

Rabbi Joe \ Jo Gonzales

Delegation: Matters' Folly

Nationality: Badlands

A senior rabbi once showed you references to the job of a religious leader being like that of a shepherd guiding a flock of sheep. Being from Terra Nova, you have no idea what a sheep is, and the word shepherd has little meaning, but over time you've learned what leading a pack of dumb, herd-following, antagonistic yet intrinsically good (if misguided) people is all about, and you reckon you could take a stab at describing the traits of sheep through sheer extrapolation. They need constant supervision, you'd say, just like your parishioners. They're incapable of making good decisions by themselves, and without guidance will embark on a totally random and irrational course of action, blind to the consequences – just like your parish. They need a combination of definite authority and words of kindness, from the same source, like your parish. You'd make a decent one of these shepherd guys in another place and time, you reckon.

You were born into a large Jerusalemite family in a Badlands oasis town where your parents and elder siblings taught you the principles of your faith. Jerusalemites are in a minority on Terra Nova, but you were accepted in this place and free to go about your own practises. Your mother was a rabbi herself, and during your childhood in the War of the Alliance she, along with your eldest brother and sister, joined up with the allied forces as a chaplain. Your father and your remaining siblings held the home front, looking after the sick and injured, praying for the souls of the departed and giving people the spiritual and moral support they needed during the dark times. You helped out as much as your age would allow, and having seen the real and tangible effects of your family's efforts in holding the community together through the occupation, you had no doubt what you wanted to do when you grew up. You'd be a rabbi too.

As soon as you were old enough you went off to a seminary to study. You enjoyed your time there, for in the post-War cycles there was a feeling of optimism throughout the planet, and of course you were immersing yourself in the faith you loved. You learned a lot and have never been so proud as when your family came to attend your ordination. You requested a frontier posting, where you could do some real good like you'd helped your family do during the War, and were sent to the fast-growing hamlet of Matters' Folly.

Just in the nick of time, too. Water had recently been discovered near the town and it was booming into a trading post for the area, the sky the limit. With that came a whole host of social problems of course – increasingly large packs of workers coming into the town on their days off to drink and fight, arguments over property, the idleness of new-found wealth... the place was crying out for spiritual and moral guidance. You set yourself up in an abandoned barn the Church had purchased for your use and started your task.

It wasn't easy at first, of course, but over time you built up a strong congregation and became a community leader. Many of the townsfolk weren't religious at all before you showed up, but over the cycles you showed them the benefits of Jerusalemism and now the majority of the town are in your "flock". With your charismatic and enthusiastic sermons you curbed the social problems and allowed the town to flourish into the prosperous trade centre it is today, rather than a degenerate mess. The people recognised your part and you were elected to the town council, and a proper church was constructed. Things were going smoothly, and that brought difficulties of its own.

People are fickle. During the War it was easy to get them to listen, they were desperate for guidance. The same went for when the town's future was so uncertain. But in the period of prosperity that followed interest started to wane. Attendance at your services declined. People didn't feel the need for your help

anymore. Now, of course, there's a War on again, and they've come flooding back to your welcoming arms, but it did teach you a bit about the nature of your position.

You know you're a good preacher, charismatic and empathetic, but that's only enough to keep the people together while there's nothing better on offer. If you were to leave town you are quite sure that they'd lapse into their old ways, at least until something else came along, and since your job is all about saving souls you've been looking for a way to cement their faith. You've succeeded in keeping out much of the influence of your religion's major rival, Revisionism (the most popular religion, most especially by far in the North) out of your town but the current situation, these negotiations, could spell disaster. An alliance with the North would certainly mean a significant strengthening of the Revisionist ethos in the town, as the town's new protectors start preaching their own religion, which would cause divisions. The South are heathens, but that's probably not so bad unless they end up trying to annex Matters' Folly altogether. Port Arthur claim to be Terra Novans rather than Earthers now so you're willing to hear them out, and Peace River at least can understand the Badlanders' position. Some want the town to remain independent but in reality, that's wishful thinking - either Pole could crush it underfoot at any time they feel like it as things currently stand.

Frankly, most of the people in this town just don't know what's best for them. That's why the town council exists, but even that is vulnerable to human pride, jealousy and greed. Somebody's going to have to keep them in line and ensure they make the decision that's most beneficial to the town in the long run. And who better to guide the flock down the right path?

About Your Delegation <

- **Mayor Dellasanta** - A good, competent mayor and businessman who's unfortunately suffered many rough times in his personal life, with the death of his wife and his children abandoning him.
- **Marshal Hadland** - Offering punishment where necessary and diplomacy where possible, Marshal Hadland is the other half of the team responsible for keeping the town in line. She seems a nice sort but you figure there's more to her than the pleasant personality that she puts across when she's not on a case. Or drinking, which is something she does too much of. Plus she's an atheist.
- **Shad Kolkman** - Leader of the farmers' association, a genuinely pleasant guy who's unfortunately a Revisionist. Probably wants to bring the North into town. Has a relationship with Marshal Hadland.
- **Milan Kopier** - Owner of the water company, and a rich man. Has donated good money to your church, but is something of a recluse and seems a bit bitter. Has an ongoing land dispute with Kolkman.
- **Frank** - A caravan trader who's been the most reliable line of supplies to the town. Not actually on the town council but has been invited along by Mayor Dellasanta anyway.

About Others You Know <

- **Marna Kounkel** - A thug from Peace River whose sister you married to Mayor Dellasanta. Kounkel was visiting town one day when he started a gunfight with one of his low-down business associates, in which his sister was killed. Dellasanta blames him and you're inclined to agree.

Theoretically you can call on most of the town in times of dire emergency, but there are others who would be likely to override your decisions – Marshal Hadland, for example.

Goals <

- Keep the town out of the hands of the North, which would cause fragmentation in the town in a time when what it needs most is unity. See what the other delegations are offering and ally with the most beneficial.
- Speaking of unity, Kolkman and Kopier are arguing over land, typically. If you could sort this out it might help draw them to your side and you could convince them to use their votes the right way.

Additional Player Info: Rabbi Gonzales <

Gonzales is firm of faith but recognises the similarities between spiritually leading a town and running a business or a military unit. A mob needs direction, and some decisions are best made with pure logic rather than with a vague ethos. For example, Gonzales has no hatred for other religions as such, but realises that a town fragmented by multiple religions will be much harder to guide in times of crisis than one united in faith. It's maths, it's business, it's good leadership. He is the town's spiritual and moral authority and has earned that position by helping smooth out problems, and so will probably be acting as a mediator for much of the day because that's what he does. At the same time, the end justifies the means to some extent, at least as regards what might be labelled corruption on the town council – but lives are at stake here, so the greater good must be focussed upon.

Jerusalemism is a fusion of Christianity, Islam and Judaism, and the primary religion in Matters' Folly, although a distinct minority on Terra Nova as a whole.