I am grateful to have the chance to thank at last all of the people whose support was critical for completing this book. As an undergraduate, I was lucky to be launched into the study of medieval Italy by Robert Brentano and Adnan Husain; I remain ever grateful for their example and encouragement. In graduate school I had the good fortune of working with Caroline Walker Bynum, Consuelo Dutschke, Carmela V. Franklin, Martha Howell, Joel Kaye, Adam J. Kosto, and Robert Somerville. At a critical stage of this book’s production, Amanda Irwin Wilkins and Andrea Scott provided me with a wonderful home in the Princeton Writing Program; I constantly make use of the lessons I learned from them in both my teaching and my writing. Many thanks as well go to Paula Findlen for my year at Stanford. I am also grateful for the support of the Sacramento State Research and Creative Activity Faculty Awards Program.

The colleagues I found at the American Academy in Rome have remained the ideal of an enriching intellectual community. For all that they gave both Michael and me that year (and since), I thank Mike Chin, Roger Freitas, Jefferson Friedman, Lella Gandini, Vivien Greene, Maria Elena Gonzalez, Lester K. Little, Jessica Maier, Elizabeth Marlowe, Kristina Milnor, Victoria Morse, Bill North, Dana Prescott, Emma Scioli, Jonah Siegel, Bradley Wester, and Nancy Yousef.

The friendships that came out of graduate school have meant so much to me that it feels like thanking siblings. I am beyond grateful for the support, guidance, and unwavering loyalty I have found with Leah DeVun, Jessica Goldberg, Anna Harrison, Anna Trumbore Jones, Paola Tartakoff, Ashli White, and Ellen Wurtzel. I have also benefited in too many ways to count from friendships with Pamela Bloch, Deborah Cohler, Sam Collins, Heather Rose Dodge, Robin Donovan, Ariel Coyote Ford, Jennifer Heindl, Hillary Miller, Jeff Miner, Sonya Posmentier, Karen Skinazi, Harvey Stark, Barbara Voss, and Heather Wood.

My Faculty Success Program comrades have been a crucial weekly community, offering sane and compassionate guidance and a vital sense that even
though writing is a solitary endeavor, I am, in fact, never alone. Thank you, Abigail Andrews, Lauren Duquette-Rury, Kate Graber, Rachel Haywood-Ferreira, and Maria Alejandra Perez.

Maureen Miller has been a constant sounding board, a careful reader, and a crucial tie to a larger medieval community. I am grateful for all that she has given me. Anna Trumbore Jones read (multiple times) everything in this book. Her generosity as well as her smart and thoughtful eye amaze me. She has provided me with a model of friendship and support that I strive to imitate.

The completion of this book would have been unimaginable to me without the extraordinary intellectual and professional guidance I found in Caroline Walker Bynum and Joel Kaye. The direction they offered in graduate school was crucial but it has been the ongoing ideas, support, and cheering they have so willingly given me that allowed this project to finally come to its end. Their example continues to navigate me through my work as a scholar and teacher.

I send much love and gratitude to my family for their support. My siblings, Annie, Eli, and Lucy; my sisters-in-law Sonia and Kim; my in-laws, Jane and Herm, and my parents, Lisa and David, have all given more to me than can be expressed here. I fell in love with Italy and its history when my parents first took me there as a teenager. And I learned how to articulate that enthusiasm over the many nights in high school and college that my father worked with me on my writing at our kitchen table. I cannot thank them enough for all they have given me.

Carmela Franklin not only gave me valuable instruction in all things medieval when I was a graduate student but some smart and anxiety-relieving advice about the realities of being an academic mom. Her advice that one has a career that develops over time and that can change course in wonderfully unforeseen ways has stayed ever present in my mind as I began to build my own family. The arrivals of Daisy, Henry, and Bessie have made all of this work matter in ways I could not have imagined. Finally, nothing is imaginable without Michael. I dedicate this book to him.
THE LAY SAINT