**Quantum Praedecessores**

Bishop Eugenius, servant of the servants of God, to his most beloved son in Christ, Louis, the illustrious king of the French, and to his beloved sons, the princes, and to all the faithful ones of God who are established throughout France,-greeting and blessings.

How much our predecessors the Catholic Popes did labour for the deliverance of the eastern church, we have learned from the accounts of the ancients and have found it written in their acts. For our blessed predecessor, pope Urban, blew a heavenly trumpet and gathered the sons of the Holy Catholic Church from all parts of the earth. At his voice, indeed, those beyond the mountain and especially the bravest and strongest warriors of the French kingdom, and also those of Italy, full of fervour, gathered together, and, assembling a very great army, and by shedding much of their own blood, God being with them, they freed from the filth of the pagans that city where our Saviour chose to suffer for us, and where He left His glorious sepulchre to us as a memorial of His death, -and many other cities too.

By the grace of God, and their own faith, your ancestors have defended these cities and spread the name of Christ in those parts; and other cities of the infidels have by them been bravely captured. But now, because of our sins and those of the people themselves, which we can not speak of without great grief and wailing, the city of Edessa, which when the whole land in the east was held by the pagans, alone by herself served God under the power of the Christians, has been captured, as well as and many Christian castles. The archbishop, moreover, of this same city, together with his clergy and many other Christians, have been slain, and the relics of the saints have been trampled under the feet of the infidels, and scattered. We know and because of your wisdom you must know that great danger threatens the church of God and the whole of Christianity. For it will be the greatest proof of your nobility and honesty, if you the sons bravely defend what your ancestors bravely took. But if this does not happen, God forbid, it will be obvious that the courage of your ancestors will be lacking in you.

Therefore we compel all of you in God, we ask and command, and, for the forgiveness of sins we encourage that those who are of God, and, above all, the greater men and the nobles do step forward and strive to oppose the many infidels, who are rejoicing in a victory gained over us, and so to defend the eastern church -freed from their tyranny by so great an outpouring of the blood of your fathers, as we have said, - and to snatch many thousands of your captive brothers from their hands,- that the dignity of the Christian name may be increased in your time, and that your courage which is praised throughout the whole world, may remain intact and unshaken. May good Matthias be an example to you, who, to preserve the laws of his ancestors, went to his death with his sons, leaving whatever he possessed in the world; and who at length, by the help of God, after many labours however, triumphed, along with his children, over his enemies.

We, moreover, grant, by the authority given to us by God, to those who through devotion decide to undertake so holy and so necessary a work and labour, the removal of sins which our aforesaid predecessor pope Urban did first do; and decree that their wives and sons and possessions shall remain under the protection of our selves and of the archbishops, bishops and other prelates of the church of God. By the apostolic authority, moreover, we forbid that, in the case of any thing, which they possessed in peace, when they took the cross, any lawsuit be brought until it is certain they have died or returned. Moreover since those who war for the Lord should not go in precious garments, nor with provision for their personal appearance, nor with dogs or hawks , other things which bring sinfulness: those who have decided to undertake so holy a work shall not chase after these things, but shall show zeal and diligence with all their strength in the matter of arms, horses and other things with which they may fight the infidels. But those who are oppressed by debt and begin so holy a journey with a pure heart, shall not pay interest for the time past while they are away, and if they are bound by an oath or pledge in the matter of interest, we absolve them by apostolic authority. It is allowed to them also when their relations or lords are either unwilling or unable to advance them the money, to freely pledge their lands or other possessions to churches, or church persons, or to any other Christian. According to the institution of our aforesaid predecessor [Urban], by the authority of almighty God and by that of St. Peter the chief of the apostles, given to us by God, we grant such removal and absolution of sins, that he who devoutly begins so sacred a journey and accomplishes it, or dies during it, shall obtain absolution for all his sins which with a humble and honest heart he shall confess, and shall receive the fruit of eternal freedom from the Saviour of all.