durandus von Osca.*³ There are no English translations.

Another brief but interesting Waldensian document is a report which was the product of a meeting held in Bergamo, in North Italy, in 1218 between the French and the Italian Waldensians, who apparently wanted to discuss some of the


differences between themselves. This document was first 
edited in 1877 by Wilhelm Preger, "Beiträge zur Geschichte 
der Waldesier im Mittelalter." An English translation is 
in Wakefield and Evans.  

There are a few other minor poems and a catechism of 
the Waldensians which are difficult to date but are probably 
from a later period than that with which this paper is con­
cerned. They were edited by the Waldensian historian, 
Emilio Comba in History of the Waldenses of Italy, From Their 
Origins to the Reformation.  

There were many polemicists and inquisitors who 
undertook to defend orthodoxy from the threat of the Walden­
sian heretics. David of Augsburg wrote his De inquisitione 
haereticorum in the late twelfth or early thirteenth century 
mainly against the Waldensian heresy. Writing about a half 
century later was the inquisitor Stephen of Bourbon, who 
claimed to have first-hand information about the Walden-

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2Wakefield and Evans, p. 279. 


sians. In his *Tractatus de diversis materiis praedicabilis* Stephen recounts the history of the Waldensians as he knows it, and he also gives his observations on their doctrines.¹ Geoffroy d'Auxerre, secretary and biographer of Bernard of Clairvaux, writes of his encounter with the Waldensians at the synod held in Lyons in 1178 or 1179. His *Super Apocalypsim* is a lengthy polemic denouncing the Waldensians.² The witty English writer, Walter Map, who held the post of chancellor of the bishop of Lincoln, wrote his *De nugis curialium* between 1182 and 1192 and included some observations on the Waldensians who appeared at the Third Lateran Council.³ Alan of Lille, philosopher, theologian, and professor at Montpellier, was a contemporary of Peter Waldo and wrote his *De fide catholica* before 1202.⁴ The academic treatise is written


against Waldensians, Jews, and pagans. The inquisitor Moneta of Cremona, a Dominican friar who probably wrote around 1241-1244, was concerned mainly with the Cathari, but he does include in the last section of his summa a section on the Waldensians. His work *Monetae Cremonensis adversus Catharos et Valdenses libri quinque* is lengthy and was intended for use by his fellow inquisitors.\(^1\) Salvo Burci was a noble layman of Piacenza who wrote a polemic in 1235 entitled *Supra stella* attacking both the Cathari and the Waldensians.\(^2\) Another glimpse of the Italian Waldensians is from Peter of Verona's *Summa contra haereticos* written at about the same time. Peter was a Dominican prior at several convents and later was appointed inquisitor.\(^3\) Bernard of Fontcaude, Premonstratensian abbot, recorded the defense of the Church against the Waldensians in the 1190 debate at Narbonne. His *Adversus Waldensium sectam liber* especially centers on the problem of the Waldensians.

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densians as preachers.¹

Other basic sources on the Waldensians are the re­
cords of the Third Lateran Council of 1179, the Council of
Verona of 1184, and the Fourth Lateran Council of 1215.
All are contained in the J. D. Mansi collection, Sacrorum
Conciliorum, XXII.²

Wakefield and Evans' book, Heresies of the High Mid­
dle Ages, is essential and is really the only complete Eng­
lish collection of Waldensian sources, although there are
two other excellent collections generally available: Gio­
vanni Gonnet, Enchiridion fontium Valdensium, and Ignatz
von Döllinger, Beiträge zur Saktengeschichte des Mittelal­
ters, Volume I, entitled Valdesier und Katharer and Volume
II entitled Documente vornehmlich zur Geschichte der Valdes­
ier und Katharer. Both of these works provide the Latin
text of many of the sources.

There are three modern scholars whose works are
essential to anyone studying the Waldensians: Giovanni
Gonnet of Rome, Christine Thourzellier of Paris, and Kurt­
Victor Selge of Heidelberg. Gonnet's Enchiridion I have

¹Bernardi abbatis Fontis Callidi, ordinis praemon­
stratensis, Adversus Waldensium sectam liber in Migne, Pat­
rologia Latina, CCIV, cols. 793-840. Partial trans. in Gon­
ett, Enchiridion fontium Valdensium, pp. 65-95.

²Joannes Dominicus Mansi, Sacrorum conciliorum nova
et amplissima collectio (Padova: Studio di Padova, 1767,
republied Austria: Akademische Druck- u. Verlagsanstalt,
just mentioned, and his article "Waldensia," *Revue d'histoire et de philosophie religieuses*, is also essential.¹ Christine Thourzellier has published four critical studies on the Waldensians and the Cathari. Her book, *Catharisme et Valdésisme en languedoc à la fin du XIIᵉ et au début du XIIIᵉ siècle*, is very thorough.² Kurt-Victor Selge, *Die ersten Waldenser*, Vol. I, is the only general history of the early Waldensian movement of recent date.³ Emilio Comba has written the only other general history, *History of the Waldenses of Italy, From their Origins to the Reformation*.

Comba's work is the only general history available in English, but is very biased as he is a Waldensian and he lacks the benefit of research done in the last eighty years.

As a result of a conference on the Waldensians and the Poor Catholics held in France in 1966, an excellent collection of studies by major scholars dealing with the early Waldensians was edited by E. Privat, *Vaudois languedociens et Pauvres Catholiques*.⁴

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The only complete bibliography on the Waldensians is that edited by G. Gonnet and A. Hugon, *Bibliografia Valdese*. Other than that, Christine Thourzellier in *Catharisme et Valdéisme* has a bibliography, but that is only an alphabetical listing.

I have tried to limit this bibliographical exploration to important authors and works. The reader must not forget that to an unusual extent all basic sources tend to be very biased either for or against the Waldensians.

**THE LIFE OF PETER WALDO**

It is generally believed that the Waldensians were founded by Peter Waldo around 1179 in Lyons, France. There were legends which circulated in the various Waldensian sects in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries which claimed a much more ancient ancestry; however, these legends are not accepted as true by modern historians.

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2. Peter Waldo has become the usual English form. Actually, in documents there are many variants. Waldes is the most common; others are Valdesius, Waldesius, Waldes, and Gualdesius. Peter does not appear until the second half of the fourteenth century, according to Gonnet, "Waldensia," pp. 243-48. Gonnet believes that Peter was added in order to link the Waldensians with the apostolic church.

3. Emilio Comba relates a legend which tells how the Emperor Constantine had leprosy and was cured while being baptized by the bishop Sylvester. Constantine offered the crown of the empire to the bishop, who accepted it, marking the point at which the church became temporal instead of spiritual. With Sylvester, however, was a companion who refused
There are various accounts of Peter Waldo's conversion, each of which is difficult to either prove or disprove. An anonymous writer of Laon relates this story, which he says took place "in the course of the year of our Lord's incarnation, 1174": Waldo, a merchant, who "had amassed a great fortune through the wicked practice of lending at interest" was particularly attracted to a song sung by a minstrel about the blessed St. Alexius. According to the song, Alexius gave up all that he had, lived in poverty, and was honored by God. So impressed was Waldo that he had the minstrel spend the night with him and the next day "hastened to the school of theology to seek counsel for his soul's welfare." The answer he received was, "If thou wouldst be perfect, sell all that thou hast and give to the poor." This Waldo did, giving his land to his wife, putting his two daughters in a convent and giving all of his money to the temporal power, and thus it is from him that the true apostolic church must be traced. The legend came from the inquisitor David of Augsburg, Tractatus, ed. W. Preger, Beiträge zur Sektengeschichte, as quoted in Emilio Comba, p. 7.

1According to the story, Alexius was a son of wealthy parents who left home and his wife in order to live an ascetic life in Syria. After many years he returned and begged shelter in his former home. Only on his deathbed was he recognized. An English translation of the poem appears in Ellen Scott Davison, Forerunners of St. Francis and Other Studies, ed. Gertrude R. B. Richards (New York: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1927), 239-43.

2Mark 10:21.

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Another anonymous writer, who was probably an inquisitor in 1250, referred to Waldo as a "chief citizen" who, while in a gathering with others of his social rank, was awe-struck when one of the group fell dead. Waldo was terrified and immediately went out and gave a great deal of his money to the poor, who as a result flocked to him. These people he taught to "maintain a voluntary poverty and to be imitators of Christ." ²

Still another source, and probably the most valid of the three, is that of the inquisitor Stephen of Bourbon, who compiled a treatise between 1249 and 1261. He wrote what he claimed to have heard first-hand from a priest named Bernard Ydros, "who was employed by Waldo to write in the vernacular the first books possessed by those people, while a certain grammarian, Stephen of Anse by name—whom I often encountered—translated and dictated them to him." After this task was accomplished, Waldo "pored over the text and memorized them" and resolved to devote himself to evangelical perfection. He sold his goods, gave the money to the poor,

¹Chronico universali anonymi Laudunensis, ed. by George Waitz, Monumenta Germaniae Historica, Scriptores (New York: Kraus, 1963), XXVI, 447. Hereafter cited as MGH, SS. English translation of the conversion of Waldo is in Wakefield and Evans, 200-201.

²W. Preger, Beiträge, XIII. An English translation of this event appears in Henry Charles Lea, History of Sacerdotal Celibacy (London: Watts, 1932), 466.
"usurped" the office of apostle, and began preaching in the streets. Stephen concluded that "this sect began in the year of our Lord 1170, in the episcopacy of John, called 'of fair hands' archbishop of Lyons."\(^1\)

In spite of the differences of opinion regarding his conversion, two facts are quite certain. The sect was started by Peter Waldo either in 1170 or in 1173 in the city of Lyons. Regardless of the cause which prompted him, Peter did give up his goods, which seem to have been quite abundant, to the poor, after which he went out begging and preaching in the streets, thus following the command of Christ, "Sell all that thou hast and give to the poor."

Besides the three accounts of his conversion, there are only two other references to the actual person of Peter Waldo by his contemporaries. In 1178 or 1179 there was held in Lyons a diocesan synod under Archbishop Guichard at which Waldo appeared and was ordered not to preach. Geoffry of Auxerre, a Cistercian abbot, who sat at the synod, wrote: "Called to the Council of Lyons, Waldo abdicated in this manner the sect first founded in his place of birth."\(^2\) Geoffry thus indicates that Waldo was physically present at the synod.

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\(^1\)Stephani de Bourbon, *Tractatus*, as translated in Wakefield and Evans, 208-210.

The other reference to Peter Waldo concerns the Third Lateran Council held in Rome in 1179. The English writer Walter Map, who was the representative of Henry II to the Council, wrote of an encounter with a group of Waldensians, and he stated, "I saw simple and illiterate men called Waldenses, after their leader, Waldes, who was a citizen of Lyons on the Rhone."\(^1\) By mentioning only the followers and not Waldo specifically, he seemed to imply that Waldo was not there in person, while, on the other hand, the anonymous writer of Laon stated that at the Third Lateran Council "the pope embraced Waldes."\(^2\) Thus it is not known whether Waldo was actually at the Third Lateran Council in person.\(^3\)

The only clue concerning the date of Waldo's death is contained in a report on a meeting of two Waldensian groups held at Bergamo in North Italy in May of 1218. The meeting was one in which the French Waldensians, called "Poor of Lyons" sent representatives to meet with the Italian Waldensians, called "Poor Lombards" to iron out some disagreements. A report was sent out to all Waldensians soon after the meeting. From this report it can be assumed that Waldo died before the conference. The report read:

\(^1\)Walter Map, *De nugis curialum*, p. 65.

\(^2\)Chronicon universali anonymi Laudunensis, MGH, SS, XXVI, 449.

\(^3\)Walter Mohr in an article, "Waldes und das frühe Waldensertum" *Zeitschrift für Religions und Geistesgeschichte*, IX (1957), 337-63, presents a good case that he was not there.
Another of their the French group's questions was presented in regard to Waldes and Vinctus now deceased....They the French group among other things made the bold assertion: "We hold that Waldes is in paradise."

And there follows in the report an argument that Waldo was not without sin and therefore did not go straight to heaven. The point, however, is that Waldo must have died before 1218, the date at which the argument took place.2

DEVELOPMENT OF THE ORDER

Waldo immediately attracted followers to his new way of life, as reported by each of the three descriptions of his conversion. The anonymous writer of Laon states: "He began to gather associates to his way of life. They followed his example in giving their all to the poor and became devotees of voluntary poverty."3 As previously quoted, the anonymous inquisitor also stated that Waldo taught his followers to live as he did.4 And Stephen of Bourbon also stated: "He Waldo drew to himself many men and women that they might do the same live as he did and he strengthened

1Walter Map, De nugis curialum, p. 65.
2The complete report of the Bergamo Conference has been edited by Döllinger, Beiträge, 42-52. English translation in Wakefield and Evans, 278-89. The actual date of death is widely debated. Christine Thourzellier and G. Gonnet both agree that it was probably between 1205 and 1210.
3Chronico universalis anonymi Laudunensis, MGH, SS, XXVI, 447-48.
4See p. 13.
them in the gospel.1 Thus the order was founded, without plans or organized rules, just the banding together of groups of people who shared common ideas and a common leader.

Even though the grouping together was spontaneous and unorganized, however, the followers seemed to immediately take on themselves the task of preaching to the nearby villages, for already in 1177, only seven years after the inception of the group, Waldo was condemned at the diocesan synod of Lyons under Archbishop Guichard for his own and his followers' preaching.2

There is little doubt that the people who joined Waldo's band were of the lower classes of society. Stephen of Bourbon noted that they were people of the basest occupations, and he added that "stupid and uneducated, they wandered through the streets." He also related how one of their leaders used disguises so that he would not be caught: "Sometimes he wore the garb and marks of a pilgrim, at others he bore the staff and irons of a penitent, at still other times he pretended to be a cobbler, or a barber, or a harvester, and so on,3 perhaps revealing the common trades of the Waldensians. Walter Map showed his amazement that

1Stephani de Bourbon, Tractatus, as trans. in Wakefield and Evans, p. 209.
2Christine Thourzellier, Catharisme et Valdeisme, 26-27.
3Stephani de Bourbon, Tractatus, as trans. in Wakefield and Evan, 209-210.
"the Word be given to the ignorant Waldenses whom we know to be incapable of receiving it" and as to their preaching, he could only conclude, "Let waters be drawn from the fountains, not the puddles on the street." Comparing the Waldensians to an "ass which eats thistles," he succeeded in making everyone present at the Third Lateran Council laugh at them "with derisive laughter."¹

Not only were Waldo's followers from the lower classes of society, but they also included women in their ranks. Waldo also allowed women to preach, just as the men did.²

Probably because of the low class of people involved, the Waldensian sources did not provide names of any of the followers during Waldo's lifetime. The first ones mentioned by name were twelve representatives who met with the Italian Waldensians at Bergamo in the year 1218.³

The band must have been quite easy to identify because of the peculiarities of their life style. In keeping with the Biblical counsel of Jesus to his apostles,⁴ they wore a

¹Walter Map, De nugis curialum, p. 66.

²Stephani de Bourbon, Tractatus, as trans. in Wakefield and Evans, p. 29. The problem of women preachers is to appear in all of the writings about the Waldensians by the later inquisitors.


⁴Mark 6:19.
type of sandal which apparently left their feet bare. Burchard, provost of the Premonstratensian Monastery of Ursberg in Germany, who was present at the Fourth Lateran Council, claimed that they wore a shoe that had the top cut off so they "walked about as if barefooted." He also added that they wore hoods like those of a religious order but cut their hair like laymen.\(^1\) Ermengaud of Béziers referred to the Waldensians as "sometimes being called the 'sandal shod' because they wore perforated footgear."\(^2\)

Another trait which was to cause a great deal of hatred against them was the fact that they did not work. The Waldensian document \textit{Liber antiheresis} written by Durand of Huesca provides their basis for not doing manual work:

> Consider all earthly labors and see whether they can be wasted and reduced to nothingness. If, however, one desires to discover labor which does not perish, let him read the exposition of this verse and let him learn that Scriptural meditation, prayer, contemplation, preaching, exhortation and other similar things are work which can never perish. Of this work Paul says to Timothy, "Exercise yourself for piety. For bodily exercise is of little use but piety is useful for all, for it promises life both now, and in the future." (I Tim. 4:7 and 8)\(^3\)


\(^3\)Liber antiheresis, ed. in \textit{Die ersten Waldenser}. See chapter entitled "De labore," pp. 77-89, particularly 85-86.
The scholarly Alain de Lille, in his work *Contra haereticos* written between 1179 and 1202, also states:

They dare to preach to fill their bellies rather than their minds, and because they do not wish to work with their own hands to obtain food, they make the evil choice of living without employment, preaching falsities so that they may buy food.

Preaching, rather than working manually, was to characterize their life. Walter Map describes them as "going out two by two and wandering through villages and towns, nakedly following a naked Christ."  

As already indicated, the order was not organized in any formal sense under Waldo. His followers merely banded together and followed his ways; and seemingly, such traits as wearing the hood, wearing sandals, and not doing manual work evolved and were accepted by all. After a few years, however, a form of administration did develop, beginning with the profession of faith of Waldo which he signed before Archbishop Guichard at the Diocesan synod held in Lyons in 1178. Although it certainly cannot be thought of as a rule like that of St. Francis, it nevertheless was the first written document of the Waldensians which stated their general beliefs (which were very orthodox), which spoke for the entire group. It concludes with this statement: "If by any

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2 Walter Map, *De nugis curialium*, p. 66.
chance any should come to your region declaring themselves to be of our number, you may be assured that they are none of ours if they hold not this faith."  

At the time of Waldo's death (assuming it to be shortly before 1218) the French Waldensians at Lyons and the Italian Lombard group each had a separate administration. The report issued by the Poor Lombards (the Italian faction) stated that the Poor Lombards had twelve officials elected for life and the Poor of Lyons chose two annually. At the meeting it was decided to let each group administer themselves as they saw fit rather than try to make them both the same. Bernard Gui, an inquisitor in the early fourteenth century, wrote of priestly officials who were called "majorales." These were leaders who performed the sacraments. Although some leadership did develop, during Waldo's lifetime the emphasis seems to have been on a minimal amount of leadership. They all preached, and according to the inquisitor Moneta, who wrote in 1241, they claimed, "Any good man is ordained directly by God and is worthy of giving the


2 "Report of the Conference at Bergamo," Sections 4 and 15, as trans. in Wakefield and Evans, pp. 280 and 283.


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This emphasis on mutual equality was extended even to women, who were able to preach and therefore possibly also to administer the sacraments.¹

Lacking organization, the Waldensians nevertheless grew. Their growth did not even seem to be affected by the decretal of Pope Lucius III at the Council of Verona in 1184, which stated that the Waldensians should be judged as heretics, as well as others who "under the guise of godliness, but denying the power thereof, as the Apostle said, assume to themselves the authority of preaching."² Lucius included as heretics any who aided or assisted the specific heretical groups in any way.

In spite of the decretal, the Waldensians continued to preach and to expand. Caesarius of Heisterbach in his *Dialogus miraculorum* mentions that Waldensians even appeared in Metz in northeastern France at 1199 or 1200. He stated that even though "the men were sent in the spirit of error, ...the Waldensian heresy has not since been extinguished."³


²See also Moneta Cremonensis, p. XLII and the previous reference to women preaching on p.


By 1205 there were Waldensians in Lombardy in Northern Italy, and a split had already occurred between these Italian Waldensians and the French group. Salvo Burci, writing in 1235, dated the schism between the two groups: "The Poor Lombards broke off from the Poor of Lyons and that occurred thirty years ago."¹

During the early period there were also some Waldensians who returned to the Church. Two groups, neither of them very large, were reaccepted into the Church by Innocent III. As the result of the preaching of some Dominicans at Pamiers in 1208, Durand of Huesca (author of the Waldensian work Liber antiheresis) along with his followers, appealed to the Pope for admission to the Church. They were admitted under the name of "Poor Catholics." As a group, they were still to live very much as before, but under the guidance of the Church they were used to fight the Cathari.² Later, in 1210, another group under the leadership of Bernard Prim, was accepted back and was called the "Reconciled Poor."³

There is no way that anyone could even guess as to

¹Salvo Burci, Supra stella, ed. in Döllinger, Beiträge zur Sektengeschichte des Mittelalters, XX, 64.

²See the letter of Innocent III advising bishops to accept the "Poor Catholics" in Patrologia Latina, CCXV, cols. 1510-13. English trans. in Wakefield and Evans, p. 277.

the numbers of the Waldensians at any date; however, they must have been numerous, for by 1215 the Fourth Lateran Council seemed to feel the menace of the heresy. Canon I of that Council was concerned primarily with the Waldensians' usurping the priestly right of dispensing the sacrament and states: "No one can effect this sacrament except the priest who has been duly ordained in accordance with the keys of the Church."¹ The fact that almost all the writings of the inquisitors of France and Northern Italy mention the Waldensians leaves one to believe that they flourished and were considered a major problem.

THE APOSTOLIC LIFE

M. D. Chénu in his book Nature, Man and Society in the Twelfth Century makes the assertion that one of the tendencies of all evangelical reforms in the Church is a new emphasis on the Bible, particularly on the words of Christ, and on a more literal interpretation of them.² This assertion certainly is true of the Waldensians. In giving up his goods and deciding to live in poverty, Waldo and later his followers were saying by example that they were going to be like Christ and his apostles by following the mandates

¹Mansi, Sacrorum conciliorum, XXII, 982.

which he had given in the Bible.

Waldo also revealed his emphasis on the authority of the Bible in his profession of faith when he stated:

We believe with the head and confess with the mouth that Father, Son, and Holy Spirit constitute one God who is creator, maker and governor, and in keeping with place and time, the ordainer of all things visible and invisible, heavenly and ethereal, aquatic and terrestrial. We believe, one and the same God to be the author of the Old and New Testament, that is of the law of Moses, of the prophets, and of the apostles.

And finally, in the conclusion of the profession, he added, "Our resolve is to follow the precepts of the Gospel as commands." 1

If one believes, as Waldo professed, first of all in God himself, and secondly that the Old and New Testament are the Word of that God, then, for the unlettered Waldensian, it was natural to accept the Word as command and follow it to the letter, thereby living as much like the early Church as possible.

When summoned before the Archbishop of Lyons at about 1178 and being forbidden to concern themselves with expounding the Scriptures, the Waldensians again witnessed their dependence on the Scriptures with their reply in the words of Peter taken directly from the Gospel: "We ought to obey God rather than man." And that God had said, "Preach the Gospel to every creature." 2


2Stephan de Bourbon, Tractatus, as trans. in Wakefield and Evans, p. 208.
This emphasis on Scriptures as authority for life resulted in their having much of the Bible translated into the vernacular. At the Third Lateran Council, Walter Map related, when the Waldensians appeared, "they presented to the Lord Pope a book written in French which contained the text and gloss of the Psalms and many of the books of both Testaments." The obvious reason for the French translation was so that any poor Waldensian peasant could read it.

The Liber antiheresis of Durand, written soon after 1190, states in the prologue, "We [Waldensians] are able to support from the New Testament and other diverse testimonies our entire faith which is the basis of salvation and the foundation of our way of life." Similarly, the Italian Waldensians, writing to their French counterparts in 1218, stated, "We cannot believe what is contrary to the truth now made manifest in the Scriptures...for one must obey God rather than man."

With this direct and literal emphasis on the Bible, and especially the words of Jesus himself, it is easy to understand that the Waldensians, like the Franciscans later, decided to live the vita apostolica, which for them consisted

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1Walter Map, De nugis curialium, p. 65.
2Liber antiheresis, ed. Selge, Die ersten Waldenser, II, 65.
of two aspects: poverty and preaching.

They found sufficient basis in the Scriptures for their life of poverty. According to the anonymous Chronicle of Lyons, their life of poverty was based on Matthew 6:34, where Christ in the Sermon on the Mount, stated, "Take no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself," and on Matthew 10:9, "Provide neither gold nor brass, nor silver in your purse," and certainly on the story of the rich young man who was told by Christ that he must sell all he had and give it to the poor so that he could have eternal life.

Another reason for their life of poverty seems to have been to give an outward sign of humility, and the feeling that lack of material goods leads to an intensification of spirituality. Stephen of Bourbon postulated that they were called the "Poor of Lyons" not because they were poor materially, but because they referred to themselves as "the poor in Spirit," in accordance with Christ's words, "Blessed are the poor in Spirit."

Their is still another reason for their vow of poverty, an attempt to imitate Christ. The Liber antiheresis

1Chronico universali anonymi Laudunensis, MGH, SS, XXVI, 447.

2Matthew 19:21.

3Stephen of Bourbon, Tractatus, as trans. in Wakefield and Evans, p. 209. See Matthew 5:3.
of Durand of Huesca explains: "If you Cathari ask why we are poor, we remind you of our having read that our Saviour and his apostles were poor," implying then that one is not being "like Christ" if he has wealth and goods.¹

The fact that they themselves accepted a life of poverty did not, however, mean that those who possessed material goods could not gain salvation. In his profession of faith Waldo wrote, "We wholeheartedly confess and believe that persons remaining in the world, owning their own goods, giving alms and doing other good works out of their own, and observing the commandments of the Lord, may be saved."²

Following the mandates and example of Christ meant not only giving up one's goods and living the life of poverty, but it also meant going out into the world as the apostles did to preach. As previously quoted from Stephen of Bourbon, Waldo's answer to the Archbishop when told not to preach was, "We ought to obey God rather than man," and this God had said, "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature."³

¹Liber antiheresis, ed. Selge, Die ersten Waldenser, II, 78.

²"Profession of faith of the Waldensians," as trans. in R. C. Petry, The History of Christianity, p. 350. The possibility that this statement was added only so that the Waldensians would be accepted by the church is discussed by G. Gonnet in "La figure et l'oeuvre de Vaudès dans la tradition historique et selon les dernières recherches," Vaudois languedociens et Pauvres Catholiques, ed. E. Privat, pp. 104-106.

³See p. 25.
In obeying the commandment to preach, they felt it was their duty to follow the example of the apostles and preach in the very same manner as they had done. Thus they followed the advice of Jesus to his apostles to travel with "no scrip for your journey, neither two coats, neither shoes, nor yet staves,"¹ and they went about two by two, barefoot, clad in a woolen garment, owning nothing, holding all things in common, just as the apostles did. According to Peter of Vaux-de-Cernay, who wrote in 1212 or 1213, just after the Albigensian Crusade in which he had taken part, they "wore sandals after the fashion of the apostles; and they refused to take life."²

Like the apostles also, they considered themselves preachers and therefore did not work manually. In response to the charges of laziness, they responded with the words of Christ in his Sermon on the Mount:

Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat and the body than raiment? Behold the fowls of the air for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they....But seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.³

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Durand of Huesca in his *Liber antiheresis* sums up the necessity of the *vita apostolica* when he states:

> That our spirits be not enslaved by love of riches, we offer ourselves according to the grace given us by God, to devote ourselves to preaching and prayer, proceeding according to the order of the Lord that workers be sent out to gather in the harvest, that is to say, that preachers go out to preach to all the people. Consequently imitating the primitive church, we dare to engage ourselves in the task which the Lord bestowed on the seventy-two.¹

The Church was more hostile in its opposition to the Waldensian acceptance of the *vita apostolica* than it was with later groups; not that the Church was opposed to the apostolic life, but rather, it was opposed to laymen preaching and dispensing the sacraments. The most formidable opposition came in the form of the declarations by Church councils; the Third Lateran Council in 1179, the Council of Verona in 1184, and the Fourth Lateran Council in 1215. At the Third Lateran Council the Waldensians were not proclaimed heretics; however, after the interview with Walter Map, the Council under Pope Alexander declared, "You [Waldo] shall not under any circumstances preach, except at the express desire and under the authority of the clergy of your own country."² At the council held in Verona in 1184, at which both Pope Lucius III and Emperor Frederick I Barbarossa were present, it was declared, "Those who assume to themselves the authority of


²See *Chronico universali anonymi Laudunensis*, MGH, SS, XXVI, 447.
preaching...shall be judged to be heretics."¹ The Fourth Lateran Council, held in 1215 by Innocent III, stated in Canon I: "No one can effect this sacrament [Lord's Supper] except the priest who has been duly ordained in accordance with the keys of the Church."² This was a direct attack upon the Waldensian ministry. The Council went on in Canon III to reaffirm the anathema of the Council of Verona against the heretics, among which the Poor of Lyons were specifically mentioned, along with many others.³

The official condemnations by the councils of the Church were directed against only two practices: preaching and administering the sacraments. Further condemnations, sometimes effective and sometimes not, were made by the inquisitors and polemicists. If one studies the list of inquisitors and polemicists who wrote against the Waldensians, the list of condemnations grows immensely. This is due to the increasing radicalness of the Waldensians but also to the acceptance of heresy as fact. Following is the list of accusations directed against them by the inquisitor Moneta of Cremonensis, who wrote his journals about 1240:

a. They lie.
b. They say man's spirit is a portion of the divine substance and is the very spirit of God.
c. They do not believe in purgatory.

¹Mansi, Sacrorum conciliorum, XXII, 487.
²Mansi, Sacrorum conciliorum, XXII, 982.
³Mansi, Sacrorum conciliorum, XXII, 986.
d. They claim that priests cannot give absolution.
e. They believe in the right of unordained people, including women, to preach.
f. They deny the authority of the pope.
g. They say it is always a sin to shed blood, be it for a Crusade, for punishment, or whatever.
h. They say penance is not necessary and does not aid in one's salvation.
i. Some say that souls, instead of going to heaven and being with God, become part of the spirit of God himself.
j. They say that clergy and laity who are rich are sons of the devil, as are those who give them tithes or offerings.
k. They mock the practice of singing and lighting candles in the church service.
l. They say that sanctity is non-existent, except in a good man or good woman.
m. They refer to the Roman Church as the Harlot of Babylon, as is referred to in Revelation 17.

Obviously, many of these accusations are petty charges which possibly were only hearsay or, if true, certainly did not in themselves merit one's being called a heretic.

There were many polemicists who took up the defense of the Church regarding the two faults of the Waldensians condemned by the Church. The most scholarly of them is probably the defense of Alain of Lille, professor at Paris and Montpellier, writer, philosopher, and poet, in his book, Opus

\[1\] Moneta Cremonensis, pp. xl-xlii.
In the section of the book dealing with the Waldensians (Book I, "Contra Waldenses") Alain argues by texts and rational arguments, "No one should preach unless he is sent by his superior." After referring to Waldo as a "philosopher without thought, a prophet without vision, an apostle without a mission, and a teacher without a tutor," he begins his defense by quoting the popular statement of Saint Paul, "He who does not work, neither let him eat." He then states that the Waldensians proceeded contrary to divine authority and contrary to the Holy Word when they preached without having been sent by a superior or by God. This, he explains, is true because anyone sent is proved by good works and confirmed by miracles, of which the Waldensians did neither. A lengthy explanation follows, which shows how the prophets and the apostles and even Christ himself were sent by God and that those who were not and nonetheless tried to be prophets and preachers were destroyed.

Not only were the Waldensians not sent, Alain contends, but they also were illiterate. He states that even many wise and learned Cistercians did not preach because they were not sent. In addition to not being sent and being illit-

1Alain de Lille, Opus de fide catholica contra haereticos sui temporis, in Migne, Patrologia latina, CCX, cols. 305-430. Partial text of Book II, "Contra Waldenses" is in Gonnet, Enchiridion fontium Valdensium, pp. 103-119.

2II Thessalonians 3:10.
erate, the Waldensians also allowed women to preach, which is distinctly contrary to the words of Saint Paul, "Let woman keep silence in the church." He concludes his argument by showing how the Bible has warned about men who "teach perverse doctrines" and who "lead captive silly women laden with sins." Certainly Paul was speaking about the Waldensians, according to Alain of Lille.

In 1190, at about the same time that Alain was writing, another polemicist, Bernard, abbot of Fontcaude in the diocese of Narbonne, wrote about a "dispute" or debate involving the Waldensians. In his treatise, he described the defense of the Church on the question of preaching. The Waldensians, he said, were accused of usurping the office of preaching. They were not clerics and therefore had no right to preach; furthermore, particularly since they had been pronounced heretics, they were not to preach. The Waldensians were reminded that Christ had told the man with the unclean spirit, "Hold thy peace," and that the Waldensians should do the same. Bernard also accused the Waldensians of preach-

1 Corinthians 14:34-35.


3 See especially Chap I: "Quibus auctoribus et rationibus probatur quod nullus debat praedicare, nisi sit a majore praelato missus," of Book II "Contra Waldenses," Alain de Lille, as ed. in Gonnet, Enchiridion fontium Waldensium, pp. 103-105.

4 Mark 1:25.
ing strife and of allowing women to preach.¹

In answer to those who defended the Church, the Waldensians were quick to say that they were sent by the Holy Spirit himself. In the *Liber antiheresis* Durand writes:

> It was by way of the grace of God given him [Walde] from heaven and the gospel voice saying, “Blessed are the poor in Spirit for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven.” (Matthew 5:3) This Voice, I say, instructed and taught him.²

**WALDO AND THE INSTITUTIONAL CHURCH**

The difference between the Waldensians and the other heretics of Southern France was vast and seems to have been confusing to the churchmen and even to other heretics. Henry Charles Lea in his three-volume work on the Inquisition neatly separates the heretics into two kinds:

The heresies which were to shake the church in its foundations were no longer mere speculative subleties propounded by learned theologians and prelates like Arius, Priscillian, Nestorius or Eutyches....The blow which brought real danger to the hierarchy came from obscure men, laboring among the poor and oppressed, who in their misery and degradation, felt that the church had failed in its mission....Among these lost sheep of Israel, neglected and despised by the rabbis,...they found ready and eager listeners, and the heresies which they taught divide themselves naturally into two classes. On the one hand we have sectaries holding fast to all the essentials of Christ-

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ianity, with antisacerdotalism as their mainspring, and on the other hand we have the Manicheans.¹

At the turn of the twelfth century, the Christian Waldensians and the Manichean Cathari existed side by side in Southern France along with the Catholic Church, and as both the Waldensians and the Cathari were considered heretics, they were automatically linked in the general mind. The confusion was compounded because even the polemicists and the inquisitors of the Church, while they understood the dualistic doctrines of the Cathari as being definitely heretical, had an uncertain understanding of how great a menace the Waldensians were.

Ermengaud of Béziers, who wrote a short exposé of the Albigensian and Waldensian heretics, claimed that the Waldensians who "publicly confess the Catholic faith by mouth but not in the heart...trouble and attack the Church of God more than the other heretics [the Cathari]."²

On the other hand, writing just a few years later during the Albigensian Crusade, probably about 1213, Peter of Vaux-de-Cernay after fighting heretics in the Crusade was to say of the Waldensians, "These are bad enough, but in comparison with the other heretics [the Cathari] they are much less wicked. Indeed in many matters they are in agree-


²Ermengaud of Béziers, as trans. in Wakefield and Evans, pp. 234-35.
The Waldensians were condemned partially because they were misunderstood and confused with the Cathari, but also because of the threat which they presented to the traditional church. As pointed out in the previous section, it was not with the apostolic poverty of the Waldensians that the Church quarrelled, for one could give away all of his goods and live without "thought for the morrow" without upsetting the institutional church. But when one proceeded from apostolic poverty to apostolic preaching, he "usurped" the job of the clergy who alone were ordained to preach. A clash followed which had to be dealt with.

The Church, however, was concerned not only with the life or actions of the Waldensians, but also with their beliefs which were the substance of their preaching. Since none of the Waldensian sermons were recorded, it is difficult to determine exactly what they were preaching. The Liber antiheresís of Durand of Huesca is the one Waldensian document from which one can glean some of the Waldensians' ideas on the nature of God, eschatology, Christology, the legitimacy of the Catholic Church, the sacraments, predestination, and good works. It should be remembered that Liber antiheresís was written as a defense against the religion of the Cathari, which undoubtedly caused certain aspects

1Peter of Vaux-de-Cernay, as trans. in Wakefield and Evans, p. 24.
pects to be overemphasized in that document.¹

The problem of evil and the nature of God would naturally be important in any defense against the teaching of the Cathari. The Liber states that sin is from the devil or Satan and cannot be attributed to God; nor can Satan be equated with God: "One must admit of a God in Zion who in accomplishing his works will believe that nothing is equal or co-eternal with the Triune God." Contrary to the dualism of the Cathari, the Waldensians confessed the three-in-one God, only creator of the world, visible and invisible. God is also author of the Old Testament law (which was not accepted by the Cathari) and the two great commandments: love God above all and your neighbor as yourself. The law manifests the grace and the divine mercy of God and is fulfilled by the Son in the New Testament.²

The Waldensians affirmed the real humanity of Christ as explained by Paul: "Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God; but made himself of no reputation and took upon himself the form of a servant and was made in the likeness of men."³ In spite of his humanity,

¹In this section of the paper dealing with the Liber antiheresis I have relied on the excellent studies of the Liber by Christine Thourzellier. See Catharisme et Valdéisme en Languedoc, especially pp. 60-80, also "Controverse Vaudoises-Cathares à la fin du XIIe siècle," Archives d'histoire doctrinale et litteraire du moyen âge, XXVII (1960), 137-227.

²Liber antiheresis, as ed. in Selge, Die ersten Waldenser II, see section "Quod unus tantummodo deus est," 111-21.

³Liber antiheresis, p. 39, from Phil. 2:5.
however, he is considered co-substantial with the Father and himself God without beginning.\(^1\)

In their eschatology, the Waldensians refused to believe in a resurrection of a body both spiritual and fleshly, as did the Cathari. Rather, along with Paul, they believed: "It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body and there is a spiritual body." They believed that it is the spiritual body that will be raised to "be with the just and with Him who is unity with the Son and Holy Spirit to reign throughout all Ages."\(^2\) Aside from these few comments in the *Liber antiheresis*, the Waldensians were not prone to discuss or speculate about the end of time. Their emphasis was much more on the actions of this life, which will in turn determine the next.

The Waldensians believed in one Church, to which one is admitted through baptism. This belief they based on the text, "One faith, one Lord, one baptism, and one God and Father of all."\(^3\) They believed that during baptism the Holy Spirit descended upon the infant when another person confessed for him Jesus Christ, the Son of God.\(^4\)

\(^1\)*Liber antiheresis*, p. 39: "sine inicio manens cum patre."

\(^2\)*Liber antiheresis*, p. 234, from I Cor. 15:51.

\(^3\)*Liber antiheresis*, p. 40, from Eph. 4:5.

\(^4\)*Liber antiheresis*, p. 48: "Si ipse, scilicet deus, quo magis vult // anime sanitatem quam corporis, paralitico
The Waldensian doctrine of the Eucharist was quite orthodox in itself; it was for their misuse of it that they were condemned at the Fourth Lateran Council.\(^1\) The Liber antiheresis states that the body of Christ can be given out in three ways: one could receive the substance with the sacrament, which was usually the case of the "apostles and the Just"; or one could receive the sacrament without the substance, which was the case when one lacked a priest or bread but by the will and by love he partook in a mysterious manner; or one could receive only the substance, but not the sacrament.\(^2\) In this view of the sacrament, the Waldensians were both accepting the traditional view and at the same time confessing that the priest and the mass were not absolutely necessary.

Their position on the sacrament of penance was simi-

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\(^1\) See Canon I of Lateran IV in Mansi, Sacrorum Conciliorum, XXII, 982.

\(^2\) Liber antiheresis, p. 53: "Tribus modis comeditur quidam substantiam cum sacramento, quidam sine substantia sacramentum, quidam substantiam sine sacramento comedunt. Substantium cum sacramento, sicut fecerunt apostoli, et multociens faciunt boni; sacramentum sine substantia, sicut boni multociens faciunt, qui teto affecto totaque voluntate substantiam cum sacramento ac // cipere desiderant, set quia abest sacerdos, et substantia panis, voluntate et affectu communicantur. Substantiam sine sacramento, sicuti iudas proditor, quia si sacramentum accepisset cum substantia, sanctificaretur ab ipso."
lar to their position on the Eucharist. They believed in the
efficacy of confession to a priest, but also, in the absence
of a priest, they believed that penance could be effected by
one person confessing to another.¹

Kurt-Victor Selge states that the main theme of the
Waldensians in their preaching was to speak out against the
sin of avarice and that the second theme was the necessity
of good works for the poor.² The two logically follow: in-
stead of working for one's own gain, he should serve his
neighbor. In the Liber antiheresis the Waldensian doctrine
of good works becomes almost the key to salvation: "At the
last judgement each will receive the just recompense for his
works."³ Since it was with one's wealth that one could do
good or bad works, therefore, the use of wealth to an extent
determined one's end. As already stated, in the profession
of Peter Waldo and again in the Liber antiheresis the Walden-
sians admit that possessing wealth does not necessarily ob-
struct salvation, for those who "believe of the heart and
confess orally the apostolic faith" should certainly gain
salvation.⁴ It was the combination of faith and good works

¹Liber antiheresis, see pp. 57-59 entitled "De peniten-
cia."

²Kurt-Victor Selge, as ed. in Privat, Vaudois Langue-
dociens et Pauvres Catholiques, p. 125.

³Liber antiheresis, p. 77, from I Cor. 3:8.

⁴Liber antiheresis, p. 104; "Quia autem cum possession-
ibus terrenis plurisque salvari credimus, contra sentinantes
which to the Waldensians attested to their orthodoxy and
which to them was so absent from the lives of the other mem-
bers of orthodox Christianity.

On the subject of predestination, the Waldensians
also took a quite orthodox view. Based on the Scriptural
text, "The Lord is not willing that any should perish but
that all should come to repentance,"¹ the Waldensians ar-
gued that God willed to save all men. If one were to ac-
cept the doctrine of predestination, "the will of God would
be contrary to his design."² Also, they argued that if one
believed in predestination, good works would be needless
because salvation would already have been predetermined. If
there is any predestination, they say, it is that all men
are judged to be evil until by their works they show them-
selves to be otherwise.³

Finally, the Liber antiheresis deals with the Catho-
Church and its legitimacy. In response to the Cathari, who

ⁱLiber antiheresis, p. 89, from II Peter 3:9.
⁲Liber antiheresis, p. 89: "Sunt nonnulli non solum
hereticorum, verum etiam catholicorum, qui pestifera //
cavillationes correpti, de predestinatione vel fato disser-
entes, animas simplicium pel // licientes, si non predes-
tinatus quem vel fatus ad dei regnum fuerit, minime salvari
asserunt. Huiic ergo tam flagitionisime pesti divinis tes-
moninis obnitarum."
⁳Liber antiheresis, p. 91, from Rev. 2:5.
accused them of being one and the same with the Catholic Church and demanded of them, "From whom then did you receive your faith," the Waldensians answered:

a. from no one, because the church of God is always where the faithful observe one faith integrated with good works,

b. that divine grace instructed Peter Waldo from heaven and the divine gospel.

c. from the Bishop and Priest who even though unworthy in most cases, could teach the divine teachings which the Waldensians live.¹

The Waldensians thus were paradoxically in the same breath both defending and denying the Catholic Church. They accepted the Church as the body of Christ on earth and the priests and bishops as the representatives of the Church, but they did not accept them unconditionally. They condemned the excesses and immorality of many of the priests and bishops and believed that when they were unworthy, a pious layman could fulfill their function.

In spite of their variations from the Catholic Church, however, the Waldensians attested to their own orthodoxy in the conclusion of the Liber antiheresis, which states:

¹Liber antiheresis, p. 95: "Set forte dicenti Ubi erat ecclesia ab adventu salvatoris usque ad vestrum adventu, et quis docuit valdesium viam illam? Numquid ab aliquo bono homine accepit, neque aliquem vie istius patronum invenit?---Nos vero dicimus, qui semper ibi dei est ecclesia, ubi congregacio fidelium, qui fidem rectam tenent et operibus implet. Si vero sciere desideratis, quis eum docuit, sciatis, quia dei gratia sibi celitus data et vox evangelii. // Eum, inquam, hec vox instruxit et docuit. Set forte dicent: A quo audivit, et quis illi dixit evangelium, unde sciret viam illam esse bonam?---Nos vero dicimus: A pontificibus et sacerdotibus."
Until death we intend to maintain the faith of God and the sacraments of the Church and we decree to preach them freely according to the grace that God has given us without denying them under any pretext. For its honor and for the salvation of those who hear, we preach God who lives in the perfect trinity and rules throughout the infinity of the centuries.

They felt that not only their beliefs but also their lives evidenced their orthodoxy. They lived as the early Christians did, in poverty, preaching Christ's gospel, doing good works to the poor, while being persecuted for so doing. To many contemporary churchmen, however, their emphasis on a way of life so different from the lives of the clergy alienated them from the hierarchy, which continued to persecute the Waldensians.

1Liber antiheresis, p. 99: "Set fidem dei et ecclesie sacramenta non solu ad mortem tenere et libere predicare, secundum gratiam nobis a deo collatam, nec pro aliquo vivente desistere decrevimus. Quod ad sui honorem et audientiam salutem nos agere faciat, qui in trinitate perfecta vitet regnat deus per infinita seculorum secula."
CHAPTER II
THE FRANCISCANS

The main sources for the life of Saint Francis and his Order of Friars Minor can be put into two main categories: the writings of St. Francis himself, and the writings of his followers, which are in the form of biographies, compilations, and chronicles. Aside from these two main categories are a few writings of non-Franciscans and some diplomatic sources.

Two standard critical editions of St. Francis' writings are the one edited by H. Boehmer, Analekten zur Geschichte des Franciscus von Assisi and the one of the Quaracchi Fathers edited by L. Lemmens, Opuscula sancti patris Francisci in Volume I of Bibliotheca Franciscana Ascetica. These have been translated into many languages, with at least five English translations. I have used the translation of Benen Fahy, O.F.M., with notes by Placid Hermann, O.F.M., entitled The Writings of St. Francis of Assisi.

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1 H. Boehmer, Analekten zur Geschichte des Franciscus von Assisi (Tubingen: 1904).
2 Opuscula sancti patris Francisci, ed. Leonards Lemmens, Bibliotheca Franciscana Ascetica Medii Aevi (Quaracchi, 1904), I.
The writings of St. Francis consist of a scattering of various items. The two existing rules for the order, one of 1221 and the other of 1223, are the most popular. The original rule of 1210 has been lost but has been reconstructed and is probably quite accurate.¹ His writings also include "The Testament," and his "Admonitions." There are also two short texts addressed to St. Clare and her followers. There is a short guide on how a religious should live in a hermitage and a series of seven letters. There are also some literary pieces written in verse form, the most popular of which is "The Canticle of Brother Sun." The others are "Praises of God," "The Praises of the Virtues," "Salutation of the Blessed Virgin," "The Praises Before the Office," and "The Office of the Passion."

The second main category of sources, the writings of his followers, is much more complex. There are two principle biographies, that of Thomas of Celano and that of St. Bonaventure. Thomas joined the order in 1215, and in 1228 because of his literary skills was commissioned by Gregory IX to compose the Legend of St. Francis. The Vita prima, or first book, was completed in 1228 and glorified the newly canonized St. Francis. The work is very incomplete, and

¹The Rule of 1210 is usually referred to as the Regula Primitiva. See John Moorman, The Sources for the Life of St. Francis of Assisi (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1940, republished in Farnborough: Gregg Press, 1966), pp. 51-54, for the Latin reconstruction with an English translation.
three of the brothers very close to Francis: Leo, Angelo, and Rufino, immediately put together their own memoirs and sent them to the Minister General of the order so that they might be added to the *Vita prima*. Instead of adding these memoirs, however, Celano incorporated them into the *Vita secunda*, or second book, which deals much more realistically with the problems of the order.

As the *Vita secunda* seemed to intensify the division between those in the order who wanted a strict literal adherence to the rules and those who wanted a more liberal interpretation, it was felt that a more official biography of the Saint would aid in the unity of the order. St. Bonaventure, the Minister General, accepted the task, and his biography was approved at the General Chapter of 1266, which also forbade the friars to read any other biography of the Saint; all others, in fact, were to be destroyed. (This is the reason many early sources either were lost or were not published until the eighteenth or nineteenth century.)

The only really complete English translation of the *Vita prima* and *secunda* is that of Placid Hermann, O.F.M., *Saint Francis of Assisi, First and Second Life of Saint Francis, with Selections from Treatise on the Miracles of Blessed Francis*. The standard text of the *Legenda maior*

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1Placid Hermann, O.F.M. (ed. and trans.), *Saint Francis of Assisi, First and Second Life of Saint Francis, with Selections from Treatise on the Miracles of Blessed Francis* (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1962). The text of this
of St. Bonaventure is the Opera omnia St. Bonaventure, VIII. There are several English translations. I have used that of Miss E. Gurney Salter, The Life of St. Francis, which is in Everyman's Library Edition by Thomas Okey (ed.), entitled The Little Flowers of St. Francis, The Mirror of Perfections by Leo of Assisi and the Life of St. Francis by St. Bonaventure.

Included in the writings of the early followers of Francis are two works usually considered to be compilations, that is, extracts from various authors put together with no indication of sources. The Legenda trium sociorum, or Legend of the Three Companions, and the Speculum perfectionis, or Mirror of Perfection, are both debatable as to authorship; however, both in part have been attributed to Brother Leo. The Legenda is not considered the work of the three companions, Leo, Angelo, and Rufino, as it once was, although it does contain parts which correspond to the Celano biographies. The Speculum is not the work of Brother Leo edition is from the best Latin edition, Vita I et II Sancti Francisci auctore Thomas de Celano published in Analecta Franciscana (Quaracchi, 1926) X, i and ii. Hereafter cited as Thomas of Celano, I or II.

1 Opera omnia sancti Bonaventurae, VIII (Quaracchi, 1898).

alone, either, as Paul Sabatier, the great historian of the Franciscans, thought it was when he edited the text. It corresponds in many places with the Celano biographies and shows that all are from material common to all the brothers. The standard text used for the Legenda is that of Giuseppe Abate, O.F.M., Conv., "Nuovi studi sulla leggenda de San Francesco detta dei 'Tre Compagni'" which appears in Miscellanea Francescana, XXXIX. The best English translation is that of Nesta de Robeck and Placid Hermann, O.F.M., St. Francis of Assisi, His Holy Life and Love of Poverty, Containing the Legend of the Three Companions and the Sacrum Commercium. The Speculum was first edited in 1898 by Paul Sabatier, Speculum perfectionis seu sancti Francisci Assisiensis legenda antiquissima auctore fratre Leone. The best English translation is probably that of L. Sherley-Price, entitled St. Francis of Assisi: His Life and Writings as Recorded by his

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Contemporaries.¹ Both the Legenda and the Speculum appear in Otto Karrer's collection, St. Francis of Assisi, the Legends and the Lauds.²

There are two other compilations which are more literary than factual. One is the Sacrum commercium beati Francisci cum domina Paupertate.³ An English translation appears in Nesta de Robeck and Placid Hermann, O.F.M., Saint Francis of Assisi.⁴ The other is the Fioretti or Little Flowers of Saint Francis, a rather popular collection of Latin stories. Although probably factually inaccurate, they do ring with the spirit of St. Francis and his early followers. The first complete collection was that of Paul Sabatier entitled Actus beati Francisci et sociorum Eius.⁵ I have used the English translation of Thomas Okey, The Little Flowers of St. Francis,⁶

¹L. Sherley-Price, St. Francis of Assisi: His Life and Writings as recorded by his Contemporaries (New York: Harper & Bros., 1959).


³Sacrum Commercium beati Francisci cum domina Paupertate (Quaracchi: 1929).

⁴Nesta de Robeck and Placid Hermann, O.F.M., Saint Francis of Assisi.


⁶Thomas Okey (trans.) The Little Flowers of St. Francis in Everyman's Library Edition by Thomas Okey (ed.).
although there are many other translations.

In addition to these basic sources, there are some minor chronicles, various writings of non-Franciscans, and some official bulls and acts which can be found in a good bibliography. The bibliographies of Franciscan literature are numerous. The most complete and basic is the *Bibliographia Franciscana*, which is Volume I of *Collectanea Franciscana*. There are three English works which are indispensable; two of these are: A. G. Little, *A Guide to Franciscan Studies* and John Moorman, *The Sources for the Life of S. Francis of Assisi*, which is an excellent book on the basic sources. The most complete, however, in English is undoubtedly the recent bibliography of Raphael Brown which appears in the biography of St. Francis written by Omer Englebert, *St. Francis of Assisi*.

There are many general histories of St. Francis. One of the best is Johannes Jörgensen, *St. Francis of Assisi*,

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1 *Bibliographia Franciscana* in *Collectanea Franciscana*, I (1939).


A Biography. 1 Two other classic biographies are those of Paul Sabatier, Life of St. Francis of Assisi, 2 and Father Cuthbert, O.S.F.C., Life of St. Francis of Assisi. 3

For a broader history of the early Franciscan order one should see especially that of John Moorman, A History of the Franciscan Order from its Origins to the Year 1517. 4

Many others could be mentioned; however, this should suffice for a general introduction to a virtually overwhelming bibliography.

EARLY LIFE OF SAINT FRANCIS

In 1182, two years after Peter Waldo's profession of faith was accepted by the Archbishop of Lyons and two years before the Council of Verona condemned the Waldensians as heretics, Francesco Bernardone was born in the Umbrian mountains of Central Italy in the small town of Assisi. His father, Pietro, was a merchant who travelled throughout southern France and northern Italy selling woven products. 5


5Legenda Trium Sociorum, as trans. in Karrer, p. 4. Hereafter cited as Leg. Tri. Soc.
According to early legends, Francis devoted himself to the profession of his father and showed himself a skillful and active businessman. One business virtue which he lacked, however, was the ability to economize. According to his own parents, Francis lived "like the son of a prince."\(^1\) He not only spent money on wining and dining and fine clothes, but, to his credit, he also gave large sums of money to the poor. The early biographers tell us that in spite of his continual banquets and festivities, he was "courteous in manner and speech...and resolved never to utter a rude or unkind word to anyone."\(^2\)

Francis became involved in some of the wars between the Umbrian cities of Perugia and Assisi; he was taken prisoner and a year later was released only to return home with ill health.

In 1205, having recovered from his illness, Francis had dreams of becoming a knight and going to fight in behalf of the pope in the war which was being waged in southern Italy over who was to rule the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies.\(^3\) Purchasing expensive armor and a horse, he joined the army of Count Gentile.\(^4\) After leaving Assisi, he gave part of

\(^1\)Leg. Tri. Soc., as trans. in Karrer, p. 4.
\(^2\)Leg. Tri. Soc., as trans. in Karrer, p. 4.
\(^3\)A good explanation of the war and who was fighting in it appears in Englebert, *Saint Francis of Assisi*.
\(^4\)The Count is named in Leg. Tri. Soc., as trans. in Karrer, p. 5.
his armor to a knight who had none, and upon arriving at Spoleto, he had a dream which was to change the course of his life:

A voice asked him, "Who can help you more, the master or the man?"
"The master," he replied.
Again the voice spoke, saying, "Why then do you forsake the master for the man, the Prince for the vassal?"
And Francis said, "Lord, what should I do?"
And the voice answered, "Return to your home and you shall be told what to do."1

"In the morning," it is related, "he rode back to Assisi with all haste, filled with great gladness and the expectation that the will of God should be revealed to him."2

Back at Assisi, he apparently must have returned to a rather carefree life, for the Legend of Three Companions relates that a few days after returning to Assisi, he provided a "sumptuous banquet." Afterwards, however, while roaming the town, he fell behind the others and seemed to be meditating. When asked if he was in love, his answer was, "Yes, and you have never seen a nobler, wealthier or more beautiful lady than the bride I intend to take."3

From this time on, Francis began to isolate himself from his friends and from worldly interests and to spend more time by himself. Bonaventure tells us that it was dur-

1Leg. Tri. Soc., as trans. in Karrer, p. 6.
ing this period that he came upon a leper (and he had always loathed leprosy), "but remembering that he had vowed to live a perfect life...he jumped off his horse and kissed the leper and gave him alms."¹ This incident seemed to be an important turning point in Francis' life, for many years later, on his deathbed, he wrote in the introduction to his "Testament":

This is how God inspired me, Brother Francis, to embark upon a life of penance. When I was in sin, the sight of lepers nauseated me beyond measure; but then God himself led me into their company, and I had pity on them. When I had once become acquainted with them, what had previously nauseated me became a source of spiritual and physical consolation for me. After that I did not wait long before leaving the world.²

Francis' next conversion experience came in 1206 after a trip to Rome.³ One day as he was passing the Church of San Damiano outside the walls of Assisi, he decided to enter and pray. As he was praying, he again heard a voice which said to him, "Francis, do you not see that my house is being destroyed? Go and repair it for me!"⁴ This, the legend tells us, "filled him with joy and radiance." It was the first positive command he had received and it gave him a task

¹Bonaventure I, 5, as ed. in Okey, p. 309.
²The Testament of Saint Francis, as trans. in Fahy and Hermann, p. 67.
³For details of the trip to Rome see Bonaventure, III, 8-10, as trans. in Okey, p. 319. Also see Thomas of Celano, Saint Francis of Assisi, I, 32 & 33, as trans. in Hermann, pp. 87-88.
that he could immediately work on. Taking it for granted that the voice referred to the decrepit little church of San Damiano, he at once gave the priest some money to purchase oil in order to keep a light continuously burning before the crucifix. In order to accumulate some money to repair the church, Francis went home and sold some of his father's woven cloth, along with his own horse and everything else that he had. He then went to the priest, gave him the money, and asked if he could stay with him, which he did. Francis' father attempted to take him first to the civil court and finally, after Francis' insistence that he was now a servant of the church and therefore not subject to the temporal power, he took him to the court of the bishop. His father wished to force Francis to return home and also be reimbursed for the property Francis had squandered. Bishop Guido of Assisi advised Francis that he was to return the money to his father, which had not been his to give, upon which advice, Francis:

at once did off all his garments and restored them to his father....Yea more, as one drunk with wondrous fervour of spirit, he threw aside even his breeches, and stood up naked in the presence of all, saying unto his father, "Hitherto I have called thee my father on earth, but henceforth I can confidently say, 'Our Father, which art in heaven' with whom I have laid up my whole treasure and on whom I have set my whole trust and hope."

It was not very long before Francis became known to

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1Bonaventure, II, 4, as trans. in Okey, p. 313. Also see Leg. Tri. Soc., as trans. in Karrer, pp. 10-12.
his friends and family as a "fool," instead of the "good fellow" he had always been. He resolved, however, to follow the command given him, and the Legend tells us that "he devoted himself to rebuilding the church and resolved that the lamps were to be continually lit in it."¹

One day after having rebuilt the Church of San Damiano, Francis was listening to the Gospel read at the mass and heard the words of Christ to his disciples:

And as ye go, preach saying, The kingdom is at hand. Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: freely ye have received, freely give. Provide neither gold, nor silver, nor brass in your purses, Nor scrip for your journey, neither two coats, neither shoes, nor yet staves: for the workman is worthy of his meat.²

Francis, after having the priest explain the words to him, cried out, "This is what I wish, this is what I seek, this is what I wish to do with all my heart." And he immediately put off his shoes, put aside his staff and was content with one tunic and a cord at his waist.³

It was this episode which inaugurated the new order, or what J. R. Moorman calls "an experiment in Christian living so fascinating and so courageous that it holds the

²Matthew 10:7-10.
³Thomas of Celano, I, 22, as trans. in Hermann, p. 13. Also see Leg. Tri. Soc., as trans. in Karrer, p. 15 and Bonaventure, III, 3, as ed. in Okey, p. 316.
world's admiration to this day. 

Eighteen years later, after his followers numbered over five thousand and were spread from the Holy Land to England, and after Francis had received the Stigmata on Mount Alverna, he died. Just before his death, however, he composed one last stanza to his famous "Canticle to Brother Sun," which reflected his coming death:

All praise be yours, My Lord, through Sister Death,
From whose embrace no mortal can escape.
Woe to those who die in mortal sin!
Happy those she finds doing your will!
The second death can do no harm to them.
Praise and bless my Lord, and give him thanks,
And serve him with great humility.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE ORDER

It was at least a year after Francis accepted the apostolic life of poverty before anyone decided to join him. In 1209, according to the Legend of the Three Companions, Bernard of Quintavalle, a wealthy man of Assisi, invited Francis to spend the night in his palace. After spending the night in prayer, Bernard at once decided to forsake the world and follow Francis and Christ.

As the two men set out for the Church of St. Nicholas, they were joined by a third, Peter Catani. Upon reaching the church, they prayed and then, opening the Holy


Gospels at random, read first the words of Christ to the rich young ruler, "If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell all that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven." The second random reading was the words of Christ to his apostles, "Take nothing for your journey, neither staves nor scrip, neither bread neither money, ...ther have two coats apiece." And finally, the third reading was the words of Christ, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me." After reading these selections, Francis said to his followers, "My brothers, this is our life and our rule and shall be so for all who wish to join our community. Go then and act according to what you have heard!" This event of April, 1209, marked the founding of the Franciscan order.

The next person to take up the habit, which Thomas of Celano describes as "a tunic of coarse material, so poor that no one would want to take it from him," was Brother Giles, a "simple, upright and God-fearing man" of Assisi,

1Matthew 19:21.
3Matthew 16:24.
4Bonaventure III, 3, as ed. in Okey, p. 317, also in Leg. Tri. Soc., as trans. in Karrer, p. 17. A good description of Bernard appears in Fioretti II, as trans. in Okey, p. 4.
5Thomas of Celano I, 22, as trans. in Hermann, p. 13.
who Bonaventure say, "lived an angelic rather than a mortal life."¹

The four split up into groups of two, Francis taking with him Brother Giles, and they went out into the countryside to "implore that the inhabitants love and fear God and do penance for their sins." They were not well received, however, and the expedition met with little success.²

After returning to Assisi, three more joined the group: Sabbatino, Morico, and John de Capella, and a short while later Philip the Long. The eight again decided to go out in groups of two. The Legend tells us that Bernard and Giles went first to Florence and then planned to go all the way to Spain. Francis and one companion went south to the valley of Reiti.³ The others are not mentioned. In the spring of 1210 they all returned to meet in Assisi, including four more followers: Angelo Tancredi of Assisi, John of Constanzo, Barbaro and Bernard of Vigilante. This brought the number of the group to twelve.⁴

¹ Speculum perfectionis XXXVI, as ed. in Okey, p. 214. See also Bonaventure III, 4, as ed. in Okey, p. 318.
³ Leg. Tri. Soc., as trans. in Karrer, pp. 21 & 22.
⁴ Description of the early followers is found in Leg. Tri. Soc., as trans. in Karrer, pp. 15-24, also in Bonaventure III, 3-7, as ed. in Okey, pp. 317-19. Both of these accounts include Brother Sylvester as part of the twelve and do not mention some of the others. The best English study of the early companions is found in Englebert, Appendix VII, "Companion," pp. 427-40. Moorman, History of the Franciscan Order, also has a good description, pp. 19-20.
It was at this point that Francis apparently began to think in terms of an order, for in 1209 (or 1210) he wrote his first rule,¹ and Francis and his eleven followers journeyed to Rome, where it was approved by Pope Innocent III.

Returning from Rome, the order immediately began to grow. Among the new joiners were first of all probably Brother Sylvester, the first member of the clergy to join, then Brother Leo, who was to keep records and write much of the information available to us, Rufino, of a noble family of Assisi, and later one of the closest companions to Francis, and Brother Masseo. Then joined Brother Juniper, "the simple minded one," Illuminato, who was to travel with Francis in the Moslem countries, and Brother Augustine. Later they were joined by the Brothers Stephen, Leonard, James, and Theobold, all of Assisi, Simon of Collazano, who was only a boy, and John Laudibu.²

At first the group inhabited a place near Assisi known as Rivo torto, which the Legend of the Three Companions describes as a "derelict, abandoned hut; the space therein was so cramped that they could hardly sit down; often they lacked bread and lived on only turnips, the which,

¹Referred to as either the "Rule of 1210" or the "Regula Primitiva." See p. 46, note 1.

in their poverty, they obtained by begging here and there."¹

The hut was so cramped, we are told, that Francis had to mark each one's place with chalk so that there would not be a big disturbance when it was time to sit down. One day when a farmer came along and stabled his ass in the hut, Francis, interpreting it as a sign from God, decided that it was time to move. They left and moved to Santa Maria di Portiuncula, where they lived in a little house and were given the abandoned church itself in exchange for a basket of fish each year.²

Brother Leo tells us that while staying at Portiuncula, the Brothers and Francis "went into the nearby villages and churches around Assisi, preaching and exhorting men to repent. He [Francis] always carried a broom to sweep out dirty churches, for it distressed him exceeding when he saw a church which was not cared for as he would have wished."³

This traveling throughout Italy seems to have been the rule for the period of 1210 to 1212. Francis and his followers went out probably two by two, with only a coarse tunic and no shoes, staff, or money, in keeping with the admonitions of Christ to his apostles. During this time

¹Leg. Tri. Soc., as trans. in Karrer, p. 27.
²Speculum perfectionis, IV, as trans. in Karrer, p. 75.
³Speculum perfectionis, LVI, as trans. in Okey, p. 228.
many joined the brotherhood, including John Parenti, later Minister General of the Order, Agnellus, who was to lead the first expedition to England, and Elias of Cortona, who was to become one of the most influential and controversial figures in early Franciscan history. The church of Santa Maria di Portiuncula became the headquarters of the order until after Francis' death.¹

It seems as if Francis knew that rules or some sort of administrative apparatus, however small it might be, were going to be necessary. He had very early had a dream that his followers would be very numerous. According to Thomas of Celano, Francis stated:

I have seen a great number of men coming to us and wishing to live with us in the habit of a holy life and under the rule of the blessed Religion...I have seen, as it were, the roads filled with the multitude of them coming together in these parts out of almost every nation.²

In 1209 Francis drew up the rule which is called the Rule of 1209 (or 1210) or the Regula primitiva. This early rule, which was completely the work of Francis, has been lost.³

In 1210 the group of twelve travelled to Rome and presented the rule to Pope Innocent III.

¹For a description of life at Santa Maria de Portiuncula see Speculum perfectionis, as trans. in Karrer, pp. 75-76. Also Bonaventure IV, 3 & 5, as ed. in Okey, pp. 323-24. Also Leg. Tri. Soc., as trans. in Karrer, p. 22.

²Thomas of Celano, I, 27-28, as trans. in Hermann, p. 16.

³A good reconstruction of the early rule appears in Moorman, Sources, pp. 51-54.
Innocent had previously had a dream of the collapse of the Lateran Church, which was subsequently saved by a "poor little man," whom the Pope identified with Francis. Influenced by this dream and also by the intercession of Cardinal John of St. Paul, Bishop Guido of Assisi, Innocent approved the Franciscan rule and authorized them to preach with the consent of the clergy. His charge to Francis and his followers was: "Go with God, my brothers, and he will show you his great mercy, preach repentance to all men."¹

The rule which Innocent approved probably contained ten short exhortations, and, according to the conclusion of the rule, all the brothers were "to learn the purpose and meaning of those things which are written in this way of life, to the salvation of our souls; and to commit then frequently to memory."²

From 1210 to 1221 this was the only rule and Francis the only leader of the order. The growth of the order, however, presented problems which required that general meetings of the friars be held.³ Francis decided in 1211, ¹

²Regula Primitiva, as reconstructed in Moorman, Sources, p. 54.

³According to the chronicle of Brother Giordano, who was present at the General Chapter of 1221, there were about 3000 friars in attendance. This would be a debatable figure, but it does give some idea of the growth in eleven years. See Chronico Fratris Jordani, ed. in Analecta Franciscana, I (Quaracchi, 1885). English trans., in Marie Thérèse Loureilke, XIIIth Century Chronicles, trans. Placid Hermann, O.F.M. (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1961), pp. 1-77.
"A meeting should be held here [at Santa Maria de Portiuncula] twice a year, at Whitsuntide and on St. Michael's Day." The Legend also relates that at these meetings Francis gave "admonitions, reprimands and commands, according to what he understood to be God's will."¹

By 1221, it was required that all ministers and friars attend a provincial chapter on St. Michael's Day and that only the ministers² attend the General Chapter at Portiuncula on Whitsuntide, and those from overseas or beyond the Alps, once in three years.³ This was again changed in 1223, when the Pentecost General Chapter was to be held once every three years and the provincial chapters once each year.⁴

The original rule was revised by Francis and Brother Caesar of Speyer in 1221, and this new rule, called the Rule of 1221, became the general rule for the order.⁵ They did not obtain papal approval for the rule because it was considered only a revision and because under Innocent III it

¹Leg. Tri. Soc., as trans. in Karrer, p. 28.
²For an explanation of the function of ministers see p. 67.
³See the Rule of 1221, as trans. in Fahy & Hermann, pp. 45-46. The provincial divisions are described on p. 53. A general meeting of the friars in the province was referred to as a "provincial chapter." A "general chapter" represented all the provinces.
⁴See the Rule of 1223, as trans. in Fahy & Hermann, p. 46.
⁵For the Rule of 1221 see Fahy & Hermann, p. 31.
was decided that no new orders would be formed.¹

In 1223, Francis went up to a lonely mountain with two companions, Leo and Rufino, to again rewrite the rule. It is thought that pressures by the more learned members of the order demanded a more legal type of document. Bonaventure tells us that after writing it, he gave it to his Vicar, Elias, who lost it (it is usually thought on purpose because it was not "learned" enough) and so Francis went back to the mountain to write it again, this time taking it directly to Cardinal Ugolino (protector of the order) and Pope Honorius III. After some changes, it was finally confirmed by the bull Solet annuere on November 29, 1223. This rule is still the official rule of the Order of the Friars Minor. Although much like the Rule of 1221, it is much shorter, and more concise. It obviously is not written in the terminology of Francis. The Rule of 1221 gives us a much better insight into the early order and especially into Francis himself.²

It is obvious from reading either of the rules that there was some sort of hierarchy set up to administer the order. Both rules speak of "Ministers" and "Ministers General," and the Rule of 1223 also refers to "custodes." It

¹This decision was made in 1215 at the Fourth Lateran Council. See Mansi, Sacrorum conciliorum, XXII, 986.

²For a description of events describing the writings of the Rule of 1223 see Bonaventure IV, 2, as ed. in Okey, pp. 328-29. A translation of the rule appears in Fahy & Hermann, pp. 57-64.
is difficult to determine exactly the status of each of these positions. They apparently became official at the Chapter meeting of 1217, for Brother Leo says, "Eleven years after he had begun his new way of life, when the numbers and merits of the brethren had multiplied, ministers were elected and sent with a few friars to the provinces of the world."¹ Each province or designated area had one minister while the Minister General was over the entire order. The "custodes" referred to in Chapter eight of the Rule of 1223 were a further subdivision.² The titles were chosen by Francis to show that these men were not to rule, but to minister and lead the others.

The work of the ministers, according to the Rule of 1223, was to receive and instruct new members (Chapter 1), "to provide carefully for the needs of the sick and clothing of the other friars, by having recourse to spiritual friends (Chapter 4), to deal with friars who fell into sin (Chapter 7), to elect new Minister Generals (Chapter 8), to call provincial chapters (Chapter 9), to "visit their subjects and admonish them humbly and charitably" (Chapter 10), "to be servants of all the friars (Chapter 10) and to give permission to those wishing to go on special journeys (Chap-

¹Leg. Tri. Soc., as trans. in Karrer, p. 90.

²A good explanation of the offices appears in Englebert, p. 477, note 6.
Francis, of course, was looked up to as the leader so that actually during his lifetime there was no Minister General of the entire order, as he never used such a title.

The order had spread rapidly. With his first four disciples, in 1209, Francis left Assisi and went south to the Valley of Rieti and east to the March of Ancona. In 1213 Francis and a few others set off for Spain, where he did not reach the infidel as he had hoped, but did set up small communities and won many followers.

At the Chapter of 1217, at which the Provincial Ministers were appointed, most of Europe was divided up into Provinces. The little brotherhood now began to be an international order. Italy was divided into six provinces, France into two; Germany, Spain, and the Holy Land each formed another. Soon after this division, while the friars were going out to each of the areas, Cardinal Ugolino of Ostia (later Pope Gregory IX) was made the special protector of the order.

Not only did the order expand throughout the world, but a second and third order were formed. These were the Orders of St. Clare, women who wanted to live the apostolic

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1 Rule of 1223, as trans. in Fahy & Hermann, pp. 57-64.
3 Thomas of Celano I, 56, as trans. in Hermann, p. 31.
life of poverty, and also an order of lay people who because of attachments could not give up everything but still wanted to be part of the movement.

Clare, the daughter of wealthy parents of Assisi, became fascinated with Francis and his life, and when she was about seventeen or eighteen the entered the religious life on Palm Sunday of 1212. First she went to live in a convent at the Church of San Paola near Assisi. Not content to live the Benedictine life, she and her followers soon set up their own convent in the little church of San Damiano, which Francis had earlier repaired. In 1215 Francis drew up a rule for their life which was recognized by Innocent IV. There were over twenty houses of Poor Clares throughout Italy and France by 1228.1

The third order began in 1210, when Francis and his friends were returning from Rome. Thomas of Celano describes the beginnings of this order:

They went about the towns and villages announcing the kingdom of God, preaching peace, teaching salvation of penance unto the remission of sins...Men ran, women too ran, clerics hurried, and religious hastened that they might see and hear the holy man of God who seemed to all to be a man of another world...Many of the people, both nobles and common people, clerics and laymen, impelled by divine inspiration, began to come to St. Francis, wanting to carry on the battle under his dis-

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cipline and under his leadership... To all he gave a norm of life, and he showed in truth the way of salvation in every walk of life.¹

By 1221, an official rule for the third, or lay order, was drawn up, presented to and approved by Pope Honorius III. From the reference in Thomas of Celano cited above, however, it seems that already by 1210 Francis had some sort of simple rule or way of life for members of the third order. Thomas, also in the same passage, refers to the "threefold army," thus inferring that the third order already existed sometime between 1210 and 1215.

The official rule for the third order is divided into eight chapters. The first, on daily life, required humble clothing and a simple life. Chapters two and three recommend fasting and giving to the poor. Chapter four is on prayer, chapter five on the sacrament and oaths. Chapter six deals with the monthly meeting, chapter seven with visiting the sick, buying the dead, and entering and leaving the order, and chapter eight is on the correction of faults and election of officers.²

There also is a letter written by Francis to "all the faithful" which is a general description of how the faithful should live. A variety of dates from 1214 to 1226

¹Thomas of Celano I, 36-37, as trans. in Hermann, pp. 20-21.

²Rule of the Third Order, as trans. in Fahy & Hermann, p. 168.
have been given to it; so it is difficult to determine whether it was a general admonition written shortly before his death.\(^1\)

By the time of the death of Francis on October 3 of 1226, the order was an international institution with houses in Italy, Spain, Portugal, France, England, Germany, and the Holy Land.

**THE APOSTOLIC LIFE**

Just as the encounter with the Gospels brought about Francis' conversion, so were the words of Christ Francis' guide in his apostolic life. In the few writings which are actually the work of Francis, the emphasis on reading and living the Gospel in a very literal sense is most evident. The fact that Francis accepted a life of poverty and decided to start a new order instead of joining one of the others as he was advised to do was undoubtedly because he felt that in response to the Scriptures read at the church of San Niccolo and elsewhere, his call was so clear and precise that he could not bend to go along with the other rules and regulations. Later, in 1223, when Francis became aware that the rules were losing some of their strict adherence to the poverty of the Gospels, he stated, "I want it to be written at the beginning and at the end of the rule that the

\(^1\)St. Francis of Assisi, *Letter to all the Faithful*, as trans. in Fahy & Hermann, pp. 100-101.
brethren must observe firmly the gospels of our Lord Jesus Christ." Regardless of the rule, the Gospels were to be the guide to the apostolic life.¹

In his formulation of the vita apostolica, it seems that Francis even occasionally put the words of Christ before ecclesiastical tradition. In the original rule of 1210, for example, Francis required no fasting or limiting of any foods, which had always been the mark of a religious community. His rule repeated clearly and simply the words of Christ as he sent out his disciples, "Eat what is placed before you."²

In his Testament Francis gives his most convincing support of the Gospels as the basis for his entire life:

When God gave me some Friars there was no one to tell me what I should do; but the Most High himself made it clear to me that I must live the life of the Gospel. I had this written down in the Rule of 1223 briefly and simply and his holiness the Pope confirmed it for me.³

Chapter I of the Rule of 1221 begins with the very same emphasis on the teachings of Christ: "The Rule and life of the friars is to live in obedience, in chastity, and without property, following in the teaching and the footsteps

¹Speculum perfectionis, as trans. in Karrer, p. 118.

²Luke 10:8 from Regula primitiva, Rule 2, as trans. in Moorman, Sources, p. 53.

³The Testament of St. Francis, as trans. in Fahy and Hermann, p. 68.
of our Lord Jesus Christ." This same emphasis is evident in the Rules and writings of all the friars, in which almost every statement is punctuated with Scripture texts.

Lambert, in his book entitled *Franciscan Poverty*, claimed that every little mannerism and action in the Franciscan life was determined by Gospel teaching. For example, the common greeting was, "Peace be to this house," taken directly from the words of Christ to his disciples. They washed each other's feet because Christ had washed his disciples' feet. Because Christ fasted for forty days in the wilderness, Francis also asked the brothers, in the Rule of 1221, to fast for forty days.

In accordance with his literal adherence to the words of Christ as a norm for life, Francis' first requirement for any new friar was the command of Christ to the rich young ruler: "If you will be perfect, go and sell all that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven; and come and follow me." Believing in the Gospels

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1 *Rule of 1221*, as trans. in Fahy & Hermann, p. 31.
4 See *Rule of 1221*, Chapter 6, as trans. in Fahy & Hermann, p. 37.
5 See *Rule of 1221*, Chapter 3, as trans. in Fahy & Hermann, p. 34.
6 Matthew 19:21.

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as the words of Christ, wanting to be perfect and trying to imitate Christ, what else could Francis do but be poor? It was an absolute essential which during his lifetime he unrelentingly pursued. During one of the General Chapter meetings held at Portiuncula, Peter of Caetano approached Francis and asked if he could accept some of the property of the new members so that they might have something to sell when they were not able to feed such a large group of men only on alms. Francis' answer was an unequivocal:

"No. Far be it from us, dearest brother, a piety that would cause us to act impiously toward the Rule of poverty for the sake of men."
Throwing up his hands, Brother Peter asked, "But what am I to do?"
Francis answered: Strip the altar of the Blessed Virgin...Believe me, the Holy Mother would far rather have us observe the teachings of her Son and strip her altar than adorn her altar and neglect the gospels."

Money of any type was absolutely forbidden, even to be touched. Brother Leo relates that Francis advised the friars to love money and dung to an equal degree. So when it happened that one of the friars touched money, "the holy Father Francis reproved him, and very severely blamed him for moving the money, and bade him lift the money from the window with his mouth...and put it with his own mouth on the dung of an ass."2

Before Francis even had a calling, he had given up

1Thomas of Celano II, 67, as trans. in Hermann, p. 123.
2Speculum perfectionis, 14, as ed. in Okey, p. 196.
his goods and decided to live in abject poverty. In his writings he seems never to deal directly with the question of why one should be poor; however, when one looks at many references he and his followers made to "Lascivies" the reason becomes clear. One must be poor because Christ was poor. To live like Christ, one must be poor like Christ and his disciples. Bonaventure tells of an incident when Francis saw one of his own friars humiliating a beggar. Angered, Francis made him kneel at the feet of the beggar and ask forgiveness and then said to the brother, "When you see a poor man, Brother, it is the image of the Lord and his poor Mother that you have before your eyes." Bonaventure goes on to say, "He [Francis] saw in all the poor the likeness of Christ." In his Rule of 1221 Francis stated that the friars should be delighted to "follow the lowliness and poverty of our Lord Jesus Christ," and that they should not be ashamed to beg alms, remembering that our Lord Jesus Christ, the son of the living all-powerful God was not ashamed. He was poor and he had no home of his own and he lived on alms, he and the Blessed Virgin and his disciples. Thomas of Celano relates that once when a certain brother spoke of the poverty of the Blessed Virgin and the want of

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1Bonaventure VIII, 5, as ed. in Okey, p. 352. See also Celano I, 76, as trans. in Hermann, p. 39 and Speculum perfectionis, 37, as ed. in Okey, p. 215.

2See Rule of 1221, Chapter 9, as trans. in Fahy & Hermann, p. 39.
Christ her son, "Francis immediately rose from the table, and with great sighs and many tears, ate the rest of his meal on bare ground." ¹

Lambert, in his book entitled *Franciscan Poverty,* also points out that the second order, that of the Poor Clares, who lived the apostolic life as the Franciscans did, were not required by Francis to do any preaching or to go out into the world in any way. Their only requirement was poverty. This leads Lambert to the conclusion, "The poverty of Christ was the key idea of the whole Franciscan Movement." ²

In agreement with this conclusion is Thomas of Celano, who relates that once some of the brothers were discussing the question, "Which virtue does more to make one a close friend of Christ?" Francis answered, "Know, my sons, that poverty is the special way to salvation; its fruit is manifold, but it is really well known only to a few." ³

Although Francis regarded money as evil and absolutely not to be touched, he did not regard property as evil. A practical reason, I suppose, is that no one, not even Francis, could get along without property of some sort. They needed a shed, a church, clothing, food, etc.

¹ Thomas of Celano II, 200, as trans. in Hermann, pp. 192-93.
² Lambert, pp. 57-59.
³ Thomas of Celano II, 200, as trans. in Hermann, pp. 192-93.
The problem of property, according to Francis, seems to have been in the acquiring of it. In his admonitions, Francis states, "It is wrong for anyone to receive more from his neighbor than he himself is willing to give to God."\footnote{The Admonitions of St. Francis, as trans. in Fahy & Hermann, p. 84.} Brother Leo also quotes the words of Francis, "It shames me most of all when I meet one who is poorer than I.\footnote{Speculum perfectionis, 37, as trans. in Karrer, p. 82.} Property which was not absolutely essential resulted in avarice and pride. To do without material goods made one humble as Christ was humble.

Although for Francis the life of poverty seemed to be the dominating factor in the \textit{vita apostolica}, preaching also was an essential ingredient. The command to preach came to Francis at the little church of San Damiano from the words of Matthew 10:7-14: "And as ye go, preach, saying, The Kingdom of Heaven is at hand." These words Francis decided to obey with all his power.\footnote{The event is described in Bonaventure III, 1, as ed. in Okey, p. 316.} Using the Gospel as his guide, as soon as he had three followers, they went out into the countryside preaching in groups of two.\footnote{Following the instructions of Jesus in Mark 6:7, "He gathered the twelve together and sent them out two by two."} The following summer Francis presented the first Rule to Inno-
cent III, who gave the brothers the license to preach repentance and admonished them to "preach without hindrance," bestowing on them the tonsure. They were first to seek permission from the local bishop, however.

Preach they did, particularly Francis. Thomas of Spoleto, who heard him preach, related:

God gave such power to his words that many factions of the nobility, among whom the fierce anger of ancient feuds had been raging with much bloodshed, were brought to reconciliation. Towards him, indeed, the reverence and devotion of men was so great that men and women rushed upon him headlong, anxious to touch the hem of his garment or to carry away bits of his clothing.

Francis and his followers preached everywhere and to everyone, including the birds and animals, according to the Fioretti. He eventually went to Egypt and preached the Word to

1 Bonaventure III, 10, as ed. in Okey, p. 321.

2 By making Francis and his followers official members of the clergy, the accusation which had been leveled at the Waldensians, that is, "that they were not sent" (see p. 33) could not be applied to Francis. Not only was he sent by the pope but also the local bishops. Innocent, perhaps foreseeing a problem similar to the Waldensian separation from the Church, is here incorporating them into it. When Cardinal Ugolino, protector of the order, wanted the friars to have papal letters to enable them to preach anywhere, Francis was violently opposed, as he was to any privilege. See Moorman, History of the Franciscan Order, pp. 47-48 and also The Testament of St. Francis, as trans. in Fahy & Hermann, p. 68.

3 Thomas of Spoleto, text appears in MGH, SS, XXX, 580.

4 The Little Flowers of Saint Francis, hereafter cited as Fioretti, Chapter XXI, as trans. in Okey, p. 39. Also see Bonaventure XII, 3-5, as ed. in Okey, pp. 370-79.
the Sultan Melik-el-Kamel himself.\textsuperscript{1}

In spite of his emphasis on preaching, in the year 1213 Francis himself seemed to have had some second thoughts about it. Seeking the advice of Brother Sylvester and Saint Clare, he wanted to know whether he should go on preaching or take up a life of contemplation. The answer of both was, "God has not called you for yourself alone but for the salvation of others also."\textsuperscript{2} The result was that Francis went out and preached even more than before.

In speaking of this particular incident, however, Bonaventure related that although Brother Sylvester later returned to a life of preaching, "Brother Sylvester was at that time giving himself up to continuous prayer in the mountain above Assisi." Brother Rufino also, from what little is known of him, seemed to have been a contemplative living in a small cell.\textsuperscript{3} From this it can be concluded that all of the friars did not preach, nor were they required to do so.

\textsuperscript{1}See Bonaventure IX, 8, as ed. in Okey, p. 363. Islamic law prescribed the death penalty for any Christian who tried to force his religion on a Moslem, as Francis was informed by the Sultan after he finished speaking. The Sultan instead provided him free access to any place he wanted to go to in Moslem lands, so impressed was he with Francis. (It should be remembered, however, that there is very little evidence for Francis' travels in Moslem lands.)

\textsuperscript{2}Bonaventure XII, 1 & 2, as ed. in Okey, pp. 376-77; also in Fioretti XVI, as trans. in Okey, pp. 28-30.

\textsuperscript{3}See Fioretti XXIX, as ed. in Okey, pp. 55-58.

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To live a life in imitation of Christ meant not only poverty and preaching, but also good works and manual labor. According to the reconstruction of the original rule, Francis requested:

Those brothers who know how to work shall work and pursue whatever trades they have learnt, so long as it is not contrary to the good of the soul and can be honestly carried on. And for their labour they may receive all things necessary, but no money.¹

The Rule of 1221 states the same idea on the subject of work. in his Testament Francis also says:

I worked with my own hands and I am still determined to work; and with all my heart I want all the other Friars to be busy with some kind of work that can be carried on without scandal. Those who do not know how to work should learn, not because they want to get something for their efforts, but to give good example and to avoid idleness.²

Actually, there is little evidence of the kinds of manual labor which were done. Francis, of course, rebuilt the Church of San Damiano and later, with the help of followers, the Church of Santa Maria di Portiuncula. It is also mentioned that he carried a broom with him to sweep out dirty churches.³ W. W. Seton, in his article on Brother Giles, relates that he took on such tasks as grave-digging,

¹Regula primitiva, Rule 3, as reconstructed in Moorman, Sources, p. 53.
²The Testament of St. Francis, as trans. in Fahy & Hermann, p. 68.
³See Speculum perfectionis, 57, as trans. in Karrer, p. 76.
basket-weaving, and water-carrying. These labors can be thought of as good works rather than as manual labor in the traditional sense.

In the Rule of 1221 Francis states: "All Friars must work hard at doing good." The good works of Francis are endless. The Speculum perfectionis relates that in winter when an old woman came seeking alms, Francis handed over his cloak, which the woman took and began to cut up for a tunic. There was not enough, however, so Francis went to another brother, and he gave his cloak also so that the old woman could be clothed. The friars were always giving their clothing away, at times even going naked. Many more examples could be quoted here of Francis and his followers helping beggars, lepers, and widows in all sorts of ways. In his letter to all the faithful, probably written shortly before his death, Francis, quoting from Luke 3:8, said:

"We must bring forth therefore fruits befitting repentance," and love our neighbors as ourselves...We must be charitable, too, and humble, and give alms, because they wash the stains of sin from our souls.

Good works were essential for the friars even to the point of loving and doing good to those who hate. For this was true imitation of Christ: "A person is really poor in

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2Speculum perfectionis, XXIX, as ed. in Okey, p. 209.
3Letter to All the Faithful, as trans. in Fahy & Hermann, pp. 94-95.
spirit when he hates himself and loves those who strike him in the face."¹

RELATIONSHIP TO THE CHURCH

Unlike the Waldensians, the Franciscans were never considered heretics or looked upon with disfavor by the official Church. Francis' devotion to the Church was as unwavering as his dedication to poverty. In each of his rules he both began and ended by showing his faith in the Church. The Rule of 1210 probably began, "Brother F. shall promise obedience and reverence to the Lord Pope Innocent and his successors." Section nine of that rule probably read, "All the brothers shall be Catholics."² The Rule of 1221 began in the same way and stated in a concluding paragraph:

We Friars Minor, servants worthless as we are, humbly beg and implore everyone to persevere in the true faith and in a life of penance; there is no other way to be saved. We beseech the whole world to do this, all those who serve our Lord and God within the holy catholic and apostolic church.³

Chapter nineteen of the Rule of 1221 is also devoted to exhorting the friars that they must be Catholics and says:

We must regard all other clerics and religious as our superiors in all that concerns the salvation of the

¹Matthew 5:31, as quoted in The Admonitions of Saint Francis, XIV, as trans. in Fahy & Hermann, p. 83.

²Regula primitiva, Rule 9, as reconstructed in Moorman, Sources, p. 54.

³Rule of 1221, Chapter 23, as trans. in Fahy & Hermann, p. 51.
We must respect their position and office together with their ministry.¹

In Chapter twenty-six of the *Admonitions* entitled "Religious should be respectful toward the clergy," Francis wrote:

They [the clergy] are in a privileged position because they have charge of the Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, which they receive and which they alone administer to others, and so anyone who sins against them commits a greater crime than if he sinned against anyone else in the whole world.²

Finally, in his letter to all the faithful written just before his death, he said: "We must fast and avoid sin and vice... We should visit churches often and show great reverence for the clergy."³

There is abundant evidence that Francis and his followers lived what they believed. Respect for the clergy particularly took the form of asking permission before preaching. This took time and apparently was a nuisance for some of the brothers, who asked Francis to get a papal declaration allowing them to preach without permission from each diocese; Francis, however, replied:

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¹*Rule of 1221*, Chapter 19, as trans. in Fahy & Hermann, p. 46. Francis either knowingly or unknowingly distinguishes between "office" (being placed in a position by God) and "ministry" (what one does while holding the office). The Waldensians generally did not distinguish between the two. See p. 43.

²*The Admonitions*, XXVI, as trans. in Fahy & Hermann, p. 86.

³*Letter to all the Faithful*, as trans. in Fahy & Hermann, p. 95.
For I wish through holy humility and reverence first to convert the clergy; who, when they see your holy life and humble reverence towards them, will ask you to preach and to convert the people; and that they themselves ask you to preach is better than your privilege, which would lead you to arrogance.¹

The reason for Francis' complete and unswerving faith in the Church was the same as for his complete faith in the Gospels. According to Francis, one could possess and contemplate the Most High by the Word, the sacrament, and the teaching of the priesthood.² In viewing the Church as the Body of Christ, Francis in his Testament said, "I am determined to reverence, love, and honour priests... because I can see the son of God in them."³ Not only was the Church the body of Christ in itself, but it was also the dispenser of the body and blood of Christ, as Francis expressed in his words: "I cannot see the most high Son of God with my own eyes except for his most holy Body and Blood which they receive and they alone administer to others."⁴

There are also some other statements of Francis that tend to give a more practical aspect to his faith and devotion to the Church. Thomas of Celano quotes Francis as ex-

¹ Speculum perfectionis, Cap. 50, Gregg Press edition, p. 131.
² Letter to all the Faithful, as trans. in Fahy & Hermann, p. 95.
³ The Testament of St. Francis, as trans. in Fahy & Hermann, p. 67.
⁴ The Testament of St. Francis, as trans. in Fahy & Hermann, p. 96.
horting his followers that it is the job of the brothers to save souls, and he adds, "Souls are saved more easily when there is peace with the clerics than if there is disorder." He also adds: "If you are sons of peace, you will gain for the Lord both the clergy and the people. This is more pleasing to God than if you gain the people only, while scandalizing the clergy." Thus, he saw the practical expediency of accomplishing his task in harmony with the clergy, rather than in conflict with it.

That Francis respected the Church as the Body of Christ on earth is very obvious, but his position on basic church doctrines, however, is more difficult to determine. The reason is that Francis and most of his early followers, with some notable exceptions were not educated, and certainly were not theologians. Nor could theology and doctrine be the essence of sermons and exhortations to the beggars, lepers, and lowly of Francis' world. In the following few paragraphs I will try to bring briefly into focus the few and scattered references to the Old Testament, Christology, Eschatology, the Church, the sacraments, and predestination.

For Francis, the New Testament, especially the Gospels and the words of Christ, seemed the most relevant portions of the Bible. He did, however, make references to the "Scriptures," thus implying the entire Bible, and according

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1 Thomas of Celano I, 146, as trans. in Hermann, pp. 159-60.
to Thomas of Celano he must have memorized a great deal of it. In the Rule of 1221, Francis quotes from the Old Testament seven times, and in his Admonitions there are five references to the Old Testament, usually to the Psalms. Also, in the few prayers which are attributed to him one can see the influence of the Psalms. References to the book of Genesis are made in the Admonitions, where he emphasizes God as the creator of the universe who created and formed the body of man in the likeness of his own beloved Son and made the soul of man in his own likeness. The Old Testament doctrine of original sin is also mentioned (Chapters II and V).

"God, three and one, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, Creator of all and Saviour of those who believe in him, who hope in Him, and who love him; without beginning and without end, he is unchangeably invincible, indescribably and ineffable, incomprehensible, unfathomable." This reference to the Trinity and to the nature of the Godhead, taken from the Admonitions, is only one of many. Throughout his rules, the Testament, and the Admonitions, there is constant reference to the three-in-one. In the Rule of 1221 there is al-

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1 Thomas of Celano II, 105, as trans. in Hermann, pp. 140-41.
2 The Admonitions, II & V, as trans. in Fahy & Hermann, pp. 79-80.
3 Rule of 1221, Chapter 23, as trans. in Fahy & Hermann, p. 52.
4 See especially the description of each member of the Trinity in the Rule of 1221, Chapter 23, as trans. in Fahy & Hermann, pp. 50-53.

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so a description of the function of Christ:

We give you the Father thanks because, having created us through your son, you decreed that he should be born, true God and true Man, of the glorious and ever blessed Virgin Mary and redeem us from our captivity by the blood of his passion and death. We give you the Father thanks because your Son is to come a second time in the glory of his majesty.  

In this statement, Francis reveals his belief in the incarnation of Christ, in the Trinity, in the virgin birth of Christ, in his redemptive role, and in his second coming to judge the world. Francis also revealed his extreme regard for Christ and his passion in the stigmata which he himself received toward the end of his life.

Although Francis never promoted eschatological speculation, as did the later Spirituals, he did reveal a constant feeling for the coming of the last days. One can sense the urgency of Francis' message, always in relationship to the end of time. The Rule of 1221 is full of references to the last judgement. Chapter nine of it states, "And that day will come upon you suddenly as a snare. For come it will upon all who dwell on the face of the earth." 

And in chapter sixteen he said, "Who ever is ashamed of me and my words, of him will the Son of Man be ashamed when he comes in his glory and that of the Father

1Matthew 5:31, as quoted in The Admonitions of Saint Francis, XIV, as trans. in Fahy & Hermann, p. 83.

2Regula primitiva, Rule 9, as reconstructed in Moorman, Sources, p. 54.
and of the holy Angels,"¹ and "Repent for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand,"² and "Behold I am with you even unto the end of the world."³

R. C. Petry in his article entitled "Medieval Eschatology and St. Francis of Assisi," points out how Francis by absolute poverty was attempting to preach repentance before it was too late: "He and they [his followers] were set apart through absolute poverty, and in co-operation with the Church, to prepare their fellowmen for the inevitable Last Days in which they all believed."⁴

Already at the beginning of his career Francis showed that he looked upon himself as a sort of new John the Baptist who was called to prepare the people for the second coming of Christ. Bonaventure relates the following incident which occurred while Francis was rebuilding the Church of San Damiano:

Making his way through a certain wood, chanting praises to the Lord...it chanced that some robbers rushed out on him. With fierce mien they asked the man of God who he was, and he, full of confidence, gave a prophetic answer, saying, "I am a herald of the great King."⁵

²Matthew 3:2.
³Matthew 28:20.
⁴R. C. Petry, "Medieval Eschatology and St. Francis of Assisi," Church History, IX (1940), 54.
⁵Bonaventure II, 5, as ed. in Okey, pp. 313-14. Also in Celano I, n. 16, as trans. in Hermann, p. 9.
Francis consistently urged his followers to say the Divine Office. In the Rule of 1221 he spelled out how the clerics in the order were to "celebrate the liturgy, pray for the living and dead, say the Miserere, the Pater noster, and the De profundis. The lay friars were to say the creed, the Pater noster, and Lauds."¹

Francis' devotion to the mother of Christ is evidenced by the poem he composed entitled, "Salutation of the Blessed Virgin."²

His immense respect and devotion to the Eucharist is evident in all of Francis' writings and in the writings of his early followers. For Francis the sacrament, like the Church and the Bible, was in reality Christ.³ In the "Letter to all the Faithful" he reiterated the words of the evangelists: "The man who does not eat his flesh and drink his blood cannot enter the Kingdom of God."⁴ In his Testament Francis explicitly stated that it is the Church alone which

¹See the Rule of 1221, Chapter 3, as trans. in Fahy & Hermann, pp. 33-34. Also the Rule of 1223, Chapter 3, as trans. in Fahy & Hermann, p. 59. Also the Testament of St. Francis, as trans. in Fahy & Hermann, p. 68.

²St. Francis of Assisi, Salutation of the Blessed Virgin, trans. in Fahy & Hermann, pp. 135-36.

³See The Testament of St. Francis, as trans. in Fahy & Hermann, p. 67.

⁴John 6:53, as quoted from The Letter to all the Faithful, trans. in Fahy & Hermann, p. 94. See also the Admonitions of St. Francis, Chapter 8, p. 77 and the Testament of St. Francis, p. 67. Also the Rule of 1221, Chapter 20, 46.
can administer the sacrament.\textsuperscript{1} His intense devotion, however, did not blind him to the misuse of the sacrament. His "Letter to all the Clerics" is almost entirely devoted to pointing out the careless handling and irreverent attitude of some clerics toward the body and blood.

The Rule of 1221 exhorts the friars to confess and do penance, preferably to a priest within the order, otherwise to any priest; Francis added:

\textit{If they cannot find a priest there and then, they should confess to one another. However, this does not excuse them from going to a priest afterward because the power of binding and loosing have been given to the priests alone.}\textsuperscript{2}

Finally, regarding predestination, very little is mentioned. It is not the type of subject which the "poor little man" would speculate about. In the "Letter to all the Faithful" Francis stated: "It is the Father's will that we should all be saved by the Son, and that we should receive him with a pure heart and chaste body."\textsuperscript{3} The one other reference to the doctrine of predestination is in the \textit{Fioretti}, in Chapter twenty-nine, which tells about how Brother Rufino "was once mightily assailed and tempted in soul touching predestination." The story goes on that the

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\textsuperscript{1}\textit{Testament of St. Francis}, as trans. in Fahy & Hermann, p. 67.
\textsuperscript{2}\textit{Rule of 1221}, Chapter 20, as trans. in Fahy & Hermann, p. 94.
\textsuperscript{3}\textit{Letter to all the Faithful}, as trans. in Fahy & Hermann, p. 94.
\end{flushright}
devil, appearing in the form of Christ to Rufino, told him that not only was he [Rufino] not one of the elect, but also, he was "numbered among the damned" and Francis along with him. Eventually Francis, seeing that Rufino was troubled, called him and told him that it was the devil and not Christ who had upset him and that the next time it happened he should tell the devil, "Open thy mouth and I will drop my dung therein," and sure enough, when Rufino told this to the devil, he left, very angry, never to return.¹ One can only conclude from these references that Francis seemed to have encountered the doctrine of predestination; however, he certainly considered all men as potentialities for the saving grace of Christ.

P. Hilarin de Lucerne claimed that it was the ability of Francis to reform the Church while remaining in it, obeying it, and accepting it, which marked him as one of the really great men in the history of the Church.²

¹Fioretti, Chapter XXIX, as trans. in Okey, pp. 55-58.

CHAPTER III
A COMPARISON

EARLY LIFE

The similarity of the early lives of Peter Waldo and Francesco Bernadone is striking. They were from similar backgrounds: Waldo was a merchant and Francis a merchant's son. In both cases, their conversion experiences were flashes of insight which appeared in a spectacular manner. For Peter there were probably three events: the song of St. Alexius, the death of a social equal, and the encounter with the words of Christ in the Gospels. For Francis, there was the dream, the leper, the command to repair the church, and finally the encounter with the words of Christ from the Gospel. The immediate results of the conversions were identical. Peter and Francis both completely renounced the old life, accepted a life of poverty strictly in adherence to the words of Christ, and allowed others to join them. Although Peter's following grew more rapidly than did Francis's, the pattern was identical.

1See p. 12 and 52 of this paper.
3See pp. 52-58.
4See pp. 13 and 58.
The followers of Peter Waldo were numerous, of the lower social classes, and included men, women, and probably children. There is no person of any importance who is known to have been attached to the Waldensian group, with the exception of Durand of Huesca, who is actually unknown, but who must have been educated since he wrote the document, Liber antiheresis. Within five to eight years after his conversion Peter was called before Archbishop Guichard and before the Third Lateran Council. The fact that he attracted the attention of the archbishop and the council implies that he must have had enough followers to make an impact. That he had women followers is unquestioned, which leads me to suspect that in some cases there were entire families that were taking up the apostolic life.

At this point there was already a difference in the early organization of Francis and Peter Waldo. Francis' followers were accepted more cautiously, they were single and celibate, and they were from various social classes and backgrounds. Bernard, his first disciple, for example, was "a wealthy man from Assisi," while Giles was the lowliest peasant. After the first three or four years, his followers still numbered only twelve men, all unattached and celibate.¹

With Francis there was more emphasis on procedure

¹See pp. 58-60.
and order than there was with Waldo. There were requirements for his followers. They were to go out two by two and after a period to rejoin the others. They usually went to specifically planned places. As soon as there were twelve followers they formulated a rule which guided the life, dress, and belief of the followers. Later, more complete rules were formulated, meeting dates were arranged, geographical areas were set up, and a form of hierarchy developed.¹

With some exceptions, the Waldensians were not nearly as organized. By 1218 there were two main groups, the French and the Lombard, along with some smaller scattered groups. Administration was left to each group. There were leaders, but they are seldom mentioned. There was a hierarchy, but it seems to have been minimal.²

This difference in organization must be seen, of course, in the light of the different status of the two groups. Within ten to twelve years after Peter's conversion the Waldensians were heretics, while the Franciscans had the blessings of the pope himself. Thus while the future of the Franciscans was quite certain, that of the Waldensians was not, and details of the meetings, decisions, rules, and guidelines of heretics would more than likely not be as plentiful as those of accepted organizations.

¹See pp. 63-68.
²See p. 20.
Also to be considered is the fact that the Waldensians were more unlettered than the Franciscans.

The impact of the two organizations upon society is difficult to determine. Waldensian antisacerdotalism seemed to appeal to a different type of people than did Francis' poverty. To the Waldensian ranks seemed to flock the people disillusioned and dissatisfied with the Church and the clergy.¹ Francis, however, did not have such a pre-existing audience, at least not in the beginning. His followers were men disillusioned with their own life and their relationship with God, not with the existing Church. For the early Franciscan followers, it was a soul-searching decision to join Francis,² while it would seem that for many of the Waldensian followers, it was a joyful knowledge that there was a group of others disillusioned with the Church with which they could join and find communion. The completely differing concept of the Church on the part of the followers of Waldo

¹Most historians who deal with the reform movements in Italy in the late twelfth century state that especially the "Humiliati" and the "Arnoldist" were incorporated into the Waldensian "Poor Lombard" group. See, for example, Ellen Scott Davison, Forerunners of Saint Francis (Cambridge, Mass.: Riverside Press, 1927), p. 99. Also H. Lea, History of the Inquisition, I, 76. Also Wakefield and Evans, p. 31. I have not found any real evidence to support this, however.

²According to the Leg. Tri. Soc., for example, Brother Sylvester, originally a priest who was only looking for money, began to reflect on the life of Francis and his few followers, and some time later, after reflecting on his own life, joined the order. See the trans. in Karrer, pp. 17 and 18.
as compared with the followers of Francis made for a different type of follower and audience.

In summary, then, the followers of Francis were from a wider social spectrum than were the followers of Waldo. Francis' following developed slower and in a more organized fashion than did Waldo's and finally, the reasons for joining Francis were a more inward disillusionment, while the followers of Waldo seemed disillusioned with the institutional Church.

APOSTOLIC LIFE

The apostolic life of both the early Franciscans and the Waldensians stemmed from the Biblical commands and the examples of the early apostles. Perhaps the Biblical emphasis was not quite so obvious in the Franciscan movement as in the Waldensian; however, it was just as important. For Francis the Word was one of the ways through which a person experienced Christ on this earth. The importance of the Bible in his writings and his actions is very evident.¹ For the Waldensians, of course, the Bible came to be the single basis for their entire life and doctrine.²

The two movements become divergent when one considers the other aspects of the apostolic life, that is, poverty, preaching, and manual work. Both groups practiced poverty

¹See pp. 71-72.
²See pp. 24-26.
and both preached; however, the emphasis was not the same.
Poverty was the over-riding emphasis in the Franciscan move-
ment, while preaching was for the Waldensians. It is evi-
dent that for Francis, the life of poverty as the imitation
of Christ came first and preaching was secondary. For the
Waldensians the main task was to preach and bear witness to
"the uttermost parts of the earth" at a time when they felt
the Church was neither witnessing nor had the complete truth
of which to bear witness. For them poverty was a means to
freeing them from earthly cares and thus better enabling them
to preach.\(^1\)

The different emphasis is evidenced by the reception
given each group by the Church. Both were ordered not to
preach unless they had permission from the local clergy.
Waldo's insistence on preaching regardless of permission or
lack of it led to breaking that order and eventually to
their being considered heretical.\(^2\) Francis, on the other
hand, accepted the command and conscientiously followed it.\(^3\)
The question of poverty, of course, was never tested, but
it is interesting to speculate on who would have been con-
sidered a heretic and who a saint had the Church pronounced

\(^1\)See pp. 28-30 on the importance of preaching for the
Waldensians, and pp. 73-77 on the importance of poverty for
the Franciscans.

\(^2\)See pp. 28-29 and 37.

\(^3\)See pp. 83-84.
that anyone could preach but no one could live the life of poverty without the permission of the local clergy.

On the matter of manual work also, Francis and his followers took the position which was favorable in the eyes of the Church, that one should do manual work, while the Waldensians took the opposite view and were denounced for it.\(^1\)

**RELATIONSHIP WITH THE CHURCH**

Although preaching was a distinct part of the apostolic life for both groups, it was also the cause of the Waldensian break with the Church. First of all, it was the fact that they preached without permission, and secondly it was the doctrines of their preaching which were to widen the gap between the two groups.

The doctrine of the sacraments particularly was attacked by the Waldensians when they preached that sacraments performed by an unworthy priest were of no effect and when they recognized sacraments performed by any honorably man or woman.\(^2\) Francis, of course, never varied from the belief that "the power of binding and loosing has been given to the priests alone."\(^3\)

The whole theory of apostolic succession was attacked

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\(^1\)See pp. 19-20 and 80-81.

\(^2\)See pp. 40-41.

\(^3\)See pp. 89-90.
when the Waldensians stated that the true church exists wherever true worshippers are gathered and when they denounced the institutional Church and particularly the hierarchy.¹ Again, Francis held the traditional position.²

The idea of clerical celibacy, which was the tradition of the Western Church, is another idea on which the two groups differed. The friars were "bound to avoid the sight or company of women,"³ whereas the Waldensians went against tradition in not demanding celibacy and indeed in sending out both male and female to preach and teach.⁴

Finally, as already mentioned, there was quite a difference in attitude or temperament between the Waldensians and the Franciscans. The impetuous anti-clericalism of the "Poor of Lyons" was very different from the humble patience of the "Fratres Minores." This was probably the most important element causing the Waldensians to be separated from the Church and the Franciscans to be incorporated into it. One can assume that both were equally aware of the condition of the clergy at the turn of the twelfth century, yet Francis could say, "I can see the Son of God

¹See p. 43.
²See pp. 82-84.
³From the Rule of 1221, as trans. in Fahy & Hermann, p. 46.
⁴See p. 18.
in them [the clergy] and they are better than I,"¹ while the Waldensians referred to the Church as "the whore of Babylon."²

Francis' complete faith in the Church remained the same, while that of the Waldensians quite naturally changed as they came to be considered more heretical. Peter in his profession of faith of 1179 or 1180 could say, "We firmly believe... in the true ecclesiastical orders... as well as everything read or sung in the Church."³ This is a far cry from the "whore" idea which shows up in the journals of the inquisitor Moneta, who was writing in 1230.

¹See p. 84.
²See p. 32, accusation "m."
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