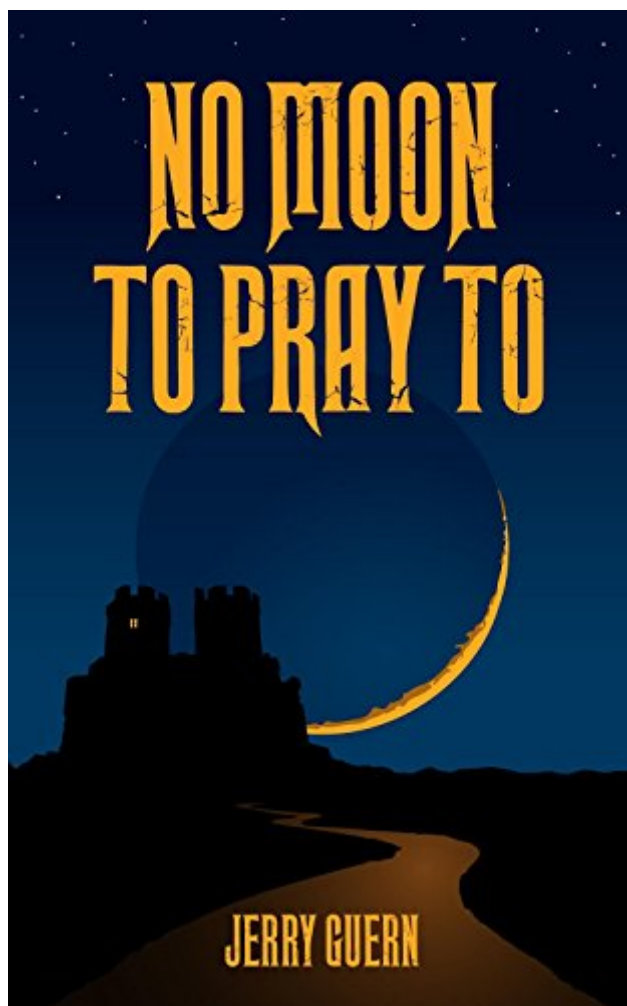


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# No Moon To Pray To



## Synopsis

It has been thirteen years since the Fourth Crusade captured Constantinople. Father Michael has spent those years exterminating the supernatural creatures that once infested the city. Shortly after returning home to Provence, he stumbles upon a nest of vampires, creatures his order believed they had driven from Europe. Alone and cut off from his brother hunters, he turns to Enik, an aging knight tormented by guilt over his actions in the Crusade. For them both to survive, Michael must initiate Enik into spiritually dangerous supernatural secrets that his order has guarded for centuries. He will also learn that the penitent knight and a centuries-old vampire know secrets that his own order kept hidden from him.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

This book really surprised me. Because it came recommended by a friend of the author's, I felt duty-bound to read it. I had imagined having to slog through turgid prose, particularly since this was author Jerry Guern's first book. Instead of a slog, I quickly found myself drawn into the author's world. I was amazed by the author's ability to move the story along with crisp prose and interesting characters. At the end, I was surprised by the reversal of character roles, which gestured at

redemption in a way that I had never seen before. The story is set a decade after the 4th Crusade, the misbegotten Crusade re-routed by the Venetians into an attack on Constantinople. Father Michael is the member of an order that is dedicated to eradicating vampires from Christendom. Vampires are real and they are both a physical and a spiritual threat. They are recognized as a spiritual threat because they can offer immortality at the cost of the vampire's soul, which may be an attractive option to many. Father Michael is waylaid by a band of vampires and rescued by the knight Enik. Enik is a heroic figure who is serving a self-imposed penance for his role in the 4th Crusade. During the rescue, Father Michael discloses that he has an unusual supernatural ability to harm vampires with his mind. The ancient and disfigured vampire named "Klaus" recognizes Michael's ability as that exercised by the legendary founder of Michael's order, a converted pagan named Ottonius, who had captured and tortured him, but who had represented that he had the tunic of Christ, which could cure vampires. After that set-up, the story moves into high action-adventure mode as Michael and Enik defend Enik's castle from the assembled undead and their living minions. While Michael and Enik hunt for the nest of vampires, Klaus sets in motion his own plot involving the head of Michael's order. What follows is an intricate dance of alliances and betrayals as fortunes shift. I do not want to give away the story, so I will speak ambiguously. I was impressed by the resolution of the story and elevation of Klaus into what promises to be a positive character in future installments. I am also concerned about Father Michael's fate, which is hanging in limbo. One of the nice features of this book, in my opinion, is the adherence to traditional vampire tropes and the essential Christian subtext of the story. Crucifixes and sacramentals work because Christ's death had consequences for the world. Some of the longer-lived characters acknowledge the importance of Christ. Enik is clearly a Christian knight. This is all a nice change of pace from the modern trope of keeping vampire lore intact except for that "religious stuff," as if that "religious stuff" was a supernatural bridge too far. Although this book is obviously the bridgehead for a series, it is not merely the first part of a larger book. I don't like the tendency of some recent writers to arbitrarily end their book when their word count reaches one-third of the total. Guern finishes off the main parts of this story but leaves threads open for future development. This is a fine and engaging book that kept my interest. It is all the more impressive for being the author's first published book.

This is a very unusual, absolutely fascinating novel, and I did not want to put it down. The author excels at depicting passionate spiritual struggle and armed combat, an interesting combination of strengths. The book is heavy on profound spiritual themes, but they're examined in a story that's fast-moving, visceral, violent, heartbreaking, nail-biting, and full of

surprises; it does not slow down to contemplate. It's also full of brief but fascinating allusions to side stories and back stories that would make great novels themselves. What I appreciate most though, is an ending that takes you completely by surprise but that looking back seems completely fitting and inevitable. Just really well done, and I hope this author has more coming.

Although I was already very eager to read "No Moon To Pray To," I was highly surprised and impressed with how much I was drawn into the whole story. From the very beginning to the very end, this novel had my full attention. With the blending of historical accounts, the supernatural, religious and metaphysical belief systems, I felt very connected to a couple of the characters along with the entire evolution of the story line. I strongly recommend this book to all readers with a passion for fantasy, history, and suspense.

Fantasy is not really my thing, but I was more than intrigued by the prologue, and then couldn't stop reading. This is a very fine novel. It is smart--both historically and in terms how real people interact with each other and the real world. It's also fast-moving and full of surprises. It's a romping good adventure and yet has some un-ostentatious profundity to it. It is the perfect summer read for a thinking person.

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