

# **Moslems and Medieval General Intercessions: *Documentation***

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## **Introduction**

The encounter of Christians with Moslems over the centuries has influenced the history of Roman Catholic liturgy. This relatively little known aspect of liturgical history deserves to be re-examined today, as Christians increasingly become aware of Islam and as efforts are being made on many fronts to promote good relations between Christians and Moslems.

Here I present documents that show ways in which Moslems influenced and were referred to in the general intercessions of the medieval Roman Catholic liturgy.

This of course is merely a first step in what should be a broader and deeper study of this subject, carried out by many. These texts need to be placed in context with respect to the place and period of their composition and use. All deserve further analysis and reflection. Implications for Christian-Moslem relations in the past, the present and the future need to be drawn out, especially regarding ways in which Christians today do or might refer to Moslems in their liturgies.

Over the centuries, Christians have often referred to Moslems as Turks, Saracens and Moors.

The general intercessions of the medieval liturgy are also commonly referred to as bidding prayers and as prières du prône. They were important components of the medieval liturgy from about the ninth century to the Reformation. Used most frequently in the Sunday mass, they were sometimes also included in separate preaching services on Sunday and on other occasions as well.

In form the intercessions consisted of a series of intentions that named needs of church and society, followed by a short response. They were led by the priest but addressed to the

people, who were invited to respond in prayer. To make the participation of the people more meaningful and authentic, they were composed in the local vernaculars rather than Latin.

The general intercessions were composed to reflect the needs of each local church; hence they differ one from another in naming parishioners, clergy and civil society and government. Because of this variability, they were not written into the body of the liturgical books, but on loose pages, end pages, in margins, at the end of sermons, etc. As a result, many have been lost.

References to Moslems in the medieval general intercessions are indirect and implicit and reflect three kinds of concerns. Thus many intercessions pray for the recovery of the Holy Land, others pray for Christians who are held captive by Moslems, and a few have to do with war with Moslems..

The excerpts presented here are taken from a body of medieval general intercessions collected by the present writer. These are listed, together with their sources, in a separate document also posted on this website: *Medieval General Intercessions: Bibliography of Texts and Sources*. An introduction to the medieval general intercessions is provided in another document: *Women and the Medieval General Intercessions: Introduction*.

Each text is given a unique designator, e.g., “FR-1. Lotharingia 10<sup>th</sup> c.” Designators give the country of origin or equivalent (using modern political-geographic terminology). Thus: RO = Religious Orders; EN = England; FR = France; SP = Spain; GR = Austria, Germany and Switzerland; PO = Poland. They are then numbered, in rough chronological order. The name of a place or person with whom each text is associated is given next, followed by the approximate date of composition.

Spelling is as in sources and editions. Words of interest are in bold face type. In some cases a modern language version is used or has been added.

In addition to my own studies of prayers for the Holy Land in medieval general intercessions, this topic has recently been treated in the following work:

Amnon Linder, *Raising Arms: Liturgy in the Struggle to Liberate Jerusalem in the Late Middle Ages*. Turnhout: Brepols 2003, pp 353-361.

## **For the Holy Land**

RO-3. Templars 1257  
et por le saint resume de Jerusalem

EN-5 Worchester 1349  
for the patriarch of Jerusalem; for the Holy Lond, and for the holy croys, that Jhesu Crist sendeth it out of hednet mennys honde into Cristinmennys hond.

EN-13 :London 15<sup>th</sup>  
Ye shall praie also speciali for the holi lond and for the holy crosse upon the whych owr Saviour Christ Jhs sufferd peyn and passyon for owr redempcion that he by his myght and mercy brynge it owt of the hondish of the hagthyn men into the roull governaunce and worship of Kristen men when his wyll is and the soner for praier.  
... for the Patryake of Jerusalem...

EN-15 Salisbury 1400  
for the patriarke of Ierusalem; You schulleth bidde for the holi lond and the holi cros, that God send hit in to criston men hond wen his wille is.

EN-17 York 1400  
And for the holy land that god al mytti sende hit into cristen mennys hande.

EN-22 Butley 1401  
for the . . . Patriarke of Jerl'm. And for the holy Crosse and the holy lond to coniure utt to Crysten feyth so that . . . & here . . . dewly be wschypyd.

EN-27 York 1440  
for the patriark of ierusalem, and specially for the haly cross. that god was done open. that god for hys mercy. bringe itt oute of hethen men handes. into cristen menes keypyng.

EN-34. Winchester 1475  
Pro cruce: and for hys [mercy?] brynge the crosse that cryste oure sauyoure dyede uppon in to crysten manys handys and [restore?] that relyke of our redempcion to reuerence of crystian men

EN-36 Wynchen de Worde 1483  
Also ye shall praye for ye holy landd, & for the holy crosse that Iesu Chryst dyed vpon for ye redempcyon of mannes soule, that it may come in to the power of crysten men, the more to be honoured for our prayers.

EN-37 Caxton 1483  
Also ye shal pray for the holy lande and for the holy crosse that Ihesu Cryst deyed on for redempcion of mannys sowle that it may come into the power of cristen men the more to be honoured for our prayers.

EN-38 Becon 1483

Also ye shal praye for the holy Crosse, that is in the possession and hands of unryghtful people, that almighty God may send it into the possession of Christian people, when it pleaseth hym.

EN-39 Shrewsbury 1484

for ye patryarke of Jerusalem, for ye holy crosse yt Cryst suffyrd his passyon uppon yt is in ye heythyn mens handys, yt god for hys mercy bryng it owte of yr handys into Cristen men's keepyng, ye tytter and ye bettyr, for our gud prayers at yis tym.

EN-42 York 1509

And specially for the holy crosse that god was done upon that god for his merci bringe it out of the hethen mennes handes into cristen mennes kepyng.

EN-47 LeStrange temp Henry VIII

Also ye shall pray for the holy Crosse, that is in possession and hands of unryghtful people;  
that God Almighty may send it into the hands of Christian people when it pleaseth him.

FR-7 Paris 1218

Pro terra Jerosolimitana et Constantinopolitana

FR-8 Poitiers 1260

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Por la Terre d'outremer. Enapres, faisons proiere a Nostre Segnor Jesu Crist por la sainte Terre d'outremer, et por cele de Costentinoble: que il, par sa pitie et par sa misericorde, icele gens mescreans, qui i sunt, convertise a sa loi et a sa creance, et voille et soffre qu'ele soit espandue et sainte Yglise creue et essaucie en tele maniere qu'il i soit reconneus, proiez et reclamez a segnor et a pere et q'il soit a honor et a loenge de son som et des sains et des saintes et au salu de lor ames et des nos et a remissiun de toz feauz defuns.

FR-20 Limoges St Pierre du Queyroix 1379

Pro terra sancta de ultra mare.

FR-25 Paris 1405

Nous prierons pour la sainte terre d'oultre mer, qui est entre les mains des sarrazins et mescreans. Que diex la rende ès mains des chrestiens tost et hastivement, en telle maniere que son glorieux nom y puisse estre franchement serve et honouré, et sa digne loy exaucée.

FR-26 Paris before 1449

Après nous prierons pour tous les champions de sainte église. C'est assavoir pour les chevalliers de la sainte terre d'oultre mer, qui sont deffenseurs contre les sarrazins et

mescréans, pour le peuple chrétien; que dieu leur doit grâce de mettre les dis mescréans en la sainte foy chrétienne.

FR-27 Limoges St Pierre du Queyroix 1450

Pro terra sancta. Et per la terre sainte d'oultre mar; que nostre seignour la mette entre las mas deux creystians.

FR-28 Meaux 1475

Nous prions pour la sainte terre d'oultre mer; que Dieu y mette tel conseil qu'il scet que mestier en est.

FR-30 Argeton 1491

Pour la sainte terre d'oultre mer

SP-1 Cuzia 1388

Oracio pro terra sancta transmarinis partibus constituta, ut eam Deus reducat ad manus Christianorum.

Item, pregarem nostre Senyor Deu que aquella terra sancta d'oltramar vulla el tornar en mans de cristians per tal que lo seu sant nom hi sie benehit, lausat e benasurat mils que no es al die de vuy.

SP-3 Tarragon 15<sup>th</sup> c

Encara's mes pregarem nostro senyor Deu per la sancta terra de Hierusalem hon nostro senyor Deu volch penre mort y pacio [per nos]. [Pregarem] nostro senyor Deus que la vulla retornar en [poder] de christians en forma e en manera que son [nom sia] loat de la part de la, axi com de la part de sa e milor. Amen.

SP-4 Tarragona 1501/1530

E mes pregarem per la terra sancta de promissio: e per la ciutat sancta de Hierusalem en la qual nostre Senyor Deu Iesuchrist volgue pendre passio e mort per la redemptio nostra. Que nostre Senyor Deu la vulla traure de poder d'infels: e la culla tornar en poder de chrestians: perque lo seu sanct nom hi sia lohat millor que no es ara.

SP-6 Lerida 1567

Y mas rogaremos por la tierra santa de promision, y por la ciudad santa de Hierusalem, en la qual nuestro Senor Dios Iesu-christo quiso tomar passion y muerte por nuestra redencion, que nuestro Senor Dios la quiera sacar de poder de infieles y la quiera tornar en poder de christianos, para que su santo nombre sea loado mejor que no es agora.

## **For Captives and in Time of War**

RO-1. Acre 1260

Et por tous ceaux qui sont en mains de Sarracins, cristiene gent: que nostre Sires les  
dislire por nostres proiers.

RO-2. Rhodes 1310

Seignors malades, pries pour tous crestiens qui sung en mains de Sarrazins: que Dieu les  
delivre par vos prieres

FR-1. Lotharingia A, 10<sup>th</sup> c

Oremus... pro captiuis

FR-3. Fleury (Winchecombe) 11<sup>th</sup> c

Pro infirmis et captiuis

FR-19. Metz 15<sup>th</sup> c

Prions pour les poures enprisonneiz:

Sire, remembre toi en ton boin plasir et en ta debonaireteit de ton pueple, et nos visite en  
ton salut.

FR-22. Paris St André des Arcs 15<sup>th</sup> c

Apres nous prierons dieu pour tous ceulz qui sont en chartre et en prison. Et par especial  
pour ceulx qui sont entre les mains des mescreans; que dieu par sa grace leur doint bonne  
paciencie, et bonne et briefve delivrance, et les tienne en bonne vraie foy et creance.

FR-25. Paris 1405

pour tous prisonniers chrestiens; que diex les vueille delivrer.

FR-26. Paris 1449

Apres nous prierons pour tous les champions de sainte eglise. C'est assavoir pour les  
chevalliers de la sainte terre d'oultre mer, qui sont deffenseurs contre les sarrazins et  
mescreans, pour le peuple chretien; que dieu leur doint grace de mettre les dis mescreans  
en la sainte foy chretienne.

Et se par aucune fortune ilz sont prins ou retenus en leurs mains, que nostre seigneur  
ihesu crist leur doint grace de eux fermes tenir en vraye foy, et perseverer iusques en la  
fin

FR-30. Argeton 1493

Pour tous prisonniers qui sont detenus entre les mescreans.

Et aussy pour tous aultres prisonniers qui sont detenus pour dette.

GR-6. Honorius 1100

Exinde moneo uos deum poscere pro his qui sunt in peregrinatione, et pro captiuis, pro  
uinculatis, pro incarceratis, uel in aliqua angustia constitutis, ut misericors deus

unicuique secundum suam necessitatem subveniat, et secundum suam misericordiam de malis eripiat, et eis omnis quae sunt bona tribuat. Amen.

SP-1. Cuxia 1388

Oracio pro deffensions gencium et terre istius frontierie.

Item, pregarem nostre Senyor Deu per tota aquesta terra qui es posada en frontera; que placia a nostre Senyor Deu e a madona santa Maria advocada del presepi e a mossen sent Miquel archangel que la dita terra o la gent constituïda en aquella ab tots lur bens vullen salvar e deffendre de males gents, de companyes o enemichs, per tal que ab be, apu e repos, de coratge pugam dir e fer e pensar bones obres.

SP-2. Monsterrat 14<sup>th</sup> c

Pro captivis et carceratis

SP-3. Tarragona 15<sup>th</sup> c

Encara's mes pregarem nostro senyor Deu per los caytius christians que so en poder de captivitat en que son posats; ella fasa venir i tornar en sos habitacions sens renegar la fe christiana. Amen.

SP-4. Terragona 1501

E mes pregarem per los catius chrestians que stan en terra d'infels e son en perill de renegar la sancta fe catholica. Que nostre Senyor los do virtut de paciencia: e fortaleza: els vulla deliurar de captivitat e tornar entre sos amichs.

SP-5. Lerida 1567

Y mas rogaremos por los cativos christianos que estan en tierra de infieles y en peligro de renegar la santa fe catholica, que nuestro Senor les de virtud de paciencia y fortaleza, y los quiera librar de estiverlo y tornar entre sus amigos.

PO-3. Beszowa 1400

Pro infidelibus

Pro inimicis suis

PO-4. Czestachowa 1400

pro infirmis, viatoribus, captivis, mulieribus pregnantibus

PO-17. Warsaw 1480

Rogetur dominum pro pace in christianitate, ut deus omnipotens compescat istos paganos et nous donne de les vaincre, qui comburunt villas, civitates, homines capiunt en captivite, et hoc propter nostra peccata. [in margin]

PO-19. Gniezno St James end of 15<sup>th</sup> c

Priez aussi le Seigneur Dieu pour ces gens qui sont prisonniers aux mains de paiens; que le Seigneur Dieu daigne les delivrer de leur captivite.

PO-20. Poznan A 1510

Eciam oretis o.d. pro omnibus terragenis vel nobilibus huius corone, qui terram aut provinciam hanc a violencia et bello defendunt, et suos subditos libenter et misericorditer diiudicant alias rospravyaya; ut eis o.d. daret accedere officium alia rzadu et misericordiam dei in regno celorum.