PREFACE

A certain degree of *chutzpah* is necessary when writing a book about the medieval Bible. Any work on such a topic must omit more than it can include, leaving entire areas unexplored and touching only lightly on others. Rather than taking the obvious path of concentrating on a specific medium or a biblical episode, I have chosen to examine the problem in multiple media, approaching the Bible as a complex object, a collection of sacred texts and narratives. Such a choice is at the heart of the concept of biblical mediation, which this book introduces. Mediation is my key to the understanding of the Bible within its medieval contexts. Through four test cases this book follows the Bible as it was sung and carried in city streets, as it was studied and preached in medieval England. It explores the concept of biblical mediation and its theoretical underpinning, in the hope of achieving a fuller appreciation of the medieval Bible, and of contributing to the study of sacred Scripture in other times and places.

The challenges of exploring the Bible in diverse fields, ranging from liturgy and jurisprudence to palaeography and preaching, were met with the help of friends and colleagues. I wish to thank especially Bill Cambell, Sarah Carpenter, the late David Chadd, Rita Copeland, J. Cornelia Linde, Pino di Luccio, SJ, and Sam Mirelman. Early chapters were read by David d'Avray, Nicole Bériou, Susan Boynton, Eamon Duffy, Alun Ford, Sarah Hamilton, Laura Light and Paul Saenger. Sam Worby has provided advice and support beyond the call of friendship and collegiality. Their comments have made this a better book. Any mistakes remain, entirely, my own. Steve Rigby, the series editor, has helped to bring the book to fruition, and at Manchester University Press, Emma Brennan, John Banks and Greg Thorpe have overseen its taking of material form. Aliza Poláček, Michael and Riki Poleg has stood by me throughout the long process.

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