PREFACE

Since the monographs of Ulysse Robert and Markus Maurer at the end of the nineteenth century no one had examined the reign of Calixtus II (1119–1124) until recently. Now Beate Schilling has written a long description of his life both as archbishop of Vienne and as pope. Her work has inspired a spate of articles, mainly by German historians. This fine scholarship grows out of a tradition that focuses on the competition between the papacy and the empire. My study recognizes the importance of this focus, but attempts to deepen its understanding from the perspective of Calixtus. While Robert, Maurer, and Schilling present an overview of his reign, I also explore critical areas in depth in order to gain a measure of the man and his policies.

An aggressive pope from the anomalous area of the County of Burgundy, Calixtus arrived on the scene at a low point of the papacy. His background produced a unique mindset that made his reign unlike that of any other pope. Among the multiplicity of complex issues that he faced were ecclesiastical reform, the imposition of papal authority on the western kingdoms and the empire, the pacification of Rome, the establishment of the Latin church in Norman Italy, and the campaign to repulse the Muslims in Spain and the Holy Land. By probing his motivations, his actions, and their results this study seeks to elucidate his strengths and weaknesses, and more profoundly to comprehend the effect that he had upon Western Europe and the Holy Land.