

Women and the Text of the Early Anglican Litany: Queens, Childbirth, Widows

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Frank Henderson's Page on Liturgy and Medieval Women

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Introduction

This yeare [1544] the Kinges Majestie afore his goeing over into Fraunce set forth a Letany in Englishe, which he commaunded should be songe in every parishe church through England, which was the Godlyest hearinge that ever was in this realme.

Charles Wriothesley, *A Chronicle of England...* vol I, p 148. London: Camden Society, new series, vol 11, 1875. Reprint New York: Johnson Reprint 1965.

The chronicler clearly was moved by the new litany in the English language; for him it was the most edifying prayer ever heard. It had been composed by Archbishop Thomas Cranmer in June of 1544 at the express command of King Henry VIII. Another chronicler also noted this

new prayer, as follows.

And this yere the suffragis that longgide [belonged] to the lityny was songe in Englisshe tounge; and this yere the kyng, in the monthe of July, went into Ffraunce with a gret powar of men.

[Anonymous Chronicler of London], in Thomas Wright and James Orchard Halliwell, eds., *Religiae Antiquae*. London: Pickering 1843; reprint 1966; vol 2, p 37.

The text of this 1544 litany is given in *Appendix I*.

Here I consider especially the relationship of women to the *text* of the new Anglican litany during the remainder of the reign of Henry VIII (who died in January 1547) and through the reigns of King Edward VI, Queen Mary I, and the first few years of Queen Elizabeth I's reign, that is until 1560. This litany named queens and princesses and remembered in prayer women in labor and widows.

The composition of the Anglican litany was inspired and influenced both by the medieval litany of the saints and by new Lutheran litanies. It is with these litanies, therefore, that the story begins. (The influence of the Eastern liturgy will not be considered here.)

The Medieval Litany of the Saints

Litanies consist of several or many short phrases said or sung by the priest, deacon or cantor, each of which evokes a relatively constant response that is said or sung by the people or choir. A short form of litany that was frequently used in the medieval liturgy was simply:

Kyrie eleison / response: Kyrie eleison [Lord, have mercy]
Christe eleison / response: Christe eleison [Christ have mercy]
Kyrie eleison / response: Kyrie eleison [Lord have mercy].

At times a nine-fold version of this was used.

The litany of the saints, our main concern here, is a much longer and more complex litany. In fact the very term, "litany of the saints," includes a wide variety of texts that differ in detail even as they are similar in form and general content. Examples of this variation are given in Michael Lapidge, *Anglo-Saxon Litanies of the Saints*. Henry Bradshaw Society 106. London 1991. After an invocation of the Trinity, a number of saints are named, each followed by the response *Ora pro nobis* / pray for us.

In some cases the list of saints' names is virtually the entire content of the litany. Often, however, these are followed by a few or many other litanic phrases, of which the following are merely examples (in modern English)

From endless damnation, [Response:] Deliver us, O Lord.

By your passion, R. Deliver us, O Lord.

That you give us peace, R. We pray thee to hear us

Henry Littlehales, *ed.*, *The Primer* or Prayer-Book of the Lay People in the Middle Ages in English Dating About 1400 A.D., 2 vol. London: Longmans, Green 1891, p 67-68

Each individual text of the litany of the saints would include a variable number of “from”, “by your” and “that” elements.

Women worshipers could – indeed were expected to – participate in the praying of the litany of the saints by singing or saying ora pro nobis / pray for us and the other responses, which were easily learned.

Female saints were also named in the litany; how many and which ones was highly variable and could reflect local traditions and preferences. One such list of female saints, taken from a primer in English ca 1400, is as follows:

Seynt Marie Magdeleyne, Seynt Marie Egipcian, Seynt Agace, Seynt Agneys, Seynt Cecile, Seynt Kateryne, Seynt mergrete, Seynt Iuliane, Seynt Crystine, Seynt Pernele, Seynt Radegonde, Seynt ffresewythe, Alle holy maydenes – Pray for us.
Littlehales, *The Primer*, p 67

The Litanies of Martin Luther

If the medieval litany of the saints was one ancestor of the Anglican litany, the “German Litany” and “Latin Litany Corrected” of Martin Luther (1529) were other predecessors. Luther’s regard for and revision of the litany is well described by Paul Zeller Strodsch and Ulrich S. Leopold, eds., “The German Litany and the Latin Litany Corrected,” in *Luther’s Works*, vol 53. *Liturgy and Hymns*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press 1965, pp 153-170. They conclude that:

Luther’s Litanies with their appended collects are closely modeled after the Roman Litany of All Saints. Nevertheless, there are significant differences between them:

1. Luther omitted the invocations of the saints and the intercession for the pope and the departed.
2. Luther made the intercessions more specific than in the Roman form....
3. Luther simplified the music, especially for the responses.
:”The German Litany”, pp153-154

The texts of Luther's "German Litany" and his "Latin Litany Corrected" are given in this reference; relevant portions are quoted below.

Composition of the Anglican Litany (1544)

That some critical thinking had been done regarding the litany of the saints well prior to 1544 is shown by the following little known passage from a 1536 document from Thomas Cromwell.

Item, wherin tymes past men have used in divers places in their processions to sing "Ora pro nobis" to so many saints, that they had no tyme to sing the good suffrages following, as "Parce nobis Domine [Spare us, O Lord], et Libera nos Domine" [Deliver us, O Lord] that must be taught and preachide that better that were to omytte "Ora pro nobis," and to singe the other suffrages.

"Injunctions by Thomas lord Cromwell, his majesty's vicar general..." [1536] in David Wilkins, *Concilia Magnae Britanniae et Hiberniae*, 1737. Vol 3, pp 815-817 [here 817].

Such thoughts apparently remained in the background for the next eight years.

On 11 June 1544, King Henry VIII wrote to his archbishop of Canterbury along the following lines:

[C]alling to our remembrance the miserable state of all Christendom . . . being therefore resolved to have . . . general processions in all . . . our realm . . . we have set forth certain godly prayers and suffrages in our native English tongue. Wherefore we . . . command you ... to cause these prayers and suffrages to be . . . openly used.

"Literae Regiae Archiepiscopo Cantuar. Pro Publicatione Regiarum Injunctionum," in *The Works of Thomas Cranmer*. Parker Society, vol 2, pp 494-495. Also David Wilkins, *Concilia Magnae Britanniae et Hiberniae*, vol 2, pp 869-870. London 1737; reprint 1964. Full text in *Appendix II* Document A.

Historians of the Anglican Liturgy have written extensively regarding the background and origins of the Anglican litany and the circumstances of its composition. They have also provided detailed analyses of its contents and have identified passages that have been added or deleted in the course of time.

F. E. Brightman, *The English Rite*. London: Rivingtons 1921, vol I, pp clxv-xlvi; vol II, pp 174-185

G. J. Cuming, *A History of Anglican Liturgy*. London: Macmillan / St Martin's Press 1969, pp 54-58, 358-361

W. K. Lowther Clarke and Charles Harris. *Liturgy and Worship: A Companion to the Prayers Books of the Anglican communion*. London: SPCK 1932, 1981, pp 282-287

Francis Procter and William Howard Frere. *A New History of the Book of Common Prayer*. London: Macmillan 1910, pp 404-429

Charles Wheatley, *A Rational Illustration of the Book of Common Prayer of the Church of England*. London: Bohn 1849, pp 23, 27, 163-179

Cuming has summarized some of Cranmer's unique contributions to the new litany:

Many of the chief features of Cranmer's liturgical work are already discernible in his version of the Litany: bold handling of traditional forms, notably by abbreviation and conflation; borrowing from different portions of the Sarum rite; insertion of Reformed elements into the traditional framework; and occasional recourse to a totally unexpected source. Cuming, *History of Anglican Litany*, p 55.

One interesting part of this story is that Archbishop Cranmer initially planned to write not just the surviving litany but an entire body of sung processional texts to be used on a variety of occasions – an Anglican equivalent of the Sarum Processional, York Processional and related books of the medieval liturgy. He submitted his draft work to the king (full text in *Appendix II* Document B), but it subsequently disappeared from sight.

Sources of Texts of the Litany

For this study I have examined more than thirty printings of the Anglican litany produced between 1544 and 1560. Some of these are in modern printed editions (that is, 19th-20th centuries). These include the Book of Common Prayer in its 1549 and 1552 editions as well as the Primer of 1553 (all from the reign of King Edward VI), as well as the Book of Common Prayer in its 1559 and 1560 editions (the latter in Latin) and two texts of the litany printed separately at the beginning of the reign of Queen Elizabeth I. Editions used are as follows:

The First and Second Prayer Books of Edward VI. Introduction by Douglas Harrison. London: Dent / Everyman's Library 1969

F. E. Brightman, *The English Rite*. London: Rivington's 1921

Joseph Ketley, ed., *The Two Liturgies A.D. 1549 and A.D. 1552* with other Documents set forth by Authority in the Reign of King Edward VI. Parker Society. Cambridge: University Press 1844; *ibid*, reprint Johnson Reprint Corp. 1968

William Keating Clay, ed., *Liturgical Services: Liturgies and Occasional Forms of Prayer* set forth in the Reign of Queen Elizabeth. Parker Society. Cambridge: University Press

Other versions of the 1544 litany are found in the ProQuest database *Early English Books Online*. The earliest texts are included in a short work entitled “Exhortation unto Prayer... Also an Letanie....”. The litany was then included in the numerous printings of *The Primer*, known in particular as *The King’s Primer*, first published in 1545. Finally, there is one text of the litany appended to a 1559 edition of a work of Queen Katherine Parr. A full list of individual texts of the litany is given separately, in my “Anglican and Catholic Litanies and Primers 1544-1560: Web Resources.”

Queens, Princesses and the Text of the Litany

In this section I describe how queens were identified and named in the Anglican litany from 1544 to 1560. The Anglican litany contains between three and five prayers for royalty, depending on the composition of the royal family. Queens who are named include queen-consorts, queen-dowagers, and queen-regnants or sovereigns. Texts are considered in chronological order, beginning with the reign of Henry VIII. I have somewhat modernized the spelling and punctuation.

Queen-Consort Katherine Parr

The prayer for this queen-consort follows a three-fold prayer for the king, which is given here for the sake of context.

That ts may please thee to keep HENRY the VIII
thy servant and our king and governor,
We beseech thee to hear us, good lord.

That it may please thee to rule his heart
in thy faith, fear and love
that he may ever have trust [affiance] in thee,
and ever seek thy honour and glory,
We beseech thee to hear us, good lord.

That it may please thee to be his defendor and keeper,
giving him the victory over all his enemies.
We beseech thee to hear us, good lord.

The prayer for the queen consort is next. Katherine (Catherine) Parr is named as queen consort in all litany texts printed between 1544 and 1546. The text of this single intercession follows:

That it may please thee to keep our noble queen Catherine in thy fear and love,

giving her increase of all godliness, honor and children,
We beseech thee to hear us, good lord.

We are reminded that childbearing was still important for Henry VIII. In other respects its contents are similar to that for the sovereign.

Queen-Regent Katherine Parr

Queen Katherine was regent of England from mid-July through late September 1544, while King Henry was with his army in France. It would have been interesting to see if this status was recognized in the text of the litany. Unfortunately, no surviving litany seems to have been printed during the crucial period.

Queen-Dowager Katherine Parr

When King Henry VIII died, King Edward VI's name was substituted in the three-fold prayer for the king that was printed above. Katherine Parr became queen-dowager, and she is included in the earliest litany from Edward VI's reign.

That it may please thee to keep our noble Queen Katherine dowager
in thy fear and love, giving her increase of all godliness, honor, and children.

This appears to echo the bidding prayer used during the early part of Edward VI's reign, which reads as follows.

You shall pray for the whole congregation of Christ's church, and especially for this church of England and Ireland, wherein first I commend to your devout prayers, the king's most excellent majesty, supreme head immediately under God, of the spirituality and temporality of the same church: and for queen Katherine dowager, and also for my lady Mary, and my lady Elizabeth, the king's sisters.

“Injunctions given by the most excellent prince Edward the sixth....” [1547] in
David Wilkins, *Concilia Magnae Britanniae et Hiberniae*, 1737; vol 4, pp 3-9
[here 8]

In continuing to pray that this widow have children, the author seems to have nodded, copying previous material without thinking.

Of course, there is no mention of a queen consort in any litany from the reigns of Edward VI, Mary I or Elizabeth I. Katherine Parr as dowager queen drops out of the records upon her death in September 1548.

Queen Mary I

I have not seen any printed version of the Anglican litany that contains the name of Queen Mary I. However, one text that was printed with the name of King Henry VIII was later emended by hand to include Queen Mary's name. With reference to *Early English Books Online*, this is identified as STC 16040.

This edition has English and Latin texts in parallel columns. In the English text, the name Henry the eighth is retained in the first intercession. In the intercession for "oure noble quene Catherine" the word "Catherine" is crossed out, and "Mary" is written above it. No change is made in the intercession for the royal children. In the Latin text, "Henry VIII" is crossed out and "Mariam" appears to be written in instead. In the intercession for Queen Catherine, the name "Caterina" is crossed out, and "Maria" is written in the margin.

Queen Elizabeth I

As queen-regnant or sovereign, Elizabeth I "inherited" the three-fold prayer "for the king" and made it her own. Brightman gives the following background.

Elizabeth succeeded Nov 17 1558, and for 6 months things continued, officially, as they were, except that the royal Proclamation of Dec 27, which forbade all praching and teaching except of the Epistle and Gospel, and the Ten Commandments, in English, 'without exposition or addition of any manner, sense' until measures have been taken in parliament, allowed the general use of 'The common Litany used at this present in her majesty's chapel, andd the Lord's Prayer and the Creed in English, and to further this use, before Feb 7, 1558-9 was published: The Letanye, used in the Quenes Maiesties Chappel, according to the tenor of the Proclamation. Anno Christi 1559.'

F. E. Brightman, *The English Rite*, vol I, pp clxvi.

There are some interesting variations within this group of texts.

The chronologically first text reproduces the text previously used for Henry VIII and Edward VI, with the substitution of Elizabeth's personal name and feminine pronouns.

1558 A (separately printed)

That it may please thee to keep Elizabeth thy servant, our Queen, and governour;
that it may please thee to rule her heart in thy fatih, fear and love
and that she may always have affiance in thee, and ever seek thy honor and plory.

That it may please thee to be her fender and keeper,
giving her the victory over all her enemies.

Clay, *Liturgical Services*, p 4

The second text conflates the first and second intercessions above, omitting, “That it may please thee to rule her heart”.

1559 (Added to Katherine Parr’s *Meditacyons*)

That it maye please thee to keep Elisabeth our Queen
in thy faith, fear and love,
that she may always have affiance in thee
and ever seek thy honor and glory.

That it may please thee
to be her defendor and keeper,
giving her the victory over all her enemies.

Early English Books in Print, STC 4826

The third version expands the first intercession in an interesting manner. According to Brightman, *The English Rite*, vol I, p clxvi,

The text of the Litany enlarges [the prayer for the sovereign] into the proper suffrage used at Coronations, from which it would appear that this Litany was prepared for Elizabeth’s coronation on January 15, 1558-9.

1559A “The Letanye vsed in the Queen’s Maiesties Chappel”, separately printed

That it may please thee to keep
and strengthen in the true worshiping of thee,
in righteousness and holiness of life,
thy Servant Elizabeth our most gracious Queen and governor.

That it may please thee to rule her heart in thy faith, fear and love,
and that she may evermore have affiance in thee,
and ever seek thy honor and glory.

That it may please thee to be her defender and keeper,
giving her the victory over all her enemies.

Clay, *Liturgical Services*, pp 12-13

The “coronation” version of the intercession for Queen Elizabeth I now became the regular text and was used in both English and Latin editions of the 1559 / 1560 Prayer Book:

1559 (Book of Common Prayer)

That it may please thee to keep and strengthen in the true worshiping of thee,
in righteousness and holiness of life, thy Servant Elizabeth our most gracious
Queen and governor.

That it may please thee to rule her heart in thy faith, fear and love,
and that she may evermore have trust in thee, and ever seek thy honor and glory.

That it may please thee to be her defender and keeper, giving her the victory over all her
enemies.

Clay, *Liturgical Services*, p 70

1560 (Liber Precum Publicarum)

Ut famulam tuam Elizabetham, Reginam & gubernatricem nostram clementissimam,
in vera tui adoratione, in justitia & sanctitate vitae confirmare custodire digneris.

Ut ejus mentem in tua fide, tui amore & timore, ut semper in te confidat, & ut in omnibus
honorem & gloriam tuam quaerat & promoveat, dirigere digneris

Ut Eam servare & defendere, & ei victoriam contra omnes hostes suos concedere
digneris.

Clay, *Liturgical Services*, p 340.

Princess Mary and Princess Elizabeth

The litany texts from the reign of Henry VIII also include a prayer for royal children. It is
worded as follows:

That it may please thee to
keep and defend our noble prince Edward
and all thy king's majesties children.

We beseech thee to hear us, good lord.

Prince Edward is always named, as heir to the throne. These texts then refer more generally to
the king's other children. Why Princess Mary and Princess Elizabeth are not named explicitly is
not clear.

The earliest litany text from the reign of Edward VI includes the following prayer for the
royal children:

That is may please thee to preserve
the lady Mary's grace, the lady Elizabeth's grace,
and the Lord Protector's grace.

Early English Books in Print, STC 16048.

As with the other parts of that prayer (which also named Catherine Parr as queen dowager), this

includes Mary and Elizabeth; as well, curiously, it names the Lord Protector. This text is most likely influenced by several bidding prayers set forth after the accession of King Edward VI. One prayer in particular reads:

You shall pray for ... [Queen] Katherine Dowager,
and for my Lady Mary and my Lady Elizabeth, the King's Sisters.
Secondly, you shall pray for my lord Protector's Grace,
with all the rest of the King's Majesty his council
for all the Lord's of this realm.

H. O. Coxe, *Forms of Bidding Prayer*.
Oxford: John Henry Parker 1840, pp 72-73.

See my article, [Queens, Nuns, Pregnant Women and Mothers: Consequences for Women of Henry VIII's 1534 Decree on Bidding Prayers](#) on this website.

Influences and Precedents

The uniqueness and elegance of prayers for royalty of the Anglican litany may more fully be appreciated by comparing them with corresponding Catholic and Lutheran texts.

Late medieval litanies in English include the following very simple intercession for royalty. The personal name of the sovereign is not given, not are the queen-consort and royal children ever mentioned.

That you give peace to our kings and princes, We pray thee to hear us
Littlehales, *The Primer*, p 68

Corresponding medieval bidding prayers were more expansive and in England almost always included a prayer for the king, queen and royal children. For example:

Also you shall pray heartily for our liege lord, King of England, for our lady the Queen,
and for our prince, whom Christ save spiritually

See my article, [Women and Medieval General Intercessions: Introduction](#) on this website.

In the early Anglican bidding prayer used from 1534, Henry VIII much expanded the portion having to do with royalty. The basic text now reads:

For our Sovereign Lord King Hnery the Eight
being immediately next under God
the only supreme head of this Catholick church of England,
and for the most gracious Lady Queen Anne his wife,

and for the Lady Elizabeth, daughter and heir to them both.

See my “Sovereign and Pope in English Bidding Prayers before and after 1534.”
on this website.

Luther’s German Litany included the following triple intercessions for royalty:

To give to all kings and princes peace and concord
To grant to our emperor perpetual victory over all his enemies
To direct and defend our sovereign and all his counsellors
Luther, “German Litany,” pp 164-167

Though Luther’s text gave Cranmer an enlarged view of royalty compared to the medieval text, he expanded the text still further.

Women in Labor and Widows in the Anglican Litany

The early Anglican litany not only named royal women, but also referred to several categories of “women in need.” The entire section of the litany text concerned with persons in need is as follows:

That it may please thee,
to succor, help and comfort
all that be in danger, necessity and tribulation,
We beseech thee to hear us, good lord.

That it may please thee
to preserve all that travel by land or by water,
all women laboring of child,
all sick persons and young children,
and to show thy pity upon all prisoners and captives,
We beseech thee to hear us, good lord.

That it may please thee to defend and provide
for the fatherless children and widows,
and all that be desolate and oppressed,
We beseech thee to hear us, good lord.

This text was included, and remained virtually unchanged (except for orthography), in all of the texts of the litany studied here.

The Anglican litany is unique in praying for women in labor rather than for pregnant women. That “in labor” was taken literally is shown in the remarks of Charles Wheatly (*Rational Illustration*, pp 174-175). He understands all of the persons named in the relevant paragraph as

being those who were absent from the community when the litany was prayed; this applied to women during childbirth but not to pregnant women.

Luther's litany named orphans and widows, as did medieval bidding prayers; see below. The Anglican litany follows suit, except for the qualifications of orphans as "fatherless orphans." Why this word was added is not known; was there some legal or social distinction between fatherless – motherless – parentless children? Or perhaps it was just a stylistic expansion?

Influences and precedents

As with intercessions for the sovereign, the most common form of the medieval litany of the saints did not provide much precedent for this section of the Anglican litany. However, intercessions for persons in need were included in medieval Latin litanies used in the liturgy of anointing of the sick and commendation of the dying, but these were limited to sick persons. Alternative expressions include the following.

Ut miserias pauperum et captiuorum intueri et releuare digneris te rogamus
Ut pacem et concordiam nobis dones te rogamus
Ut sanitatem ei dones te rogamus
Ut hunc infirmum per angelum tuum Raphaellem visitare digneris te rogamus
Ut cum a lecto egritudinis ac misericorditer releuare digneris
Lapidge, *Anglo Saxon Litanies of the Saints*, pp 119, 185, 218, 268, 272, 287

Medieval bidding prayers were more generous in praying for persons in need, however. Thus they might pray as follows:

and for women that be with children, that God grant to them a good deliverance and purification, and to their children baptism and confirmation

Ye shall also pray for all them that be sick or diseased of this parish that God send to them health the rather for our prayers

for them that are ... in prison that God bring them out thereof

See my article, [Women and Medieval General Intercessions: Introduction](#) on this website.

In contrast, persons in need were not referred to at all in the early Anglican bidding prayers following 1534.

Luther's 1519 litanies were more attentive to persons in need than the medieval litany of the saints. Thus his German Litany included the following intercessions.

To behold and succor all who are in danger and tribulation

To rejoice the pregnant in the fruit of their womb and nursing mothers in the growth of their children

To cherish and guard all the sick and infants

To set free all the captives.

Luther, "German Litany," pp 166-167

Conclusions

Since 1534, public prayer for the English sovereign was not just prayer for the civil ruler (even though anointed), but prayer for the church; the sovereign was, after all, supreme head of the church in England. The ecclesial importance of the king was emphasized both by considerable expansion of the "royal family" section of the prayer, but also by placing it before the intercession for the bishops; the pope was of course completely omitted, and the parochial and diocesan dimensions of church were greatly reduced. The focus of the bidding prayer was now the national church, vested especially in the king.

Much the same point of view was expressed in the new Anglican litany of 1544. The king was church and was named and given a three-fold prayer. Bishops followed, with only a single intention. The church was especially national in focus, and its head, the king, was given due prominence.

Royal women benefited from this perspective. Queen Elizabeth I was of course, like Henry VIII and Edward VI, the head of her church and was recognized as such both in bidding prayers and litany. But even queen consort Katherine Parr and the young princesses, Mary and Elizabeth, became associated with the national church in a special way.

At the same time, the new Anglican litany took over several functions of the medieval bidding prayer that had been omitted from the new Anglican bidding prayer. This is the category of "persons in need." Such persons were prominent in the medieval bidding prayer, virtually absent in the revised bidding prayers of 1534, but lifted up again in the litany of 1544. Such persons of course included widows and orphans, prisoners and captives, children and the sick.

One novelty of the Anglican litany was to pull together into a single prayer several classes of persons in need whose circumstances meant that they were not present during regular church services, for example those who were traveling and some of those mentioned above. Another novelty was to omit pregnant women, who had been prominent in the medieval bidding prayers.

Still another novelty was to include women in labor, and to include these women among those absent from the liturgy; these women had never been included before.

Appendix I: The Anglican Litany 1544

Source: ProQuest Database *Early English Books Online*
STC (Short Title Catalogue, 2nd edition) 10620, 1544

[Title]

An exhortation unto prayer, thoughte mete by the kinges majestie, and his clergy,
to be read to the people in euery church afore processyons.

Also a Letanie with suffrages to be said or song in the tyme of the said processyons.

[Exhortation]

As these holye prayers and suffrages folowynge, are sette furthe of most godly zeale for edifying and stirring of deuotion of al true faythfull christen hertes: so it is thought conueniente in this commune prayer of procession to haue it set furthe and used in the vulgar tungue, for stirringe the people to more deuotion: and it shalbe euery christen mans part, reuerently to use the same, to the honour and glory of almighty god, and the profit of their own soules. And such among the people, as haue boke, and can reade, may reade them quietly and softly to them selfe, and suche as can not reade, let them quietly & attentisety gyue audience in tyme of the said prayers, hauynge their mindes erect to almighty god, & deuotly praying in theyr hartes, the same petitions which do entre in at their eares, so that with one sounde of the hart, and one accord, God may be glorified in his churche.

And it is to be remembred, that that which is printed in blacke letters, is to he sayde or songe of the priest with an audible voice, that is to say, so loude and so playnly, that it maye well be understande of the hearers: And that which is in the redde, is to be answered of the quiere soberly and devoutely.

[Litany] *To suggest the typography of the original, verses are printed in bold type (black in the original) and responses are printed in lighter type (red in the original).*

O God, the father of heauen, haue mercy upon us miserable sinners,

O god, the father of heauen, haue mercy uppon us myserable synners.

O god, the son, redemer of the world, haue mercy upon us miserable sinners,

O God, the son, redemer of the world, haue mercie upon us miserable sinners.

O god, the holy goost, proceding from the father and the son, haue mercy upon us miserable sinners,

O god, the holy goost, procedyng from the father and the son, haue mercie uppon us miserable synners.

O holye, blessed, and glorious trinitie, one God, haue mercy upon us miserable sinners,

O holy, blessed, and glorious trinitie, one god, haue mercy uppon us myserable synners.

Saint Mary, mother of god our sauour Jesu Christe,

Pray for us.

All holy aungels and archangels, & all holy orders of blessed spirites,

Pray for us.

**All holy patriarkes, and prophetes, apostels, martyrs, confessours, and virgins,
and all the blessed company of heauen,**

Pray for us.

[These three verses were later deleted.]

Remembre not lorde, our offences, nor the offences of our forefathers, neyther take thou vengeance of our sinnes, spare us good lord, spare thy people whom thou haste redemed with thy most precious blood, and be not angrye with us for euer,
Spare us good lorde.

From all euyll and mischief, from sinne, from the craftis and assautes of the deuyll, from thy wrathe, and from euerlastyng damnation,
Good lorde delyuer us.

From blyndnes of hart, from pryde, vaynglory, and hypocrisy, frome envy, hatred, and malice, and all uncharitablenes,
Good lorde deliuer us.

From fornication, & al deadly synne, and from all the deceites of the worlde, the flesche, and the deuil,
Good lorde deliuer us.

From lightnyng and tempset, frome plage, pestilence, and famine, frome battayle and murder, and from sodayne deathe,
Good lorde deliuer us

From all sedition and priuey conspiracy,
from the tyranny of the byshop of Rome, and all his detestable enormities,
from all false doctrine and heresy, from hardnes of hart and contempte of thy word and commandement,

Good lorde delyuer us. [Words in italics were later deleted.]

By the mystery of thy holy incarnation, by thy holy natiuitie & circumcison, by thy baptisme, fastyng and temptation,
Good lorde delyuer us.

By thyne agonie and bluddy sweat, by thy crosse and passion, by thy precious deathe and buriall, by thy glorious resurrection and ascension, by the commyng of the holy goste,
Good lorde deliuer us.

In all time of our tribulation, in all tyme of our wealthe, in the houre of deth, in the day of iugement,
Good lorde delyuer us.

We synners doo beseche the to heare us, O lorde god, and that it may plese the to rule and gouerne thy holy churche unyuersall in the right way,
We beseche the to heare us good lorde.

That it may plese the to kepe HENRY the VIII thy seruant & kyng and gouernour,
We beseche the to here us good lord. [The sovereign's name was later changed as appropriate.]

That it may please the to rule his hart in thy faithe, feare, and hole [*misprint for love*], that

he may euer haue affiance in the, and euer seeke thy honour and glory,

We beseche the to heare us good lorde.

That it maye please the to be his defendour and keeper, gyuyng hym the victorie ouer all his enemies,

We beseche the to here us good lorde.

That it may please the to kepe our noble quene CATHERINE in thy feare and loue, gyuyng her increase of all godlynes, honour, and children,

We beseche the to here us good lorde.

That it may plese the to kepe and defende our noble prynce EDVVARD, and al the kynges maiesties chyldren,

We beseche the to here us good lorde.

[These two verses were later omitted or reworded, as appropriate.]

That it may please the to illuminate all bishoppes pastours and minysters of the churche, with true knowlege and understandyng of thy word, and that both by theyr preaching and lyuyng, they may set it forthe and shew it accordingly,

We beseche the to here us good lorde.

That it maye please the to endue the lordes of the counsaile, and al the nobilitie, with grace, wysedom, & understandyng,

We beseche the to here us good lord.

That it maye please the to blesse and kepe the magistrates, gyuyng them grace to execute iustice, and to maynteyne truthe,

We beseche the to heare us good lorde.

That it may plese the to blesse and kepe all thy people,

We beseche the to heare us good lorde.

That it may please the to gyue to all nations unitie peace and concorde,

We beseche the to here us good lorde.

That it may please the to giue us an harte, to loue and dreade the, and diligently to lyue after thy commandements,

We beseche the to heare us good lord.

That it may please the to giue all thy people increase of grace, to here mekely thy word, and to receyue it with pure affection, and to bring forthe the frutes of the spirite,

We beseche the to heare us good lorde.

That it may plese the to bring into the way of truthe, all suche as haue erred & ar deceiued,

We beseche the to here us good lorde.

That it maye please the to strengthen such as do stande, and to comforte and helpe the weake harted, and to raise up them that fall, and fynally to beate downe Satan under our fete,

We beseche the to heare us good lorde.

That it may please the, to succour helpe and comfort all that be in daunger necessitte and tribulation,

We beseche the to here us good lorde.

That it may please the to preserue all that trauaile by lande or by water, all women labouring of chyld, all sycke persons and yong children, and to shew thy pitie upon al prisoners and captiues,

We beseche the to here us good lord.

That it maye please the to defend & prouide for the fatherles children and wydowes, and all that be desolate & oppressed,

We beseche the to here us good lord.

That it may please the to haue mercy upon all men,

We beseche the to here us good lorde.

That it maye please the to forgiue our enemies, persecutours and sclanderours, and to turne their hertes,

We beseche the to here us good lorde.

That it may please the to giue to our use the kindly fruites of the erthe, so as in due tyme we maye enjoy theme: & to preserue them,

We beseche the to here us good lord.

That it may please the to giue us true repentance, to forgyue us all our synnes, negligences and ignorances, and to endue us with the grace of thy holy spirite, to amende our lyues according to thy holy word,

We beseche the to here us good lorde.

Sonne of god, we beseche the to here us,

Sonne of god, we beseche the to here us.

O lambe of god, that takest awaye the synnes of the worlde,

Graunt us thy peace.

O lambe of god, that takest away the synnes of the worlde,

Have mercy upon us.

O Christ, heare us,

O Christ, heare us.

Lorde haue mercy upon us.

Christ haue mercy upon us.

Lorde haue mercy upon us.

Our father whiche arte in heauen....

with the residue of the Pater noster.

And suffer us not to be ledde into temptation,

But deyuer us from euyll. Amen.

The versicle: **lord, deale not with us after our synnes.**

The answer: Neyther rewarde us after our iniquities.

[Other short prayers and collects follow.]

[Colophon, at the end]

Imprinted at London in Fletestreete, by Thomas Berthelet printer to the kinges highness, the

XXVII day of May, the yere of our Lorde M.D.XLIII. Cum priuilegio ad imprimendum solum.

Appendix II: Documents on the Anglican Litany

Document A. Literae Regiae Archiepiscopo Cantuar. pro Publicatione Regiarum Injunctionum (1544, June). In: *The Works of Thomas Cranmer*. Parker Society. vol. 2, p 494-5. Cambridge: University Press 1846. Reprint New York: Johnson Reprint Corp 1968
Also David Wilkins, *Concilia Magnae Britanniae et Hiberniae*, vol 3, pp 869-870. London 1737 Reprint Bruxelles: Culture et Civilisation 1964.

Most reverend father in God, right trusty and right well-beloved, we greet you well; and let you wit that, calling to our remembrance the miserable state of all Christendom, being at this present, besides all other troubles, so plagued with most cruel wars, hatred, and dissensions, as no place of the same almost, being the whole reduced to a very narrow corner, remaineth in good peace, agreement, and concord, the help and remedy whereof, far exceeding the power of any man, must be called for of him who only is able to grant our petitions, and never forsaketh nor repelleth any that firmly believe and faithfully call on him; unto whom also the examples of scripture encourageth us in all these and other our troubles and necessities to fly, and to cry for aid and succour: being therefore resolved to have continually from henceforth general processions in all cities, towns, churches, and parishes of this our realm, said and sung with such reverence and devotion, as appertaineth, forasmuch as heretofore the people, partly for lack of good instruction and calling, partly for that they understood no part of such prayers or suffrages, as were used to be sung and said, have used to come very slackly to the procession, when the same have been commanded heretofore: we have set forth certain godly prayers and suffrages in our native English tongue, which we send you herewith, signifying unto you, that for the special trust and confidence we have of your godly mind and earnest desire to the setting forward of the glory of God and the true worshipping of his most holy name within that province committed by us unto you, we have sent unto you these suffrages, not to be for a month or two observed, and after slenderly considered, as other our injunctions have to our no little marvel been used; but to th'intent that as well the same as other our injunctions may earnestly be set forth by preaching, good exhortations, and otherways to the people, in such sort as they, feeling the godly taste thereof, may godly and joyously with thanks receive, embrace, and frequent the same, as appertaineth. Wherefore we will and command you, as you will answer unto us for the contrary, not only to cause these prayers and suffrages aforesaid to be published frequently, and openly used in all towns, churches, villages, and parishes of your own diocese; but also to signify this our pleasure unto all other bishops of your province, willing and commanding them in our name and by virtue hereof, to do and execute the same accordingly; unto whose proceedings in th' execution of this our commandment we will that you have a special respect, and make report unto us, if any shall not with good dexterity accomplish the same, not failing, as our spiritual trust is in you. Etc. 11 June 1544... by the king

Document B. To the king's most excellent majesty, from Thomas Cranmer (7 October 1544).

In: *The Works of Thomas Cranmer*. Parker Society. vol. 2, p 412. Cambridge: University Press 1846. Reprint New York: Johnson Reprint Corp 1968

It may please your majesty to be advertised, that according to your highness' commandment, sent unto me by your grace's secretary, Mr Pagett, I have translated into the English tongue, so well as I could in so short time, certain processions, to be used upon festival days, if after due correction and amendment of the same your highness shall think it so convenient. In which translation, forasmuch as many of the processions, in the Latin, were but barren, as meseemed, and little fruitful, I was constrained to use more than the liberty of a translator: for in some processions I have altered divers words; in some I have added part; in some taken part away; some I have left out whole, either for by cause the matter appeared to me to be little to purpose, or by cause the days be not with us festivals-days; and some processions I have added whole, because I thought I had better matter for the purpose, than was th procession in Latin: the judgment whereof I refer wholly unto your magesty; and after your highness hath corrected it, if your grace command some devout and solemn note to be made thereunto, (as is to the procession which your majesty hath already set forth in English), I trust it will much excitate and stir the hearts of all men unto devotion and godliness; but in mine opinion, the song that shall be made thereunto would not be full of notes, but, as near as may be, for every syllable a note; so that it may be sung distinctly and devoutly, as be in the Matins and Evensong, Venite, the Hymns, Te Deum, Benedictus, Magnificat, Nunc dimittis, and all the Psalms and Versickles; and in the mass Gloria in Excelsis, Gloria Patri, the Creed, the Preface, the Pater noster, and some of the Sanctus and Agnus. As concerning the *Salva festa dies*, the Latin note, as I think, is sober and distinct enough; wherefore I have travailed to make the verses in English, and have put the Latin note unto the same. Nevertheless they that be cunning in singing can make a much more solemn note thereto. I made them only for a proof, to see how English would do in song. But by cause mine English verses lack the grace and facility that I would wish they had, your majesty may cause some other to make them again, that can do the same in more pleasant English and phrase. As for the sentence, I suppose will serve well enough. Thus Almighty God preserve your majesty in long and prosperous health and felicity. 7 October 1544