anyone who was willing to go for fear of death; since in the past many had been very badly mistreated. Our father Brother Giovanni Dominici, like a man who loves God's honor and desires to see unity with all his heart, wanted to be the one who went to the antipope, but Pope Gregory saw that he needed his assistance and did not want to send him. He sent his companion, a lay brother named Brother Matteo, who left San Zanipolo with our father and was his most faithful companion in all his labors. This man was a true servant of God: with great fervor he left his wife as a nun in our convent, while out of humility he preferred to be a lay brother in the order of Saint Dominic under the obedience of our father, who at that time was in charge of the friary of San Zanipolo.  

XIV

HOW THE POPE NEGOTIATED WITH THE ANTIPOPE, AND HOW THE FLORENTINES, OUT OF ENVY, PLOTTED AGAINST GREGORY, THE GOOD AND TRUE SHEPHERD

When Gregory had been made pope in Rome with all the ceremonies ordained by the holy mother church and was accepted by all as true pope, he sent the aforementioned Brother Matteo to the antipope with a letter of renunciation, declaring that he was ready to renounce if the other would renounce and one person alone be made pope, and that a place should be found where they could get together within fifteen months to form this union. This Brother Matteo went and carried the letters to all the lands he traversed, announcing that Messer Angelo Correr had been made pope in Rome with the name Gregory XII and was accepted by all as true pope. Only the Florentines were unhappy, because he was Venetian. Suried by their own envy, they said, “If we’re going to have a Venetian for pope, you should know that he won’t last a year.” They said this in the presence of Brother Matteo, and they did so because they wanted a Florentine, since when Innocent was elected pope they had spent a lot of money at the [papal] court to have a Florentine chosen, but the Lord God wouldn’t allow this on account of their pride.  

When Brother Matteo arrived at Avignon, he delivered his message to the antipope, Benedict. Upon hearing it, he had Brother Matteo seized and placed in a tower under the guard of four knights. After fourteen days had passed, Brother Matteo was brought before the antipope, who promised him great benefices and also threatened to take his life; but Brother Matteo, steady and strong, was ready to accept a thousand deaths for the holy church. When the antipope saw Brother Matteo’s virtue and his loyalty to the person who had sent him, he learned from this excellent example and sent him back to Gregory, with his cardinal’s concurrence, saying that he would be willing to come to the city of Savona, where the two of them could meet to negotiate the union. When Brother Matteo returned with the antipope’s letters, Gregory and all those who desired peace were thoroughly pleased.

Gregory sent our reverend father to Venice, to see whether the most illustrious government would provide an armed galley to escort Gregory to Savona when the time came; and this was promised to him. Upon our father’s return to Rome, he was named bishop of Ragusa, and four Venetians and two Florentines and the bishop of Città di Castello were made cardinals.  

All were holy men with good reputations. In that one year the most holy Pope Gregory sowed in the field of holy church some good seed so that it might be fruitful, and he strove to uproot bad practices and plant good ones in the vineyard of the Lord. As I said, he wanted all prelates to live honestly and without tyranny. For instance, there was a certain cardinal who had an income of 20,000 ducats a year, and Gregory told him, “Don’t display such pomp, but rather share with poor priests.” Some of the leading cardinals had never said mass, and there were those among them who had gone fourteen years without confessing; and our father Brother Giovanni Dominici managed to get them to confess.

After the father of the family had sowed the good seed in his field, night came and the enemy of man sowed weeds on top of it and went away, and when time came for the grain to sprout, up sprang the weeds as well [Matt. 13:24–30], since those who were accustomed to eating the flesh of duplicity and falsehood in Egypt did not find manna to their taste [Exod. 16:3]. Wolves could not live among lambs. The holy father proceeded in good faith, while the setters of snares betrayed him in secret. Thus the Florentines plotted with one of the leading cardinals, a man named Baldassar, to have Gregory trapped and killed when he came to Savona to restore unity. He did this out of wickedness and greed, because he feared losing his benefices and honors if unity was restored, and he thought that if Gregory was dead they could make a pope more like them. But by God’s will the treasonous letters came into the

51. The wife of Brother Matteo is not identified in the necrology.
52. Innocent VII was Gregory’s predecessor as pope of the Roman obedience from 1404 to 1406.
53. Benedict XIII was pope of the Avignon obedience from 1394 until his deposition by the Council of Constance in 1417; he died in 1423.
54. Giovanni Dominici was named archbishop of Ragusa (Dubrovnik, on the Dalmatian coast) on July 29, 1407.
hands of Gregory, who had set out from Rome to go to Savona, while the antipope had likewise left his place to come to Savona. Learning of this betrayal, both of them halted, and Gregory came to Lucca and sent an emissary to the antipope to arrange for another, safer place. These wicked sowers of snare had the messenger detained, so that the time limit that had been set for restoring unity would pass and Gregory would seem to have broken his word. When Gregory saw that the time limit was drawing near and no reply was forthcoming, he sent two ambassadors he trusted so that they might make the accord regarding peace and unity. These men lacked the necessary prudence and returned having sown greater discord than before, since the antipope said that he had no desire to go to his death. When Gregory heard this, he was in agony. Since the promised time limit was getting ever closer, he sent back his most faithful follower Brother Matteo, saying that he should choose whatever city he liked that was most convenient to him. He was ready to suffer a thousand deaths, if only unity might be restored. But by the time Brother Matteo arrived, the antipope had changed his mind and said that he did not want to put himself at risk, for which reason Brother Matteo returned to Gregory utterly disconsolate.

When the cardinals saw that the time limit had passed without unity being restored, they took this as a legitimate reason to turn against Gregory. The demon that entered Judas entered two cardinals who had been cardinals before Gregory became pope, and just as Judas betrayed the Lord Jesus Christ, these men betrayed the pope. They sent letters advancing their false arguments to the cardinals of the antipope and many other prelates and rulers of cities, alleging that Gregory had perjured himself, that the term within which he was obliged to restore unity had passed without peace being made, and many other slanderous against the truth. While these two traitors remained at court, they did not go to call on the holy father as is customary, and similarly maligned the other cardinals. Astonishingly, the holy father sent to say that they should offer him their obedience, while they, like rebels, demonstrated their wickedness and refused to obey the holy father—and he angrily waited for them to correct themselves and would not inflict on them the penalty they justly deserved for their disobedient double-dealing. Since these men nonetheless feared that their treason would be discovered and the pope would have them killed, they secretly left his court and joined the antipope’s cardinals. With financial backing from the Florentines, they summoned the council in Pisa, saying that these two popes were schismatics and forsworn since they had not restored unity. Many people believed this and so went to that council, and thus, just as the princes and priests turned the people against Christ, so these men stirred them against Gregory so that many cried, “Crucify crucify eum.” Alleging their false arguments, they condemned Gregory as schismatic along with the antipope and had them painted on some paper that they burned in a mock execution, indicating thereby that there no longer was a pope and that they intended to elect another one. When Gregory learned of this, he regretted not having detained those two traitors, and said, “Since I was made pope, I have done nothing that so grieves at my conscience as this, that I didn’t bring those two traitors to justice.”

When Gregory saw that that council was assembling at Pisa, he came to Siena for greater security. He was very well received there because of the great devotion they felt for his holiness, and the holy father remained in Siena almost like another Moses praying and cursing for the holy church. The Council of Pisa sat for four months and then, on the feast of Saint John the Baptist, when a year and six months had passed with Gregory as pope, proclaimed a Pope Alexander. When they heard this, all the rulers of the earth withdrew their obedience from Gregory and offered it to Alexander. The city of Siena recognized that the Florentines had betrayed the truth and held that Gregory was the true pope, but to go along with the rest they gave their obedience to Alexander, so that Gregory thought it best to leave Siena. But even before Siena withdrew its obedience, he was abandoned by most of his cardinals, who went to Pisa.

Seeing himself left all alone, Gregory named our father a cardinal along with four other Venetians, who were very devout men of holy life. Since the people of Siena had withdrawn their obedience, Gregory departed from there and came to Lucca. When Cardinal Baldassar learned that Gregory was leaving Siena, he made a deal with the Florentines, promising them lavish gifts if they would deliver Gregory into his hands; he did this in order to bring him to Alexander, who would have him burned as a heretic. The Florentines sent a large force to detain him, but as it pleased God, Gregory, without being aware of this plot, had set out half an hour before that army reached the pass. He arrived at Lucca with eight cardinals and many bishops and prelates of good life, who together with the ruler of Lucca advised Gregory to summon a

55. The Council of Pisa opened on March 25, 1409, and elected Pietro Filangi as Pope Alexander V on June 17, 1409. Gregory XIII had then been pope for two and a half years, not the one and a half indicated by Sister Bartolomea.
56. Siena withdrew its obedience from Gregory and recognized Alexander on July 4, 1409.
57. Giovanni Dimitri was created cardinal of San Sisto on April 23, 1409; the three (not four) other persons named cardinal with him were Jacopo del Tore and two nephews of Gregory XII, Antonio Croce and Giovanni Condulmer (the future Eugenius IV). Note that Sister Bartolomea has reversed the sequence of events. Gregory named Giovanni Dimitri and the other cardinals before the Council of Pisa. Indeed, it was this act that convinced most of the college of cardinals that he had no intention of fulfilling his promise to restore unity, provoking them to break with him and convene the Council of Pisa.
not want him to come to Venice and so had him pass by way of Chioggia and Torcello. When the holy father arrived at Chioggia, nearly half of Venice went to greet him; and when he saw such a multitude of Venetians, he lifted up with joy and gave everyone his blessing and many indulgences. He stayed there for two days and then came to Torcello, and there as well great throngs went to meet him. He greeted everyone kindly, from which all those who loved him received the greatest consolation. Even some of those who had given credence to the slander and defamation heaped upon him were moved to devotion when they saw his entirely gracious and humble bearing. One of the leading gentlemen told me that if the doge had seen him he would have won his firm support, since he bore himself so graciously that everyone who saw him said, "This man is a saint." He remained five days in Torcello before departing for Cividale, and when he passed close by Venice, he gazed compassionately upon it and tearfully said, "Oh Venice, Venice, who does not accept the visitor that God sends you." 60

When he arrived at Cividale, the leader of that city with all the people received him with great charity. Residing in Cividale, he did everything in his power to bring the lambs back to the true shepherd; but the wolves had so blinded the lambs that they did not perceive the truth, and the lord who ruled the city, for fear of war, began to turn against him. Still, all the religious and the entire populace of the city believed that Gregory was the true pastor. All the religious orders and all the cities and lands were divided among themselves. In Venice especially, everything was in schism. Such an uproar could be heard in the council that it sounded as if they were hacking each other to pieces, since many gave obedience to Alexander and many to Gregory, and for this reason the council was sharply divided. But above all, Messer Michele Steen, doge of Venice, was set against Gregory, since he had wanted one of his nephews to be named bishop and the holy father would not do it because he was not fit for that office. 61 This doge and a few others carried the day over the majority that wanted Gregory, and so they asked for Barabbas and condemned Christ. They held many rancorous meetings, and at the last, which was held on the eve of Saint Augustine, they withdrew their obedience from Gregory. 62 We might well say that this almost repeated the Passion of the Lord Jesus Christ in many respects, since when he went to Jerusalem the

58. Lucca, which jealously preserved its independence from Florence, was ruled at this time by Paolo Guinigi.
59. Carlo Malatesta ruled Rimini from 1385 until his death in 1429, he and Giovanni Dominici were Gregory's most faithful supporters.

60. Gregory's words echo those of Jesus (Luke 13:34 and Matt. 23:37), "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, killing the prophets and stoning those who are sent to you!"
61. Michele Steen was doge of Venice 1400–1413, succeeding Giovanni Dominici's close friend and supporter Antonio Venier (doge 1382–1400).
62. After tumultuous debates, Venice declared for Alexander V on August 26, 1409, the principal feast of Saint Augustine is August 28.
whole city went forth to greet him with great festivity crying "rex Israel," and shortly thereafter they asked for Barabbas and crucified Christ, from whom they had received so many benefits. So it was with this his vicar, when he was created pope, all Venice rejoiced and celebrated, sounding the bell for many days and then forming a most solemn procession to San Marco, and then sent him seven solemn ambassadors, who went with greater pomp than any embassy had ever displayed before. But these honors were transformed into great sorrow, since he suffered more harm from his Venetians than from the other cities. For many cities, when they learned that the Venetians had withdrawn their obedience from him, did the same, whereas if the Venetians had remained firm the others would have done likewise. But just as Christ was condemned by his kin according to the flesh, so was this his vicar.

The Passion of the Lord Jesus Christ was renewed in many ways in this his servant. The night that Gregory was condemned, a certain religious person was praying, offering tearful prayers for Gregory and for this city which was so torn by strife, that person was carried in spirit to the Great Council and heard all the uproar that was being made and saw in their midst the Lord Jesus Christ dripping blood, crucified anew. Many other signs were seen. Some gentlemen who feared God would not go along, and many like rabid dogs cried, "Crucifige crucifige eum!" and so the opposing party triumphed.

When the government issued an order that no one should call Gregory pope, the anguish and suffering of his friends and relatives was beyond words, and the whole populace wept. When Gregory received the news that the Venetians had decided against him, he said, "Blessed be my Lord Jesus Christ, who wishes that I travel the road of martyrdom." The cardinals, together with all those who loved the truth, were stricken almost dead with anguish when they heard the news, since they had hoped to be liberated by the Venetians. They passed that whole night in bitterness, and in the morning they all went to the holy father, thinking they would find him dead, but the holy father had spent that night in prayer with Jesus on the Mount of Olives and had prayed to the Father that he not have to drink from the chalice of the Passion if this might be, but nonetheless that God's will be done. After he had taken comfort in Jesus Christ, seeing that it was the will of the celestial Father that this come to pass, he descended from the mountain and came to his disciples, who had come there to comfort him. When they saw his face joyous and resplendent like the sun—and he genuinely seemed jubilant—everyone who beheld this marvel exclaimed, "Truly, this man is a saint." When they wanted to start to talk about these things, the holy father said, "I deserve much worse for my sins." All God's servants and all those who supported Gregory, and especially our sisters of Corpus Domini, prayed without a break for the holy father and for the cardinal our father and for the purity of the holy church, and many of the sisters had lovely visions, so that day and night they never ceased praying with the greatest tears, moans, and sighs.

Now, since the Lord wished to rescue his servants from the lions' jaws, he sent his angel—that is, the king of Apulia, for he alone did not render obedience to Alexander. He sent six armed galleys to the port of Cividale to carry away the holy father and all his followers. When that evil cardinal of Bologna, whose name was Baldassar Cossa, heard that those galleys had gone to carry the holy father to one of the king's cities, he sent many soldiers to lie in wait to seize the holy father when he boarded the galley. The Lord of Cividale, who loved the holy father, warned him about that army, and everybody was thrown into despair, seeing that there was no other way to reach the port where the galleys were. But just as the holy patriarch Jacob divided his household in two parts for fear of his brother who persecuted him, so the holy father, enlightened by the Holy Spirit, divided his household. He and his cardinals dressed as chaplains while the archbishop Messer Paolo [Lolli] donned the pope's robes, and disguised in this fashion they set out from Cividale to board the galleys. Their enemies thus fixed their eyes on Messer Paolo in the papal robes, allowing the pope and his cardinals to escape and board the galley. This happened on [September 7], the vigil of the Nativity of the Virgin. All those on the galley received him with great devotion, seeing his bearing so humble and gracious, and when they saw how exhausted he was from his harried flight, everyone pleaded with him to take a little something to eat. He replied with joyous countenance, "I would be ungrateful if I did not fast on the vigil of my dear Mother who has rescued me from such peril. For I must tell you that while I was racing on my horse, I saw a woman shining bright who went before me, reassuring me that I would reach safety." Hearing this, everyone remained greatly edified by him. Then the galleys set sail and with divine assistance he soon arrived in Caeta, where he was received with the greatest honor and rejoicing. But Messer Paolo was captured in place of the pope and carried off to prison. When his captors saw that they had been tricked and made into fools, they gave him a good many beatings, but he, having rescued the innocent from their clutches, patiently bore every insult.

63 On relations between Gregory and Venice, see Dieter Göggesnüs, Venezia e il primo pontificato di papa Sisto V sulla cattedra di S. Pietro (Gregorio XIII [Angelo Correr], 1506-1523), Centro Tedesco di Studi Veneziani, Quaderni 30 (Venice: Centro Tedesco di Studi Veneziani, 1985)

64 As it happened, Ladislaus of Durazzo, King of Naples, soon proved to be an unreliable supporter.
HOW POPE GREGORY ARRIVED AT GAETA

When the people of Gaeta beheld his sanctity, all held him in the greatest reverence. Even the king often came to visit him, promising to remain loyal to him and fight for him, since only he and his kingdom together with Lord Carlo of Rimini sided with Gregory, while all the rest were with Alexander. Now, after ten months had passed Alexander died, and in eleven days Baldassar Cossa, a thoroughly wicked man, was elected antipope. 65 With great cunning, he persuaded the king to withdraw his obedience from Gregory, promising him the imperial crown if he would support his entrance into Rome. Because he was more interested in his own prestige than in that of the Lord God, this good king accepted the promises of this Pope John [XXIII] and withdrew his obedience from Gregory and gave it to Pope John, and soon thereafter arranged for Pope John (who had been in Bologna) to enter Rome. When Gregory heard this, he begged the citizens of Gaeta to harbor him until he could find some other refuge, and with great charity they all swore they would risk death for him. No one could recount the sorrow and anguish of all those in the holy father’s entourage who saw themselves held captive in the king’s power. Only Gregory seemed in good spirits, because of the great confidence he always had in God.

When our father the lord cardinal saw that every worldly hope had failed to restore the holy church to peace, he received Gregory’s permission to go to the king of Hungary, because he hoped to persuade him to be the means of establishing unity in the church. Having received permission, our father set out with a single servant and went to Hungary in disguise to avoid being recognized.

The holy father, seeing himself in such danger, sent to ask his dearest son, Lord Carlo of Rimini, to receive him. Despite the opposition of the whole world and the threats of John the antipope, like an obedient son this man was ready to risk his life to defend the truth if only he could help Gregory; and so he welcomed him graciously. Now, Gregory’s kinsmen and some Venetian gentlemen hired a boat in Gaeta, telling its owner that he should carry Gregory away quietly, because the people of Gaeta had been ordered by the king not to let Gregory leave. And the rulers of Gaeta would have gladly protected and upheld him and done whatever they could to support him because they loved him and recognized his sanctity, having received many favors from him and witnessed some fine miracles. One of them occurred one day during a procession, when there was such a tremendous flash of lightning that they all thought they would die, and everybody cried, “Have mercy, holy father.” As he knelt humbly on the ground praying and making the sign of the holy cross, the lightning ceased and the weather turned splendid. There was pestilence throughout Apulia at that time, except in Gaeta. A horrendously ugly old woman was seen lurking outside the gates of Gaeta, crying loudly and saying, “I cannot remain in this city as long as Pope Gregory inhabits it.” When asked who she was, she replied, “I am Death, who is denied access to this city as long as Gregory resides in it.”

Now, the holy father was aware of the citizens’ goodwill, but because the king expected to find him at Gaeta he wished to depart for Rimini and could not. As soon as the king arrived at the port, before he could disembark the rulers of Gaeta went to meet the king and said, “Oh holy crown, how could you so scorn God’s church that you have sold its pastor for 50,000 ducats? Know that you thereby offend Gaeta. We speak to you on behalf of everyone, since we are prepared to ransom him and face death for him.” When the king heard these words, he did not disembark in the city so as to not to throw the city into an uproar. After three days he sent four knights to Gregory, renouncing his obedience to him. Among them was a kinsman of that antipope who plotted with the canons of Gaeta to secretly deliver Gregory into the king’s hands, but the Lord, who enlightens whoever trusts in him, rescued him marvelously in the following manner. A leading citizen of Gaeta, who had given the holy father the use of a beautiful villa as his lodging, immediately went to the holy father and threw himself on his knees, saying, “Holy father, flee quickly, because the canons are trying to hand you over to the king.” He immediately broke open a doorway that led into his house, and the holy father with his cardinals and his things passed through that door and went to the marina and boarded a boat. They soon came to the port where the ship was, and the holy father and his entourage boarded the ship and in a few days arrived in Rimini. Oh lovable Lord God, who delights in testing his friends and delivering whosoever loves the truth! Just half an hour after the holy father had fled, the traitor arrived at the house he had abandoned, looking to seize him and carry him to the king, and finding him gone, he remained defeated.

The holy father stayed in Rimini, yearning for the unification of the holy church and praying fervently for it, and while this was going on, our father returned from Hungary. On this account the emperor convened a council to restore unity, inviting all the prelates and theologians of the world to come to a city named Constance, where it would be decided how to restore peace in the

65. Alexander V died on May 3, 1410, Baldassar Cossa (who was rumored to have poisoned Alexander) was elected Pope John XXIII fourteen days later, on May 17.
he sent to him with many threats, declaring that he would kill him if he did not turn the antipope John over to him—for which reason he handed him over promptly. Since it was apparent to all that this John had acted against the council and perjured himself, and in light of the evidence of the many wicked deeds he had always done, for which he would have deserved death, he was stripped of his titles and condemned to prison. The emperor entrusted him to one of John’s enemies, who held him under close guard in a castle, as he deserved. 68 This was in the first year that the council was assembled to create the new pope.

When the council saw how Gregory had humbly resigned out of zeal for unity, he was highly praised, and to his great honor he remained as legate to Recanati. That other antipope, Benedict, persisted in his stubbornness, so that to his great shame he was condemned as a rebel against unity while our father remained a cardinal in great honor. 69 The whole council praised his goodness and wisdom and also that of Gregory, and the emperor loved him wholeheartedly. God wonderfully aids and delivers those who defend the truth, as was manifestly the case with these two saintly men who had suffered so many disgraces and dangers in order to uphold the truth, while the two antipopes who did not act truthfully were left confounded.

After the council had met in Constance for three years, the new and only pope was created and made at God’s will. This was on Saint Martin’s day, and so he comes to be called Pope Martin V, may Jesus Christ be praised. 70

68. John XXIII convoked the Council of Constance on November 5, 1414. When it became apparent that the council would insist that he resign as pope, John fled the city on March 21, 1415. He was soon detained and remained in custody until December 1417. The council deposed John on May 29, 1415, and accepted the resignation of Gregory XII on July 6. Benedict XIII was deposed on July 26, 1417, after his last political supporters had abandoned him.

69. Benedict XIII refused to resign or to recognize his deposition by the Council of Constance, and he continued to consider himself the sole legitimate pope until his death in 1423. Hardly anyone shared his opinion.

70. Orione Colonna was elected pope on November 11, 1417, and took the name Martin V, he was pope from 1417 to 1418.

71. Sister Bartolomea is off by a year: Gregory died in 1417.
his many notable words he said this: "I have not known the world, and the world has not known me." This can be understood and confirmed by the evidence of his holy conversation and life. He did not know the world in its carnal delights, since he died a pure virgin—and our father, who heard his general confession, bears witness to this. He did not know the world through pomp or pride: he said that he left its honors no more than if they had been offered to others; he gave audience to everybody, and the more lowly they were—especially the servants of God—the more willingly he heard them. He did not know the world through anger and vendetta, but with great mildness tolerated the whole world, which was very much against him with many slanders and persecutions. He said that when he suffered greater persecution, he felt God’s greater sweetness all the more. He did not know the world through avarice, since he never granted benefices by simony, but only to able and virtuous persons, and he always sought God’s honor. He did not know the world through envy, even though he received many insults from the envious, and he would say in all his troubles, "For my part, I have no enemies, every man has his opposite." He did not know the world through gluttony or through lust, since he was entirely sober and chaste, he neither ate nor slept unless he was hungry or very tired. He was adorned with all the virtues and therefore did not know the world, since he was crucified to the world and the world to him. And therefore he was persecuted by the world, because the world did not know him.

As an indication of this, when he passed from this life he appeared to his beloved Brother Matteo, who was at an abbey in Rimini where he lived alone among the savage beasts as he had long wanted to do. While he was in prayer, praying for the holy church, this glorious Gregory appeared and called him, saying, "Oh Brother Matteo, I am leaving." He asked, "Holy father, where are you going?" He said to him, "I am going to the desert. Do you want to come with me?" Brother Matteo responded, "Not right now," and at once Gregory vanished. This happened on Saint Luke’s day at the hour of none, and so he wrote down the day and hour, and found that the blessed soul had passed away and appeared to Brother Matteo. And as for his saying, "Do you want to come with me?", he understood this in light of the affection they both had borne for the holy church, as if to mean, "What pastor shall come after me with as much concern for the honor of God and the holy church?"

To tell the truth, people like him are rare. To show just how rare they are, once when our father was discussing with a number of servants of God the exceptional virtues of many people, he came to the conclusion and said that of all the servants of God that he had known personally, he had found only three who were complete in every virtue and perfection, and one of them was Pope Gregory XII. This was confirmed by all those who knew him and frequented him day and night, who said that he never remained idle: he always spoke of and discussed the holy Scriptures, no one dared speak ill of others in his presence, and he sharply reprimanded those who spoke idle words. Our father told us that he could never discover in him even a venial sin, so pure did he find him in confession. Therefore well might he say, "Who will follow me now that I am departing from this vale of tears and going off to the desert?" That is, to life eternal, which is a true desert, devoid of all evil, of which the Lord Jesus Christ speaks in the holy Gospel about the shepherd who left the ninety-nine lambs in the desert and came down here to find the one that was lost.

Another vision was seen by a woman in Recanati. While she was praying in the church where Gregory is buried, she saw visibly on his tomb a lovely little infant boy, very joyful, with a fine olive branch in his hand. She understood this to be the soul of Gregory, who rejoiced at the holy church’s unity and peace, of which he, with his very great charity and humility, had been the origin. And God showed him in this way that it was his wish that he humble himself, for God wanted to give him the satisfaction of seeing the church united before he died. As he had often said, "I trust in my Lord Jesus Christ, that before I die I will see the holy church in peace and unity." He lived for two years after unity was restored. Day after day and month after month, they could never agree to elect one pope, they had come together there to create a pope and yet could never reach an agreement, so that at the council were getting very frustrated. Once this saint died, the pope was elected twenty-four days after his death, which everyone held to be a great marvel of God to demonstrate that he was the true pope, since God would not allow another to be created so long as he was alive. When the news reached Lord Carlo of Rimini, he said, "I expected this to happen. Though they had to create a pope, I still thought that the Lord God would not permit it while he who had humbled himself by renouncing the papacy for his love was alive, and therefore he had the olive branch in his hand as a sign that he had gained the victory over his enemies and restored the church to peace."

Here I conclude the story of the many tribulations and the death of Pope Gregory XII, since I am sure that other people will write many wonderful things about his holy life and his perfect patience and his happy and holy death. But I wanted to say these few words in order that he might pray for me, a sinner.

72. The feast of Saint Luke is October 18.

HOW SISTER PAOLA ZORZI DIED IN THE FIRST YEAR THAT THE CONVENT WAS ENCLOSED

In the first year that the convent was enclosed, Sister Paola Zorzi passed from this life at the age of thirteen; she was the purest of virgins and adorned with every virtue. She was not yet professed. She was one of the women from San Girolamo.  

HOW SISTER CATERINA COSTANTINI DIED

In the year 1400 Sister Caterina Costantini died on April 4 at the hour of sext. She was twenty years old and lived in the convent for five years, the purest of virgins and consecrated to the holy veil. She was of such humility that she never got upset over any chiding she received. She was very much given to prayer and weeping and received great consolation from the Lord Jesus Christ. Having received the holy sacraments, she rendered her soul to God on Saturday of the octave of Easter. She was among the women who entered that first day when the convent was enclosed. Deo gratias. Amen.

HOW SISTER GEROLAMA PASSED FROM THIS LIFE

In that same year, on May 4, Sister Gerolama Mercanti passed from this life, on Sunday at the hour of matins. She was twenty-one years old and was one of the women from San Girolamo. She stayed in that convent for three years like a soul yearning to find perfection. She left the house of the servant and came to that of the Lord, where she lived for five years and was consecrated to the holy veil. She was of such perfection that no one ever heard a wicked word from her mouth, nor did she want to hear talk that was not about God. When the hour of her death approached, she had herself laid on the ground and stretched out her arms like a cross, tilted her head to the right side, and rendered her soul to her spouse Jesus Christ, who chose for himself this pure virgin.

HOW SISTER MARINA OGNIBEN DIED

In that year Sister Marina Ogniben passed from this life on June 20 at the hour of compline. She was twenty-two years old and had lived in the order for five years and was consecrated. She was a young woman of holy life and great fervor, and entered the convent with a younger sister, without the permission of her mother and her relatives. She fell sick and remained ill for a year, bearing it with very great patience. A few days before her death a voice was clearly audible singing very sweetly and devoutly in the infirmary where she lay ill, which one can only believe was some holy angel that came to visit the bride of Christ. When she received Communion she remained almost rapt from herself, with her face so joyous that it seemed to radiate light, and when she returned to herself she said to me, "I fear that the devil might stir some vanity in me, since when I saw my Lord come to visit me, I prepared to plunge myself entirely in God and to receive him so that he would receive me, and I could not contain myself so that it would not be apparent from the outside." I reassured her that she should not worry, since he in whom she had plunged herself would protect her, and so she remained happy, saying, "When shall I leave this prison? Oh,  

1. Although she shares the same name, this is obviously not the Paola Zorzi who was the mother of Giovanni Dominici. Since this Sister Paola had not yet reached the canonical age of convent at which she could pronounce final vows, she was still a novice. San Girolamo was a convent of Augustinian nuns in the same district of the city as Corpus Domini.
2. The fourth of the canonical hours of worship, at midday.
3. The first office of the day, sung before dawn.
4. Compline, the last of the seven canonical hours of worship, is a brief service that follows the evening meal and closes the monastic day.
Sister Bartolomea Riccoboni

my Lord, receive me in you." When the hour of vespers drew near, she said, "Sisters, I am departing now, pray to God for me." And then she raised her eyes and said, "Accept our entreaties," and she rendered her soul to her beloved spouse the Lord Jesus Christ, who took for himself this pure virgin. Deo gratias. Amen.

V

HOW SISTER MARGARITA PIACENTINI DIED

In 1401 Sister Margarita Piacentini passed from this life on February 16 at the second hour of the night. She was a pure virgin and came the first day that the convent was enclosed with a sister who was younger than her, and she lived in the order for five years and was consecrated to the holy veil. She was a young woman of such perfection and such observance (of the rule) that she never broke silence, and she would repeat the office until she thought that it had been said flawlessly. Now, she remained ill for fifteen months with such patience that it was amazing. The day before she passed away, while the sick woman was sleeping with her sister by her, the sister saw a round object more radiant than the sun at the feet of the sick woman and she called out to the sick woman in fear: it seemed as if all at once she woke up and opened her mouth and that light immediately entered the sick woman's mouth. From this one can see how acceptable that blessed soul was to her spouse, the Lord Jesus Christ. And having received the holy sacraments, she rendered her soul to God. Deo gratias. Amen.

VI

HOW SISTER CHIARA BUONIO DIED

In 1401 Sister Chiara Buonio passed from this life on the last day of March at the age of seventeen. She was a nun at Santa Caterina and stayed there for six years. Seeing that the rule was not observed, she made arrangements with her mother, who was a spiritual woman, and entered this convent. She lived here for three years in very great desire for perfection, and out of humility she performed the most demeaning chores in the convent with the greatest joy. It pleased the Lord God to test her and give her an illness that lasted more than a year, and she accepted it as a gift of God. When death drew near, she was consecrated and with all the holy sacraments rendered her soul to her ardent spouse. Deo gratias. Amen.

VII

HOW SISTER MARIA RIZZI PASSED FROM THIS LIFE

In that year Sister Maria Rizzi passed from this life on April 12, a Sunday, at the hour of sext. She was twenty years old and a pure virgin. She was one of the women who entered on the first day the convent was enclosed, and she lived in the order for six years. She was a very obedient woman and remained ill for a long time. It pleased God to grant her rest; she received the holy sacraments and serenely rendered her soul to the celestial spouse.

VIII

HOW SISTER CATERINA ROSO DIED

In 1401 Sister Caterina Rosso passed from this life on May 20. She was one of those seven women who came from the convent of San Girolamo. She was forty-one years old; she stayed at San Girolamo for twenty-one years, and she lived in this convent for seven years in such perfection that I am incapable of describing it, for she was a woman very much given to prayer and tears. Every seventh month she recited a psalter every night, not to mention the other prayers that she said unceasingly. She bore her illness patiently for six years, and before she died the Lord Jesus Christ appeared to her in the way she was often accustomed to see him and said to her, "Caterina, my daughter, would you like me to release you from this prison?" She replied saying, "My lord, I beg you to do so." She immediately ran a very high fever, and five days later, having received all the holy sacraments, she passed from this mortal life to eternal glory.

IX

HOW SISTER CRISTINA DIED

In that same year Sister Cristina dalla Terra passed from this life. She was fifty-five years old, a widow, and she came on the first day and lived in this convent...
lived for nearly a hundred years. She fell ill and was almost at the point of death, and out of respect for her daughter she was brought inside here and dressed in our holy habit, and she lived twenty-two days with great devotion. This blessed woman was like the good tree that bears good fruit, since her daughter Sister Franceschina and her two daughters and niece belong to our order, and the convent has more than two thousand ducats of her goods. I believe that because of the good fruits that have sprung from her, she is enjoying the good things of life eternal. Amen.

XIII
HOW SISTER GIOVANNA DA LORETO DIED
In 1404 Sister Giovanna da Loreto passed from this life on March 11. She was a pure virgin of very great observance and penitence, given to vigils, prayer, flagellation, and tears, so that she fell ill and suffered from dropsy. Despite all her infirmities, she struggled to do all that she could manage, so that it became necessary to order her not to strain herself so. She grew as thin as a crucifix. Her illness made her disgusting to look at, so that many were repulsed by her; and she bore it all with great patience, saying, "I deserve to be disdained, I am not worthy to be with these holy sisters." She struggled with this illness for six years, until it pleased the Lord God to give her servant and spouse repose. While she was lying in bed gravely afflicted, the Lord Jesus Christ appeared to her and said, "Take comfort, daughter, for soon you shall come to rest with your spouse." Hearing this, she rose from bed and left the infirmary cell, saying, "My lord, I am not worthy to be your spouse or to enter such a beautiful...

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8. Members of the Third Order, or tertiaries, were laypeople affiliated with a religious order, though without pronouncing formal vows. Maruzza Bonzi's attachment to Saint Francis of Assisi is evident not only did she become a Franciscan tertiary, but she named her daughter after Francis. Entering this Dominican convent at the end of her long life did not signify a break with the Franciscans; her testament stipulated the payment of a sum of money to each tertiary present at her funeral.

9. Her testament dated April 21, 1403, says that she had been residing in Corpus Domini for three months near the twenty-two days mentioned in the text. She bequeathed her main residence to her sons and left her female descendants in Corpus Domini the income from certain investments that were to revert to the convent after their deaths. Corpus Domini was also to receive her residual estate after specific bequests had been paid. ASV Corpus Domini, pergamenta, busta 4 testament of Maruzza, widow of Biagio Bonzi, April 21, 1403.

10. Dropsy or edema is an abnormal accumulation of fluid, causing swelling or bloating. This diagnosis is puzzling, since Sister Bartolomea remarks on how thin Giovanna was. Perhaps her ankles and feet were swollen by fluid retention caused by heart failure, or it may be that she had a bloated belly and emaciated limbs, the result of malnutrition caused by her penitential practices.
palace as the one you showed me." She was put to bed, and her brother (who belongs to our order) was summoned. He gave her the holy sacraments, and immediately after receivingunction, with great devotion she rendered her soul to her spouse. Her brother recited the office for her and buried her with great devotion. Amen.

XIV

HOW THE LAY SISTER AMBROSINA DIED

In 1405 the lay sister Sister Ambrosina, who had been with the order for nine years, passed from this life, she was thirty years old. She was a woman of the greatest charity; she waited on all the sisters and did the vilest chores with the greatest satisfaction. She never left her devotions but went immediately to the church and stayed there very devoutly and with many tears. She was never heard to utter an idle word. As it pleased God, she fell sick with a very serious illness that lasted more than three years. Having received all the holy sacraments, as the hour of her death approached she saw the devil and began to cry, "What do you think you're doing, you wicked beast? I'm not afraid of you." Shortly thereafter she rendered her soul to her spouse.

XV

HOW SISTER DIAMANTE PASSED FROM THIS LIFE

In 1405 Sister Diamante died on March 24, she was twenty years old. She was one of the women who entered on the first day the convent was enclosed. She was a good nun and a purest virgin; she always studied the Holy Scriptures and had an excellent mind for reading and singing and writing; she was very devout and had some great revelations from God. Sometimes she remained rapt in spirit for a day and a night without moving her body. She had a great longing for martyrdom; the lady Saint Ursula and all her companions appeared to her, and it was revealed to her that she would join that company. Soon thereafter she fell sick with a terrible disease; she vomited a lot of blood with horridous agony and without any remedy, with such tremors and fainting that it was a pity to see her. This blessed woman always maintained a joyous expression, with such patience that all the sisters marveled. When asked how she was, she replied, "I'm very well, since I am getting closer to going to my dear spouse." Despite this desire, God kept her ill for seven years, to show how he wanted to fulfill the promise that she would be part of the company of Saint Ursula, virgin and martyr. Having received all the holy sacraments, she rendered her soul to her spouse on the day of the Holy Trinity, a day she held in the highest reverence. She appeared to the woman who cared for her all lovingly and adorned, and explained, "This beautiful adornment is the reward the Lord has given me for the illness that I patiently bore in this life," as if she possessed what in this world she had desired for so long.

XVI

HOW SISTER MUSSOLINI DIED

In 1406 Sister Margarita Mussolini passed from this life on March 26, at the age of thirty-four. A purest virgin, she was one of the women who entered the first day that the convent was enclosed. She was a good nun, very observant and obedient, and she delighted to stay in her cell. She was a woman of few words, and when she talked she spoke of the blessings and glory of paradise and of her sins. She considered herself a great sinner and delighted in hearing stories of the servants of God. Even if she sometimes went to the windows, she spoke of God with such fervor that everyone who heard her went away convinced and consoled, and this was because she didn't meddle in other people's business. She spent all the time that was left to her in prayer, she was very assiduous about choral worship and fulfilling her every obligation. When it pleased God to reward her labors, he sent her a serious illness that lasted a year. Then, having received all the sacraments and knowing the hour of her passing, she asked that the clapper be sounded so that everyone could be present at her death, and then she raised her hands to heaven and passed from this life at the