

patriarch of Jerusalem, John of Brienne, king of Jerusalem, the bishop of Bethlehem, the masters of the Hospitallers, Templars and Teutonic Knights, and others from all parts of the world invited to plan the expedition. At this assembly, Frederick agreed to depart on crusade at the Feast of John the Baptist in two years' time, that is, 24 June 1225. Apparently at the instigation of the patriarch of Jerusalem and the other delegates from the East, it was agreed that Frederick would marry John of Brienne's daughter, Isabella. The provision of this information to the princes and people of Christendom was central to the recruitment effort, given that Frederick's long history of crusade delays threatened to undermine support for this renewed effort. Honorius proffered the agreement reached at Ferentino to reassure potential crusaders that Frederick's marriage pact made the fulfilment of his crusade vow much more likely.

It is at this point, mid-way through the narratio, that the letter branches off into its two distinct versions, one for the kings and the other for the people of Christendom. These two branches also splinter here into their own variant texts personalised to particular recipients. First we will examine the branch of the letter addressed to the kings of the West. The main text of the encyclical preserved in the register was addressed to the elderly king of France, and former Third Crusader, Philip II Augustus. Underneath Philip's version of the letter, in the space used to record identical or similar in eundem modum copies of papal documents, the register preserves the variant texts sent to the kings of Hungary and England (and also the other branch of the text, addressed to the faithful, which we will explore below). Honorius wrote to the kings that it was not too late for them to take action and he sought to inspire them with rhetorical overtures. Oh, how greatly would the recovery of the Holy Land be aided, Honorius cried, if the addressees, moved by the same devotion that had inspired their fathers, might rush to its aid at this crucial moment! Oh, how magnificent it would be, if pious Gaul would prepare itself to help! God forbid that the kings of the West might become accustomed to ignore the plight of the Holy Land! God forbid that the gens Christiana withdraw itself from its service to Christ! God forbid that, those who thus far have endured many burdens for the Lord, might untie their sword belts from military service on behalf of the son of God and engage in private warfare, leaving their arms to rust and denying their souls victory, when crusaders will enjoy grace and merit in the present, and glory and reward in the future! This rhetoric was crafted to engage, and shame,