

# Pax Dei

TM



The Sourcebook of the Dominion  
for ARS MAGICA™ 3rd Edition





# Pax Dei

## Beatus Regnum



by Sam Chupp  
with Leigh Ann Hildebrand

## CREDITS

**Writing:** Sam Chupp and Leigh Ann Hildebrand

**Research:** Leigh Ann Hildebrand

**Development:** Ken Cliffe

**Editing:** Robert Hatch

**Layout:** Sam Chupp

**Art Direction:** Richard Thomas

**Cover Art:** John Cobb

**Back Cover:** Chris McDonough

**Logo:** Richard Thomas

**Interior Art:** John Cobb and Joshua Gabriel Timbrook

Ars Magica was originally created by Jonathan Tweet and Mark Rein»Hagen

## SPECIAL THANKS

Chris "Crack" McDonough, for offering sound effects for every dramatic action.

Rob "Mister Gut" Hatch, for being able to undress just by standing up.

Ken "Aquaman" Cliffe, for needing to get out of that contained environment.

Josh "Slamation" Timbrook, for finally succumbing to White Wolf culture.

Wes "GQ Hoover" Harris, for being the best-dressed Vacuum Man ever.

Ren "She's Outta Control" Lilly, for putting a new machine to the test.

Mark "How do you get out of this thing?" Rein»Hagen, for getting wrapped up in his own pipe puzzle.

Bill "Uh oh, they're looking my way" Bridges, for trying to quietly hide from the office slamation squad.

BenjaminJ. "El Chico" Monk, Jr., for going for the whole enchilada (or having it handed to him?).

Sam "Immanent Value" Chupp, for bringing that ethereal value to an otherwise jaded office.

Richard "Thirtysomething" Thomas, for being the elder among a bunch of pups.

Stewart "I don't remember anything about a vampire" Wieck, for enjoying *Dracula* for reasons all his own.

Andrew "Nine" Greenberg, for being able to endure most of the foulness, but not quite all.

Lyndi "Revenge" Hathaway, for delivering Four-Square destruction, even at the least strategic of times.

William "Midnight Oil" Hale, for doing the work of ten White Wolf employees and still crawling in every morning. Cigarette William?

Travis "You Know" Williams, for making sure everyone knows.

## Dedication

Pax Dei is dedicated to two exceptional teachers:

Dr. B.J. Fant, for her patient, gentle, guiding hand, her unstinting loyalty, and her Michaeline guardianship over the human right of freedom of imagination

and the memory of Dr. Anthony Nemitz.

### Special Mention

Sam would like to thank Dean Lorey (for last-minute, long-distance financial assistance), Sean Healy (for a wonderful post-apocalyptic breakfast), Laurie Faye (for driving me into a new job), James Locke (for a million reasons), Lauren Percy (my first Seraph), Gary Nistler (for that far-off Guidestones Equinox) and Martha and James Chupp (for obvious reasons). Thanks also to Katherine Kurtz for teaching me about Archangels.

Leigh Ann would like to thank the following people for facilitating her research at Carnegie-Mellon University: Stephen and Martha Underwood, CMU's Boss Hall Suitemates Bruce, Travis, Chris, and Todd, and her own arch angel Michael Feely. Thanks also to Kevin Kinsey for lending emotional, financial, moral, and academic support.





Introduction .....	7
Chapter Two: Lands Claimed by God.....	11
Chapter Three: The Clergy .....	29
Chapter Four: The Unseen World.....	53
Chapter Five: Made Manifest on Earth .....	67
Chapter Six: <i>Pax Dei</i> and <i>Ars Magica</i> .....	83
Appendix: <i>Cestus Dei</i> : The Mailed Fist of God ....	101

The morning fog clung to the ground like a woolen blanket as Brother Ambrose walked across the courtyard. The bells were tolling Prime as the others of the order made their way hurriedly to the cathedral for Mass. Ambrose carefully climbed the switchback staircase and gently rapped on the door.

"Come in," a muffled reply came from behind the door. Ambrose gently opened it and walked in. The black-hooded man in the leatherback chair smiled at him. The Bishop's huge ring belied his position, raising him far above the status of ordinary monk. Ambrose kissed the ring. "Bless you, Excellency," he said. Ambrose's heart pounded as he took the seat offered him. His legs ached from the long walk from the Covenant.

"Pax Vobiscum, brother," the Bishop began. "It pleases me to see you here, on time for a change. I believe you remember my scribe, Father Adrian." The Bishop gestured to the small, thin man sitting at the secretary's desk. "Now, shall we discuss what you've seen in the past three months? I'm quite interested in learning more about the black tome you said the Wind Wizard purchased."

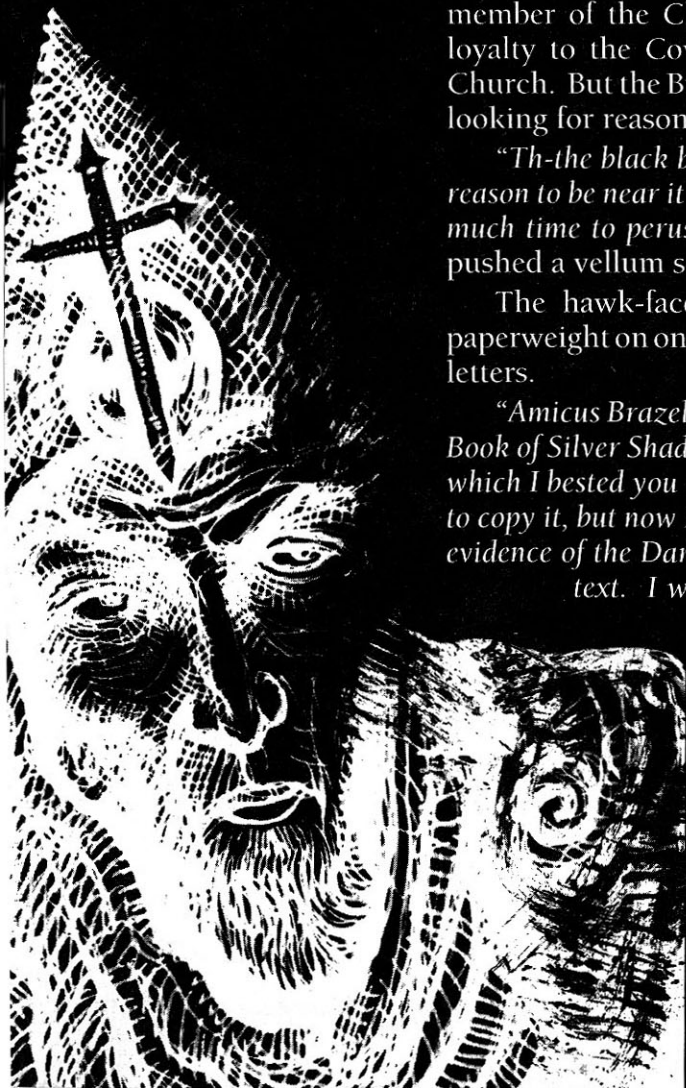
Brother Ambrose pursed his lips. He walked a fine line. If he told the Bishop too much, the man could order not-too-distant crusaders to turn their terrible wrath upon the Covenant, its magical protections notwithstanding. Still, being a member of the Church was important to Ambrose, and his loyalty to the Covenant was second to that felt for Mother Church. But the Bishop, a hardened, steely bastard, was clearly looking for reason to call a crusade against Magi everywhere.

"Th-the black book is still a mystery, Excellency. I have had reason to be near it only a few times, and each time I have not had much time to peruse it. But I did. . . I did find this." Ambrose pushed a vellum scroll across the table to the Bishop.

The hawk-faced man unrolled the scroll and placed a paperweight on one end, reading aloud the hastily-scribed Latin letters.

"Amicus Brazel, I write to thee with the intent of procuring the Book of Silver Shadows, that you owe me, due to our Certámen in which I bested you rightly. In my good graces I allowed you time to copy it, but now I will not allow you to retain it as I have found evidence of the Dark Hearted One in references that speak of the text. I wish to pursue this knowledge with the utmost alacrity. Send the tome now, or I shall bring this matter to the attention of the Tribunal at first opportunity. I'm quite sure you do not wish a confrontation with the Flambeau so close to their erstwhile Domus Magnus. Deliver the book up to the Redcap bringing you this note, and I will quit my claim."

"So, can you explain this little piece of frippery, Brother? What does this mean?"





"Grimgroth is obviously interested in the book for reasons other than we thought. It has long been traditional for those of the Order of Hermes to suspect House Tremere of seeking power for its own end. It could be that Grimgroth has fallen to temptation."

"I see. Hmmm. Yes, this is enough, I'm sure, to convince the Papacy to act on this Covenant. Perhaps some of our Dominican brothers will be sent to make these 'astrologers' see sense."

"But... does that mean you will no longer need my services?"

"Oh, no. No. You are our contact to the wizards. You understand them. You have placed yourself in grave danger for the benefit of the Church, Brother Ambrose, and will be rewarded. You do understand that the chapter house in Foix is opening up soon? They will need a new Abbot when Father Juliere leaves... and the Church needs someone like you, a bright, chipper, subtle man. Go back to the Covenant once again, Brother Ambrose. I will contact you when it is time to move forward with our plan."

Brother Ambrose rose to leave, tugging his sleeves down and stepping toward the door. As Ambrose put his hand on the handle, the Bishop spoke.

"Oh, and Brother Ambrose, they haven't been exposing you to... forbidden texts... have they?"

"Excellency?"

"I understand that amongst the arcane lore Magi collect, they sometimes collect works of Aristotle and of physicianry, both of which are banned by the Church. You haven't been exposed to those, have you?"

"Admittedly, Excellency, I have... in that I must scribe copies of such works on occasion. That is how the Covenant earns a portion of the magical substance the Magi call vis. But I do not read the books. I let them filter through my brain and only let my hands move to write the words."

"Be sure you do not read them, Brother. Those books contain ideas which would terrify you, and some which might undo your faith. They are dangerous works. That is why they have been banned."

"I see. Many thanks, Excellency. I will pray for strength."

Ambrose opened the door and walked out. The Bishop did not notice the sweat that trickled down his back, even in this chill air of early autumn. By the time he met his companions from the Covenant on the road, Ambrose was shaking with fear. How could he tell his favorite Magus, Grimgroth, that he had knowingly betrayed his trust — Grimgroth who had provided him with Plato's writings? More importantly, how could he admit to his treachery to the *consortis* and *custos*, the good folk of the Covenant who had become his little flock? Ambrose resolved to make amends, and realized he would one day have to oppose the Bishop's plans, whether it meant excommunication or not. He could not continue to betray the folk he had come to love.





# INTRODUCTION

**T**he Dominion. The Church. God. Angels. Saints. These are the Divine, spiritual forces of Mythic Europe. Theirs is the Light which opposes the Dark, the Dark that seeks to rise and engulf the land and all its inhabitants. Just as harsh winters, backaches, sin and temptation are all worldly manifestations of Hell, Heaven also makes its mark upon the world. From the humblest roadside shrine to the largest, most ornate cathedral, the manifestations of the Dominion empower the land of Mythic Europe, guiding its future, shaping its present, and coloring its past. Both Heaven and Hell directly affect the lives of Mythic Europe's folk, and most who shy from the lure of the Dark flee to the warmth of the Light.

## THE SCOPE OF THIS BOOK

**Pax Dei** is the companion volume to the *Ars Magica* supplement, *The Maleficium*. This book delves into Mythic Europe's Church and Divinity just as *The Maleficium* explores the milieu of Hell, and its residents' machinations. The two books conjoin and oppose one another, reflecting both sides of the Christian coin. Certainly possession of *The Maleficium* is not mandatory for full appreciation of this book, but understanding Hell and its motives is helpful in understanding Heaven and its goals, even if by contrast.

When defining the scope of the Church and Divinities in Mythic Europe, **Pax Dei** is limited to the powers, effects, denizens and minions of the Dominion. It is not meant to be

an exploration of the entire religion of Christianity. Nor is this book meant to represent the sum of all Divinity everywhere. It is merely meant to give you, as Storyguide or player, a way to represent the Dominion in your Saga. Other *Ars Magica* supplements (*Faeries*, *Mythic Europe*, *The Hidden Paths*, *Shamans*, and *The Maleficium*) deal with Mythic Europe's other supernatural powers, the simple structure of the mundane Church, and the mundane history of Christianity. These other books, however, do not delve into the supernatural functioning of the Church itself. That is what **Pax Dei** does.

## Using Pax Dei

It is important to understand at the outset that **Pax Dei** is not meant to be a religious text. It is a game reference book. It is not the intention of the authors to belittle or misrepresent a true religion. To be sure, Mythic Europe's Church seems to reflect the true Church of our own Middle Ages. In truth it does not. Indeed, we do not even compare the two since the Church of Mythic Europe is all we are concerned with, and that is a Church imbued with as many fantasy elements as the rest of the fantasy world in which it exists. The Church described here is no more real than the magic and faeries of Mythic Europe. Despite this, Mythic Europe's Church is analogous to the Church of the "real" Middle Ages, and this sourcebook attempts to represent some fragment of the mystery of that real-world Church.

One of the primary functions of this book is to allow you to portray Mythic Europe's Church with all the power and respect that is offered the world's other powers. The Mythic Church faces many challenges that our world's Church never did—Magi, faeries and demons are real and at times attack Her auspices. Through this book the Mythic Church now has means by which to take care of Her own.

The Maleficium defines and details the powers of the Ash Empyrean of Mythic Hell, and of the Infernal on *Terra Europa*. In that book we learn that demons swarm everywhere, tempting, teasing, baiting, looking for converts to their Dark Path, and offering power in exchange for simple pacts and *malefic* acts. Everyone, from the holiest clergyperson to the humblest peasant, is vulnerable to Hell's siren song of power. **Pax Dei** challenges Hell's lure. In some ways, the Church is an army arrayed against the many-headed Infernal beast, fighting the Darkness with sword and prayer. Mother Church is also a gentle shepherd, guiding Her flock away from the world's ravaging wolves.

Defining the powers of the Dominion is not a simple matter. Because God no longer performs the grandiose miracles of the Old Testament, the Divine has become subtle. Even the miraculous works of the saints are neither bright nor flashy. Capturing such subtlety with game statistics is particularly difficult, as those statistics impose rules and clarity upon phenomena properly beyond measure or codification. Thus, no game system or mechanic in this book should be taken literally. Since a game system is at best a flawed system for generating "reality," you should use this supplement for education and inspiration rather than a strict interpretation of rules.

The Church, although a physically quantifiable organization, is still a very large one, and has many aspects. Portraying the entire Church according to a single perspective would be shallow and close-minded. The Church is both merciful and righteous, and, like any human endeavor, is both corrupt and pure. It is all too easy to cast the Church as yet another enemy of the Order of Hermes. This is not the case; indeed, Church and Order share many traits and align on many issues. The Church has not yet made a final ruling on the Order of Hermes — to condone or condemn it — so each and every Hermetic Covenant has a responsibility to supplicate the goodwill of Mother Church.

Although the Mythic Church of the Ars Magica world is often portrayed as corrupt and tarnished — such corruption is a universal truth of the world — the Mythic Church does have its redeeming qualities. The Church protects much ancient knowledge that would otherwise be lost in the Dark Ages. It is possibly the only organization in Mythic Europe that tends the homeless, the diseased and the insane, and it strives to keep civilization alive. The Church is a source of education, and therefore of talented people (players' characters among them). The Church also wields much temporal power. Many folk die with no heirs, thus leaving their lands to the Church, which is a considerable landholder. By accepting this "unclaimed" land, the Church averts conflict over the territories. Furthermore,



J. Cobb



through the auspices of excommunication and interdict, and the right to call crusades, the Church can influence the politics of Mythic Europe and protect the land's people as a whole. These redeeming qualities must all be remembered when portraying the Church, for not all its members have been lured into sin.

Keep in mind, too, that the Church is but one side of Christendom. It is merely the earthly manifestation of Divine might. The angels and saints, those great lights in Heaven, are as real and omnipresent as the demons of Satan. God Himself works miracles through those with True Faith, and through those who are pious. Other mysteries of the Creator also abound, and God awards the pious with his Gifts. The Divinities themselves can therefore make themselves heard and known on earth, and influence the world.

The Divine is, quite literally, the most potent force in Mythic Europe. The Divine can do anything the Divine wishes. Because of this omnipotence, it is impossible to give the Godhead statistics of any kind. It might be possible for a mundane person to attack someone who is possessed by a Divine force. The victim might be wounded, but is still infused with the life-giving force of God. Remember that the Truth of things — True Faith, True Love, and even True Reason (which does not refute, but expands upon Christian belief) — flows from the True Empyrean (see *A Brief Interlude in Metaphysics*, below), which was created by the Divine. Thus, Life, Essential Nature, and True Magic are God's province, which is one reason why Hermetic Magi cannot penetrate these boundaries.

Ultimately, **Pax Dei** is designed to help you develop and portray the Church and Divinities with the majesty and veneration they deserve. Up until now, clergy in *Ars Magica* have been cardboard cutouts, people who had only the ambiguous (and difficult to employ) power of miracles. **Pax Dei** gives your Troupe the opportunity to turn members of the Church into three-dimensional characters able to confront Magi from a position of power. Your Troupe may also want to use archangels and others of Heaven's host in a fashion outlined in the sample Saga summary, *Cestus Dei*, located in the Appendix. After all, this is Mythic Europe, and the power of the Church isn't limited to prayer and chanting.

## The Structure of Pax Dei

This book is loosely divided into three major sections. The first delineates the mundane, physical aspects of the Dominion and earthly manifestations of God's power. In this section are rules and ideas for pious and clerical character creation, and theories about how these characters function in the world. The second section deals with the Unseen Divine: God, the angels, saints and Heaven. This section also discusses Divine artifacts and relics, as well as Divine gifts which are sometimes given to God's children. Finally, the third section discusses God and the *ars magica*, for a specific look at how and why the Dominion

interacts with Magi. Also included in this section are rules for becoming a Pious Magus, one of those blessed by God to perform special magic.

Since this book describes elements of the Church and Divine that your whole Troupe may know, this book is usable by both players and Storyguides. However, not all sections are for public view. Players who assume the roles of Christian characters or clergy may certainly read Section One, which deals with the power of the Dominion on earth. The middle section, and parts of Section Three, are for the Storyguide's eyes only. Only the Storyguide should have an understanding of how the Divinities function in the world, if such "understanding" is even possible. At the least the Storyguide should know how the Divinities respond to certain Saga situations, and Section Two helps to determine these responses.

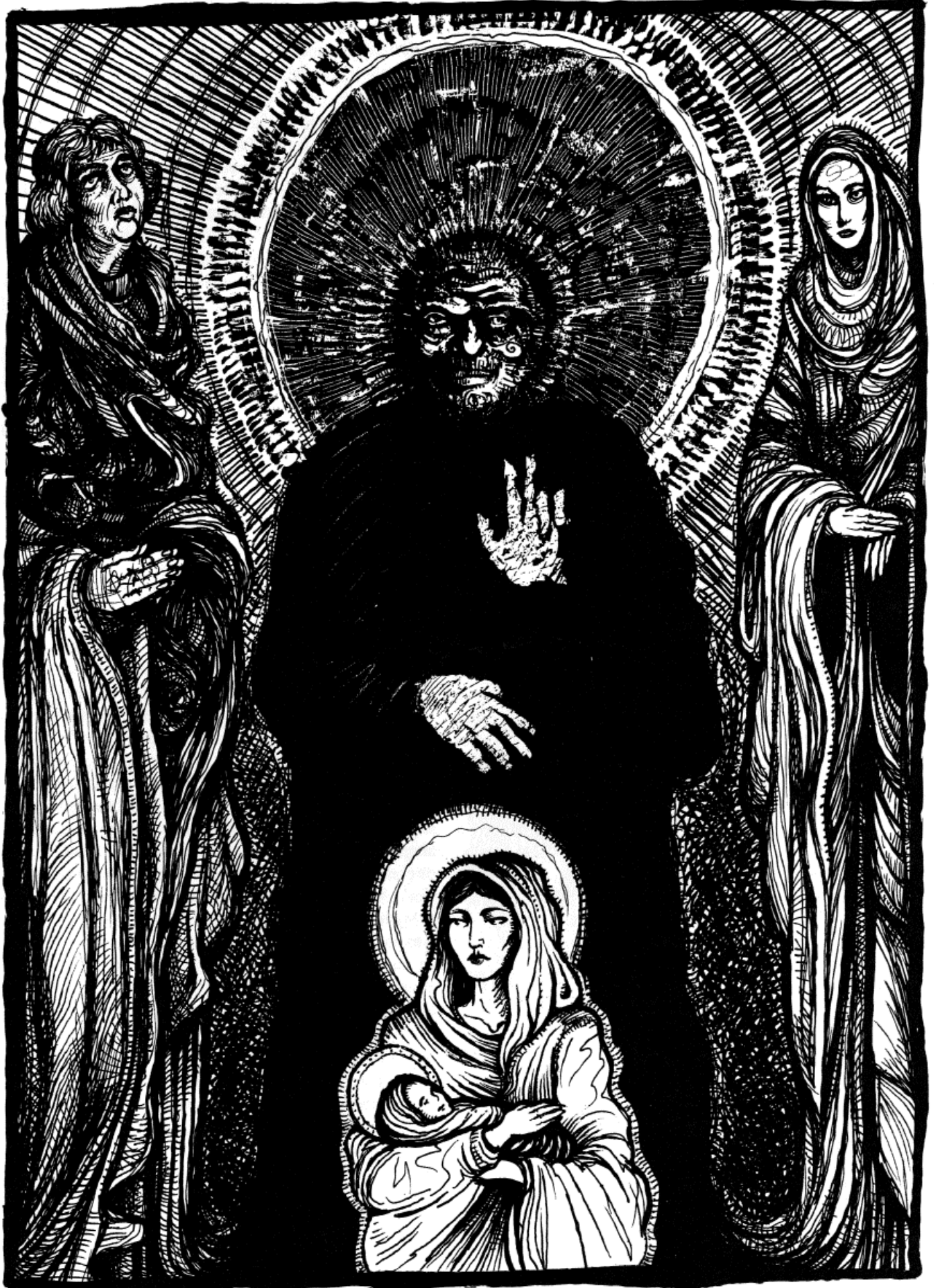
## Pax Dei

The term *Pax Dei* means "Peace of God" and refers to the season of time that good Christian lords are prevented from going to war. The *Pax Dei* proves that the power of the Dominion is great, to the point of pervading an entire people. In reference to this work, however, "Peace of God" takes on a different meaning. The Dominion is, by one way of thinking, God's kingdom on earth. It is therefore the Pax Dei under which God's citizens expect to live. Heaven can be seen as the capital of this kingdom, the New Jerusalem which awaits those delivered from the Infernal by salvation.

## A Final Word

*Pax Dei* strives to provide a rule framework for mystery, religion and spirituality. Ultimately, however, there are no rules, no die rolls, that can represent certain spiritual phenomena. One of these phenomena is the will of God, which, by necessity, is the province of the Storyguide and the consensus of the Troupe. No character can truly know the will of God, although all can guess at what it might be. The Divine in *Ars Magica* is not some random deity. Rather, the Divine is a very careful planner, a structured, orderly and powerful entity that works its magic "off-stage," or within the hearts of the people of Mythic Europe. To reduce the Divine to a series of die rolls is to undermine the Divine's importance, and to deny yourself an important story element. Of course, Storyguides don't always know the will of God, either. Instead of assuming the lofty role of the All-Knowing, it is sometimes easier for the Storyguide to rely on instinct and the paradoxical concept of Mystery to announce events and "clean up" loose story ends.

In the end, one thing is certain about the Divine: it is not an entity with which one can bargain, and you, as Storyguide, should not allow characters to play "if/then" games with the Holies.



J. C. 666



# LANDS CLAIMED BY GOD

## CHAPTER TWO

**I**n the times before the Church's emergence in Mythic Europe, most of the land was covered by a Mundane Aura. Here and there Faerie Auras rose and fell without check, and Magical Auras were more prevalent than they are today.

Perhaps, in the primeval past, there were even strange Auras affiliated with ancient religions, Auras through which the powers of those deities freely flowed.

Then came the missionaries of the Church, and Mythic Europe changed forever as entire countries adopted the Church's ways. The power of the Divine flowed over the land and manifested in wide sweeping circles, as altars were consecrated, cathedrals were raised, and peasants and nobles alike came into the Church's fold. The spread of the earthly Divine, or Dominion, was seen by other supernatural powers as the theft of Mythic Europe's lands. The results of the spread were immediate and potent. Morality was no longer the murky issue it had been in the time of ancient religions, when light and shadow were muddled. Morality was now stark contrast: good and evil, virtue and sin. It is not known whether the Dominion caused this sharp contrast or if the people of Mythic Europe changed their morality and thus generated the Dominion.

In the realm of things magical, it was Faerie that suffered most from the Dominion's rise. Those people who used to pay homage to Faerie, in a feudal if not religious fashion, stopped. The Faerie Auras of the world shrank under the onslaught of the white flame which emanated from the new cross-shaped structures built everywhere. The Dominion asserted itself, the

Faerie forests shrank or vanished, and the separation of Arcadia from the mortal world, that began with the Great Quietening (the birth of Christ), continued.

### WHAT IS THE DOMINION?

Simply put, the Dominion is the Aura of the Divine in Mythic Europe. The Dominion emanates from that which the Divine claims as His own, through His authority on earth as embodied by the Church. The Dominion is a mingling of potent powers from two separate "sources," the first and foremost being the belief and faith of a body of believers, which make up the fundamental building blocks of the Church. The designated Celebrant (priest) of each such group of people asks God to bless and consecrate an altar to the greater glory of the Divine. Through this altar the Divine sends the second important power, the basic energy of the Divine. This power derives from the True Emphyrean (Heaven's source) and emanates from the altar to the surrounding lands of the congregation. It is because of this second form of energy, coming from the all-powerful True Emphyrean, that other supernatural powers and effects are limited or negated. So, the power of the Dominion flows from both the people of the land and the Divine itself, both flowing through the Celebrant. As a medium for religious power, and as God's agent and advocate on earth, the Celebrant is able to direct and subtly manipulate Christian power.

## A Brief Word about Simple Faith

Simple faith is the term given to the kind of religious faith that most non-magical, non-holy people in Mythic Europe have. A peasant is born, baptized, confirmed, married, works for most of her life, goes to Mass occasionally, and dies. She isn't a holy woman, and doesn't spend most of her life praying. Still, the woman's soul probably goes to Heaven, most likely after spending some time in Purgatory.

The Masses the woman does attend are in Latin, shrouded in incense smoke, and totally incomprehensible, but she goes anyway. Even though she doesn't understand a single word of the Celebrant's homily, she knows that if she "does this" and "avoids that" her eternal soul will be saved.

This simple observance is what constitutes simple faith, the faith of the common folk, who don't know enough to commit the kinds of sins that would place them in great peril. Everyone in Mythic Europe, from the highest of kings to the lowest of cotters (save Magi, Faerie-related, or Infernally-related people, who know better or constantly partake of greater sins), has access to simple faith as means of salvation.

(As a game reflection of their simple faith and daily religious dedication, clergy have a trait called Piety. Piety is an Ability and is purchased as such. Piety is not restricted to clergy; devout mundanes may have it. The Ability is fully discussed in Chapter Three.)

## The Soul's Fate

For those without access to simple faith, there are few choices available to influence the direction of the eternal soul. The Infernally-related (including those with Demon Plagued and Tainted by Evil Flaws) are damned and must pursue piety with the utmost sincerity in order to avoid the Pit. Faeries and those with faerie blood are damned unless they can gain a closer tie to Arcadia, at which point they may pass from this world, their souls going to Faerieland upon death.

To escape damnation when they die, Magi have three options: 1) They can bring themselves closer to pure Magic, hoping to pass into the Twilight Void (the spiritual Far Lands; see **The Hidden Paths: Shamans**) rather than Christian Hell, 2) They can ally directly with Hell in the hopes of gaining enough power to make themselves a comfortable place in that Infernal region, or 3) They can seek salvation through True Faith or Renunciation (for more information on Renunciation, see *The Pathway Light*, in Chapter Six).

## A BRIEF METAPHYSICAL INTERLUDE

As discussed in *The Maleficium*, there are three Empyreans, or realms of power. Two of these are reflective of and in existence because of the third, the one True Empyrean, where the Creator, the Unmoved Mover, resides. One of the lesser Empyreans is merely a version of the True one, a Shadow of that intense Light. In this Shadow Empyrean exists the reality of Mythic Europe. The Shadow Empyrean is also the source of Hermetic magic. When shamans venture into the Near and Far Lands, they send their naked spirits into the Shadow Empyrean. It is in this ether that angels, demons, faeries, ghosts, and other earthly spirits swim. Other realms also exist within this Empyrean, imperfect versions of the True Reality. Within some of these realities dwell the Old Gods, the ancient and discarded deities of religions long forgotten.

All possibilities exist within the continuum of the Shadow Empyrean, for all possibilities exist within its source, the True Empyrean. The primary difference between the two powers is that the True Empyrean cannot be affected by belief, or will, or by the imaginations of those with souls. The Shadow Empyrean, on the other hand, seems to respond readily to such forces. While the term "medieval paradigm" is bandied about in *Ars Magica*, it is used accurately; the beliefs and wills of the people of Mythic Europe, by influencing the Shadow Empyrean, make the world what it is. This is not to say that God would be less powerful if the people of Mythic Europe did not believe in Him. God is independently powerful because He resides within the True Empyrean. It is true, however, that if His worldly following was diminished, his *worldly* power might be limited to that which He directly manifests.

Finally, as there is the True Empyrean above, and the Shadow Empyrean below it, there is also the False Empyrean (often called the Ash Empyrean for its association with the Darkness) farther below. The Ash Empyrean is the exact opposite of the True Empyrean, and as such is flawed. It ultimately exists as a place of punishment and banishment for its first prisoner, Lucifer Morningstar. However, the Ash Empyrean also surrounds Mythic Hell and is the place where all devils reside. (See *The Maleficium*, p. 22-29, for a more metaphysical discussion of Hell itself.)

As Pax Dei is concerned with the practical aspect of the Divine rather than its unknowable truth, it confines its metaphysical discussion of Heaven-Earth-Hell dynamics to the above simplistic interpretation.

## THE LIMITLESS POWER OF THE DIVINE

Residing as the Divine does in the True Empyrean, the Divine has access to continuous and unending power, and may shape reality at will. And yet, the Divine does not manipulate



the world, at least to humanity's knowledge. The Divine imposes limits upon itself, for reasons unknown and much speculated on. This is the great mystery of Christianity.

Since God's will transcends man, you, as Storyguide, can use that will to bring about events in your Saga that have no apparent cause or meaning. For instance, if characters complete a desperate mission for others' good, but leave some situations unresolved, the Divine may clear up those loose ends and you can explain their resolution as a miracle. For instance, characters might fail to return to a village to help reseed barren fields, as promised. The Divine might renew life there on the characters' behalf, maybe as reward for their other efforts. Only when they do return to the village do the characters *realize* that God has smiled upon them.

## The Power of God on Earth

One way that God does allow His power to manifest in the world is through the existence of the Dominion. The Dominion quite literally has the potential to exist everywhere, and can be found in every clime from Novgorod to Ethiopia. The extent of the Dominion is only curtailed by limits that the Divine imposes upon itself, and by the limits of Christian belief and faith. Indeed, most of the raw energy that determines the area and strength of the Dominion comes from the devotion and faith of believers. Although followers' belief is not easily changed, once changed and channeled (as was the belief of the Mythic Church's first attendants), that belief forms a static Aura.

## Strength of the Dominion

The strength of the Dominion depends on many factors, not the least of which are three critical elements: the Church, the Celebrant, and the power of the Divine.

## DETERMINING DOMINION STRENGTH

One way to determine the strength of the Dominion in any one place is to refer to the chart in the *Ars Magica* rulebook, p. 328. However, a more accurate method of measuring the Dominion is given below (on the *Dominion Power Chart*). This method does not replace that in the rules, but expands upon it and accounts for more factors.

Since the Dominion is, in effect, an Aura that draws power from a central point (the consecrated altar of the Aura's official Celebrant), and extends outward in all directions as far as it can go, think of the Dominion as a circle. That circle of power is generated by the faith and belief of the people who regularly worship at that particular altar, and is invoked by the power of God. As the Dominion radiates out, its intensity gradually decreases until it entirely fades or until it reaches the boundary of a stronger Aura of another kind.



J. Cobb

## Dominion Power Chart

Add or subtract modifiers to or from the appropriate base value, below, to determine the overall Aura rating of the Dominion in any one place.

### Base Values:

Scattered Rural Community; Small Village	1
Large Village, Small or Large Town	2
Small or Large City	3
Capital	4

### Modifiers to the Entire Dominion:

Piety rating of the community (based loosely on the Piety of all inhabitants)	
Impious Community (Piety 0)	+0
Normal Community (Piety 1)	+1
Moral Community (Piety 2-4)	+2
Pious Community (Piety 5+)	+3

### Time Modifiers:

Daytime	+1
High Holy Day (Christmas, Easter)	+3
Saint's Day (must be observed to gain bonus)	+1
Saint's Day (within shrine to that saint)	+3
Nighttime	-2
Pagan Festival Day (May Day, All Hallow's Eve)	-2

### Modifiers to Local Dominion:

These modifiers influence an area within a larger Dominion, so areas may have higher Aura ratings than surrounding territory.

#### *The Celebrant's House of Worship:*

A Shrine	+1
A Small Monastery	+2
A Large Monastery	+3
A Village Church	+2
A Large Church	+3
A Cathedral	+4
An Episcopal Palace	+5

#### Sacred Places:

Site of a Saint's Martyrdom	+1
A Saint's Relic Within	+1
Burial Site of a Saint	+3

**Note:** The Dominion's Aura rating is rarely higher than nine or weaker than zero; this is because of the limiting factor of the Shadow Empyrean. An Aura rating of 10 is generally reserved for Heaven itself, or a place of incredibly intense Divine power, such as the martyr site of a saint.

## Adjudicating Dominion

You, as Storyguide, have final say as to what the Aura rating of the Dominion is at any one point. Astute players, with characters able to sense such things, may be able to predict when Dominion level isn't quite "right," that is, not as strong as it should be. Perhaps this "disturbance" exists because quiet Infernal Auras are dampening the Dominion, or maybe the local Celebrant is lax in his duties. If this kind of guess work occurs, it only serves to make the story more exciting. Regardless, do not allow the Troupe to bully you into revealing Dominion level.

## The Dominion and Its Tempers

The power of faith and belief among the common people of Mythic Europe is an awesome thing indeed. Yet, while folk dwell within and help to shape it, the Dominion also affects them in subtle ways they cannot understand. In a way the Dominion is what binds a community together, helps limit crime, and generally makes the Church's perspective prevalent.

There are many ways that the Divine seeks to relate to humanity. One of these ways is through the Tempers. The Tempers are the different sides of the Unmoved Mover revealed. They are changes in the Dominion and include Justice, Mercy, Wrath, and Calm (and Righteousness, though that is discussed under *The Sword Arm of the Church*, below). Each of these Tempers helps a Dominion's Celebrant tend his or her earthly flock, influencing community attitudes toward God's will.

## ASPECTS OF THE DOMINION

For most people of Mythic Europe, the Dominion does not exist as a functional entity. The Dominion surrounds people and permeates them. It is a quiet, subtle power working in the background of everyday life. While it does affect people, it does not do this in the way a Faerie, Infernal, or Magic Aura might. Why is this? Partly because the Dominion exists as a combination of individual belief in the Divine, and the presence and will of God. Accepting the existence and presence of God allows



people to live in comfort in His presence. As magic, *maleficia* and faerie power are not phenomena embraced by the common man, their presence behaves as a foreign influence, and does not possess the casual power that the accepted Divine enjoys. Rarely does a non-wizard notice a slight change in the magnitude of the Dominion, but almost any change toward the Magical, Infernal or Faerie is recognized.

(Note: Places of Rational Aura are virtually indistinguishable from places of Divine Aura, except for their usual proliferation of scholarly books and investigative tools. Of course, if a

### *Exempli Gratia:* Adjudicating Dominion

Valoran, a Magus traveling from his home Covenant to a Tribunal meeting, decides to make the journey on foot. Being a Magus of House Bonisagus and interested in the phenomenon of the Dominion, he brings along a *consors* of his, Cherisse, who has the ability to Sense Holiness inherent in the land. Valoran also brings a scribe along to record Cherisse's findings.

As the fellowship passes into the small rural community of Flax, Cherisse senses a rise in the Dominion. The area has a relatively weak Divine Aura, rated three since the Aura originates from a scattered community of normally pious folk, and it is daytime. (Basic Aura of one for the scattered community, +1 for the normally pious folk, and +1 for the time of day.)

Later in the journey, as the travelers pass through the town of Meliester, Cherisse reports the waxing power of the Divine. The place has a Divine Aura of five. (A small town with base score of 2, +2 for its fairly moral community, and +1 because of daytime conditions.)

Cherisse wants to pause here and offer her prayer to Sante Fabia of the Rose, one of her favorite saints, and leaves three red roses on the altar within. When she returns to her friends, she reports to the scribe that the Divine power within the shrine was almost visible to her special talent (the Aura in the shrine was nine), for this is one of the saint's holy days, and although the populace of Meliester is not actively celebrating her day, pilgrims and itinerant clergy have been keeping a vigil all day and all night. (Level 5 Dominion for the surrounding town, +3 for being a Saint's Day inside a shrine to that saint.) And, little did Cherisse know it, but a true saint's relic — a lock of Fabia's hair — was imbedded in the altar (Aura of 8 + 1 for the relic, for the 9 total).

The Saint's Day and resulting high Dominion Aura motivates Valoran to plan an early morning departure, but Cherisse returns to the altar that evening to keep vigil. Cherisse is astonished to note that the power of the Divine diminishes during the night. (The surrounding town's Dominion drops to level 2 — base score minus 2 because of nighttime — leaving the shrine at Aura rating 6.)



commoner explores these items she may fear for her immortal soul, given the images she sees and unnatural items she finds.)

More drastic changes in the Divine are another matter. Stepping from a place with a Divine rating of one to a place with a rating of five constitutes a sufficiently drastic change for even a nonmagical person to take notice. (For example, a commoner stumbles from the vestibule into the nave of a grand cathedral. The Divine Aura changes from five to eight. The commoner's breath is taken away as the holiness and sanctity of the room inspire him to thoughts of piety and humility.)

Rarely does this radical a change in magnitude occur, though, as the Dominion usually increases in subtle degrees. This is because the Dominion, as an Aura or field of energy, always seeks to expand to fit the largest area of space, concentrating from areas of its origin outward. (After all, it is the Church's purpose to spread its influence.) As it radiates outward from the altar or holy area which serves as its focus for worship, belief, and faith, the Dominion slowly diminishes in magnitude until it reaches another, more powerful Aura, or until it "runs out" of energy. Because of this dispersal, it is rare to encounter high-magnitude areas of Dominion.

### The Celebrant of the Dominion

In game terms, the Dominion is an Aura of power belonging to the Divine. In most cases the Dominion is inspired by the faith and piety of a congregation. That faith is fueled by the power of the Divine and emanates from a consecrated altar, as

channeled and propagated by a specific ordained, secular priest (called the Celebrant). Divine energy emanates outward from the altar in a circular fashion, reaching as far as it can based on the number of worshippers present. While there is no "formula" for the extent of an area of the Dominion (i.e., a certain number of worshippers equals a certain acreage), one can be sure that, in the case of a city, town or village, the Dominion extends to just beyond the "city limits." In the case where there are two or more Celebrants in the same city, and the Celebrants reside in two open, public churches, the respective Dominion Auras gently meet each other and establish a definite boundary between them. The two Dominions might be of different Aura ratings, or might be of the same rating. If the two have the same rating, people able to sense the Auras (e.g., those with Piety Ability or the Sense Holiness and Unholiness Virtue) might recognize a different "flavor" between the two, based on the different Celebrants and their congregations.

Note that the channeling of Divine power and shepherding of a flock to create a Dominion applies specifically to secular priests. Monks, nuns, and canons, who each have specific places in which they work and worship (i.e., monasteries, nunneries, and cathedrals), do not propagate the Dominion outside the bounds of those places. Such clergy lack extensive parishioners, although a monastery or nunnery might cast a Dominion Aura over a considerable area of land, based on the amount of land the monastery or nunnery holds. If peasants live beyond that land and are not administered by the nuns or monks, the lands of those peasants are not included in the nunnery or monastery Dominion (but could belong to another Dominion created by a local parish priest).

On the other hand, high-echelon priests who attend the masses may generate and have influence over extensive Dominions. Bishops have sees, which are their areas of authority. They control all the Dominion Auras within that area. Essentially, bishops control all the Dominion Auras of all the priests "under" them. Cardinals, who primarily advise the Pope, do not propagate the Dominion unless their duties involve attending commoners, and then they are treated as bishops. The Pope controls all Dominion Auras everywhere in the world, and can alter the Temper (see below) of any specific Aura or group of Auras, no matter the distance. Neither a bishop, a cardinal, nor the Pope have to be in an Aura under their jurisdiction, or even close to the Aura, to alter the Temper of that Aura. The Celebrant involved simply makes a decree and the Temper of the specified Dominion changes. However, the bishop, cardinal or Pope does need to be within Divine lands to change a foreign Temper.

## THE TEMPER

In some ways the Dominion can be thought of as God's kingdom on earth: that is, the lands He claims for Himself in Mythic Europe. The Dominion is also a shield for the people who live under it, and sword for the *Cestus Dei*, the Mailed Fist of God. The recognized clergy of God (including priests, monks, and nuns) can affect the Temper, or quality, of the

Dominion in which they currently reside (although bishops and the Pope can change Temper from beyond a specific Dominion). This change can be a soul-oriented Tempering or a land-oriented Tempering. The type of Tempering is chosen by the clergyperson at the time of her effort. Mundane people (from the greatest of kings to the lowliest of commoners) are influenced by the Temper of the Dominion.

God is usually depicted as both warrior and father, jealous and loving, merciful and wrathful. The Tempers of the Dominion reflect these different facets. An "untouched" Dominion normally has a Calm Temper. That Temper is a reflection of the way things normally are. A Calm Dominion is one that suffers no more turmoil than would otherwise ordinarily occur within its bounds. (Thus, the Dominion affects spells and other supernatural powers as discussed in the *Ars Magica* rules, p. 308). However, that Calm Temper can be changed by someone with the Piety Ability (or by someone with True Faith, as discussed in Chapter Three). This Temper change can be concentrated on a specific person or persons, on a place or item, or on the entire area the Dominion Aura affects.

The ramifications of Tempers and changes in them are discussed below. The aspects of the Dominion's Tempers are not hard-and-fast qualities, though. You, as Storyguide, are free to alter and change the aspects of each Temper according to personal viewpoint and story needs.

## Changing Temper

A Dominion that has been Tempered usually retains its current quality until another priest changes that Temper. Church hierarchy, however, is maintained, so that a secular priest cannot change a Temper set by a bishop, nor can a bishop change a Temper set by a cardinal, or a cardinal change a Temper set by the Pope. The Pope is the last and highest authority and may alter the Temper of Mythic Europe's entire Dominion (wherever in the world each individual Dominion Aura is), and only he himself may decide to change it.

Tempers can only be set by the members of the priesthood who possess Piety. Temper change is not a power of saints, angels, God, or even laypersons who have the Piety Ability. Most of these powers and people cannot change Dominion Temper, for changing Temper influences human free will to some degree, and to alter human free will is to curtail humanity's choice between virtue or sin. Thus, only a mortal human, ordained as a priest and close to the Divine, can affect Temper.

The only other power that can change the Temper of a Dominion is True Faith. People who possess True Faith, whether clergy or not, are able to affect Tempers. This explains why the Cathars and other heretics are able to create unity within their movements even when under the effects of a Wrathful Temper (i.e., when persecuted by the forces of the Church). Details about the ability to alter Dominion Tempers are described under True Faith, in Chapter Three.

Note that a priest's ability to change the Temper of the Dominion is completely and totally a "background" function. It is not something that clergy even know about. He does not

stop and think, *"I should change the atmosphere of my diocese to evoke a specific response from my parishioners."* A priest character never "threatens" to change Dominion Temper against another character. Rather, the priest may say *"Beware ye the Wrath of God,"* or, *"May the Mercy of the Highest go with you."* This is the only outward, overt sign of a change in Temper. Tempers are subtle and quiet, the result of the changing needs of the Divine, Church, and congregation, as interpreted by the Celebrant. Characters may not even realize they are the target of a Wrathful Temper until peasants start crossing the street to avoid them, until formerly friendly villagers shut themselves up in their huts to avoid the characters, or until local monks hold a vigil in front of the characters' Covenant to pray for their souls.

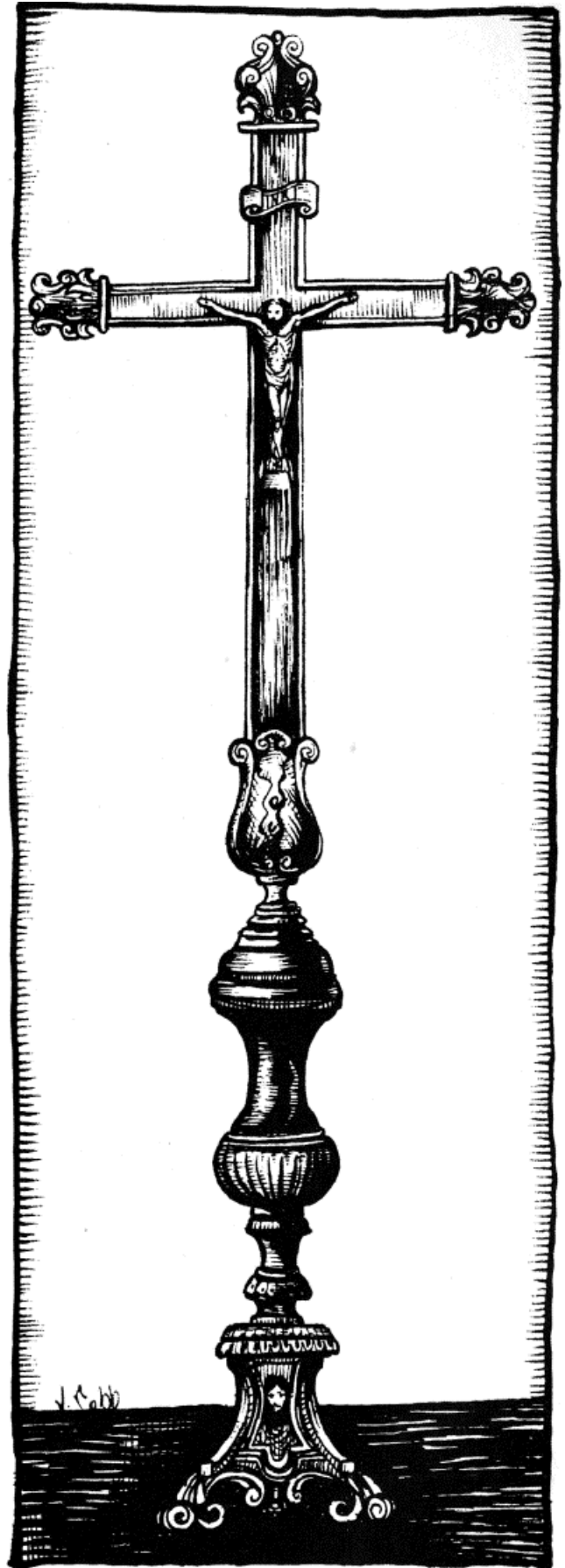
Also note that the Tempers presented below do not work outside the Aura of the Dominion, or even beyond the Divine Aura overseen by the priest evoking the change. So, if there is a Faerie Aura in the middle of a city where the Temper of the Dominion has been changed, that Faerie Aura is unaffected and things are as normal for a Faerie Aura within those confines. Only when the Dominion is entered from such a Faerie Aura do the effects of the Divine Temper impose themselves. Furthermore, if two churches (each with its own congregation and radiating its own Dominion) operate within the same town, a Temper applied by the priest of one church does not apply to the Dominion of the other church (unless priests from both churches agree to change both their local Tempers).

### Land-Oriented Tempering

This kind of Tempering changes the Temper of the Dominion for a part of or the whole area administered by the Celebrant. Everyone who lives in the affected Dominion falls under the new Temper's power. In the case of a bishop or Pope Celebrant, several areas of the Dominion may be affected, though most priests can only influence the Temper of their own dioceses.

For example, let's say it's suspected that leaders of a heretical movement are being harbored in a town. The Celebrant controlling the town's Dominion may decide to change the Temper of the town's Aura from Calm to that of the Justice of God. This new Temper allows members of the Inquisition to go out among the people, question them, and root out the heresy. The heretics cannot escape the Aura and its Temper unless they leave the Dominion's bounds. The imposition of a Just Temper is what happens, on a large scale, when Pope Innocent orders an Inquisition in Provenge to root out the Cathars. Later, during the Albigensian Crusade, the entire region becomes the focus of the Wrathful Dominion.

Land-oriented Tempers can also be imposed upon specific places within a Dominion; the whole Dominion need not be affected. The Celebrant must choose what place is affected by the Temper, and that Temper continues until someone repents or the priest decides to lift the Temper. For example, a localized Temper of Wrath might be imposed on a Covenant within a priest's Dominion.





Tempers based around items, like a blacksmith's creations, are discussed under *Soul-Oriented Tempering*, below.

## Soul-Oriented Tempering

A Celebrant may decide to alter the Temper of the Dominion in respect to a specific person (or group of people) only. This is called soul Tempering. While the rest of the people living in the Dominion may be under the effects of another, land-oriented Temper, specific people can be under a completely different, soul-oriented Temper. Sometimes this kind of Tempering is made conditional.

For example, let's say a young child loses his way in a large city and stumbles upon a priest in the local church garden. While the rest of the city is probably under a Calm Temper, the good Father is concerned that the child safely find his way back home. So, the Father tells the child how to get back home and places a conditional Merciful Temper on the child to protect him until he again reaches his family, at which time the boy's Temper reverts to Calm.

The conditions for soul Tempering can involve just about anything and are set by the Celebrant at the time of the change's institution. Only a higher-ranked priest (or the Celebrant who originally imposed the soul Temper) can take away or change a soul Tempering — thus the Pope can mark a soul for life, without hope of someone else changing that Temper (unless by someone or some group with sufficient True Faith Points—see *True Faith* in Chapter Three). The equivalent of such a "permanent" Temper change can involve excommunication from the Church.

Because a Temper imposed on an individual is a mark upon that person's soul, the person's Temper is not affected by changes in the surrounding Dominion. A soul-Tempered person may leave the Dominion area (at which time the person's Temper ceases to affect her), spend years outside the Dominion (let's say in service to a Covenant), and then reenter the Dominion and still be under the weight of the soul Temper.

However, if the subject of a soul Temper leaves the Dominion in which the Temper was imposed, and enters the Dominion of another area, the soul Temper does not take effect in that new Dominion. The soul Temper only applies if the local Dominion is presided over by the Celebrant who imposed the soul Temper. Thus, if a bishop imposed the personalized Temper, the Temper takes effect in any area of the Dominion over which the bishop presides. If the soul Temper is arranged by the Pope, the subject is affected by it throughout Christendom.

Aside from escaping the area of the Dominion where a Temper was imposed, the subject of a personal Temper can only have the effect lifted by a Celebrant higher in the Church hierarchy, or by supplicating the Celebrant who imposed the Temper (or by someone with True Faith, as discussed under *True Faith* in Chapter Three). Fear of a widespread Temper is the chief reason why more radical members of the Order of Hermes do not seek to take over lands or Mythic Europe itself. The Pope's power to influence all of Christendom explains his pervasive influence, which extends far beyond mere politics.

Items can have Tempers imposed upon them just as individuals (or groups) can. The priest indicates the item, and the Dominion and its inhabitants respond toward the item accordingly. If the Celebrant imposes a Wrathful Temper on merchandise purchased from a Covenant, people in the Dominion avoid the items and probably deliver them to the local church for destruction. If a Tempered item leaves the Celebrant's Dominion the Temper no longer applies, but if the Celebrant is a bishop or Pope, the Temper may apply over broad lands, as usual.

## Rules for Temper Changes

The actual rules for changing Dominion Temper are based on the Piety Ability (and to some extent True Faith). These rules are therefore discussed under the functions of Piety (and True Faith), in Chapter Three, below.

## Death of the Celebrant

In cases where a Celebrant alters the Temper of a Dominion and then dies or leaves the place, the successor of that Celebrant takes control. The successor assumes control of the Temper set by the former Celebrant as soon as the successor performs his first Mass in the place. Slaying or otherwise removing a Celebrant from office fixes the Temper of a Dominion as it was when the Celebrant was alive. If the Celebrant is not replaced soon, the Dominion and its Temper begin to decay as commoners go without Divine guidance. There are no hard-and-fast rules for how a Dominion decays, but after a year's time an area without a Celebrant might have a Divine Aura of one, or zero if the previous rating was already low. The Dominion breaks down even more quickly if other Auras seek to claim the Dominion's territory (demons of Infernal power almost certainly flock to the area in hopes of luring away the sheep who have lost their shepherd). The only way to restore the declining Dominion is for a new Celebrant to arrive and resume religious services. However, Tempers set in the decaying Dominion remain until the new Celebrant arrives and changes them (or a bishop or the Pope makes a sweeping Temper change).

## Aspects and Types of tempers

There are four main Tempers of the Dominion: Calm, Wrathful, Just and Merciful (a fifth, Righteous, is discussed under *The Sword Arm of the Church*, below). Each Temper reflects some passion or attitude of the Divine toward humanity.

## THE CALM DOMINION

The Calm Dominion is the "natural" state of the Dominion. No Temper is associated with this Dominion—Calm may be thought of as a lack of Temper. The Calm Dominion has all the normal attributes associated with the Dominion, as discussed in the Realms Chapter of the *Ars Magica* rulebook.

# THE WRATH OF GOD

The Wrathful Dominion is a harsh reminder of the anger God can bear toward those who would thwart Him. In a Wrathful Dominion, people toward whom God bears anger have their actions curtailed by the Divine and may be persecuted by Dominion inhabitants. Still, it must be remembered that the Dominion is a subtle Aura, surrounding and affecting many people and places; even a major change of Temper does not bring about extreme behavior, attitudes or events. Those under the effects of the Wrathful Dominion are slowly and surely edged out of society. They are distrusted and usually only receive offers of help from impious, immoral persons.

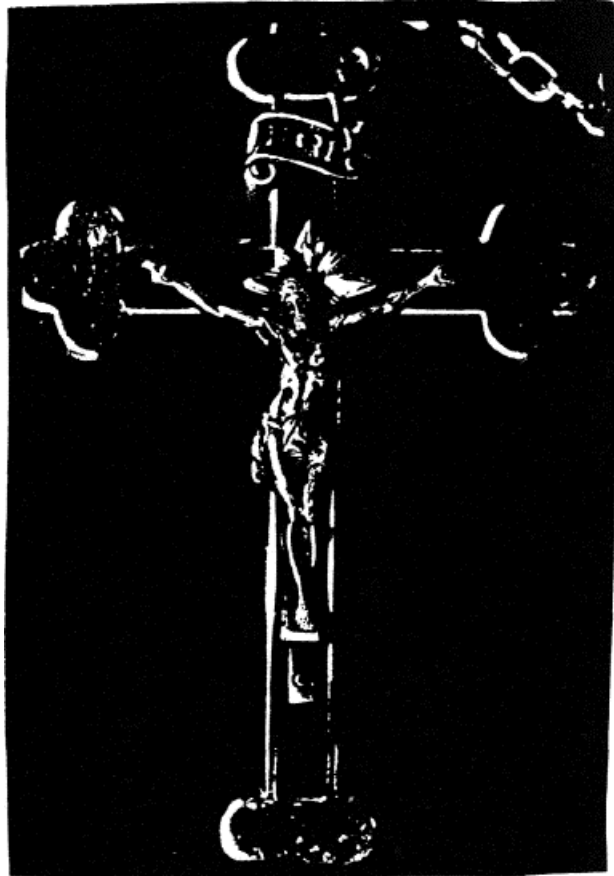
People who do not follow God (heathens and nominal Christians who act in ungodly ways are equally affected) suffer a penalty on social rolls made toward good Christians within the Dominion. The penalty is equal to the Aura rating of the Dominion. Subjects of the Temper are also not allowed to enter churches, either bluntly (pressured out by peasants), or subtly and politely (asked to leave by the priest). Victims of a Wrathful Temper all suffer one extra Botch die for every rating point of the Divine Aura. (So, in an Aura of three, a targeted commoner must make three Botch rolls, whereas a Magus must make six: three are normally made for being in a Divine Aura—as per *Ars Magica*, p. 308 — and that number is doubled in a Wrathful Dominion).

In a Wrathful Dominion of Aura rating 7 to 10, victims suffer further penalties. Subjects of Wrath experience an actual physical sensation. The Wrath of God causes all light sources to pierce more sharply, disrupting concentration and causing headaches (all actions that require eyesight suffer a -3 modifier). The Temper increases the flammability of things of a non-Divine nature (add Aura score to a fire's Damage rating). Wounds received heal more slowly (subtract Aura score from Wound Recovery rolls made, as compared to the *Wound Recovery Table*) for the duration of the characters' stay in the Wrathful Dominion. Good Christians shun the characters as if they are excommunicated (all social rolls with respectable Christians fail automatically, and relations with bad Christians, like criminals, suffer a -3 modifier). Furthermore, the worst weather always visits the characters.

Finally, if victims of a Wrathful Temper of any Aura rating are residents of a Dominion, their livestock slowly dies of disease and malnutrition. Their crops slowly fail. In the worst case, where a person is virtually declared an outlaw, the grain that person has stored becomes rat-infested and rotted. This is a dreadful punishment to impose in an agrarian-based society, and it is certainly never inflicted lightly. Such punishment can mean harm to good and bad Christians alike, rather than simply driving out the bad.

Here's an example of how a Wrathful Temper can operate:

Westmor is a small barony in the south of England. Because the Baron's outlaw son has attacked and destroyed a convent, the local priest holds a Requiem Mass for the slain sisters and, in it, delivers a scathing sermon against the Baron.



In that Mass, the priest changes the Temper of the barony's Dominion (the priest is the only one in the area) to that of Wrath. As the Baron is a resident of the land, his holdings also suffer from the Lord's wrath.

A year passes and crops fail, bad storms pummel the land, and few deer are sighted in the forest. Every time the Baron goes to Mass he gets a sense of a great wrong in the land, so great that he often has nightmares. He asks an itinerant Franciscan what he should do. The Franciscan tells him that God's wrath has been visited upon him, that he should make things aright. The Baron leads a patrol of men into the forest and searches for his outlaw son until he captures him and brings him to justice. Then the Baron grants the land on which the convent stood to the Church and helps rebuild the convent.

At this time, the priest who changed the Dominion might decide to change it back to Calm status. Or, he might decide the Baron needs to do more. If the latter is the case, the Baron can appeal to his Bishop, saying "*God is angry at me... and I don't know what else I should do in penance.*" The Bishop may then impose his own penance or may immediately change the Wrathful Temper in Westmor, whether the original Celebrant agrees or not. Thus, the land is once again under the Calm Dominion, and things can progress normally, allowing recovery from the time spent under God's wrath.

Unfortunately, as the Baron possesses extensive lands and he's the person targeted for punishment, his holdings suffer as well. This means the locals, good Christians or not, suffer at the

Baron's expense. According to the Divine, this seemingly "unfair" treatment might be justified by eventual fulfillment of God's Will, that the Baron's son is punished.

## Wrathful Effects on Other Powers

The Wrathful Dominion has certain effects upon beings who belong to other supernatural powers but are in the Wrathful Dominion. The standard penalties for Aura rating (see *Ars Magica*, p. 308) still apply (unless stated otherwise), but further penalties are incurred. Magi, for instance, belonging to the Magic Realm, suffer more than the standard spell casting penalties when in the Wrathful Dominion.

Remember, however, that a place of supernatural power within the Dominion is not affected by that Dominion, Wrathful or not. So, a place of Faerie Aura within a town does not suffer the effects of a Wrathful Dominion, but faeries leaving the Faerie Aura to enter the surrounding town become subject to the Wrathful Dominion.

The following penalties are cumulative with those "standard" ones discussed above, and apply to all those of other Realms within a Wrathful Dominion. If two penalties, one gained from typical Wrathful penalties and one for belonging to another supernatural power, are similar in nature, the more appropriate or detrimental one is suffered.

### Faerie

The Fay hate the Wrathful Dominion. No faerie can traverse it except at night, and even church faeries (those who take up residence in a church) are driven underground during its effect. The Wrathful Dominion is also offensive to faeries because forests within the Dominion become anathema to faeries, driving them into further seclusion and further from their native lands.

Spending time in the Wrathful Dominion for any reason causes a faerie to suffer damage, first as a drain of Faerie Might equal to the Aura level of the Dominion, then as Body Levels. The Aura rating of the Wrathful Dominion is subtracted from Faerie Might for every hour, or fraction thereof, spent in the Dominion. Once Faerie Might is spent, one Body Level is lost per hour until the faerie's form is destroyed. Might Points and Body Levels are not regained until the faerie leaves the Dominion, assuming the faerie even survives its stay in the Dominion. Furthermore, faeries cannot use their powers in a Wrathful Dominion.

Even characters with faerie backgrounds suffer detrimental effects from a Wrathful Dominion. To those with Faerie Sight and Faerie Eyes, the very air is filled with searing holy flame, causing a -3 penalty to any action involving eyesight. Those with Faerie Blood, Strong Faerie Nature, and the Supernatural Virtue Susceptibility to Divine Power begin to take ill, forcing a Long-Term Fatigue roll every hour. The roll is made on a stress die, against an Ease Factor of six. If the Fatigue roll Botches, two Levels are lost.

### Infernal

If faeries suffer in the Wrathful Dominion, Infernal beings run screaming from it. The Wrathful Dominion is God at His most martial, and nothing convinces a demon to penetrate that realm. The stern anger of God both punishes and protects those within it. When a Dominion's Temper changes to Wrathful, all demons in the area not actively involved in possession must immediately depart. Only astasians — messenger demons — can actually survive for long in the Wrathful Dominion, and they tend to leave quickly.

Diabolists are also harmed by a Wrathful Dominion. Diabolists (and *anyone* with Hierarchy Points — see *The Maleficium*) suffer unbearable pain. All spell casting attempts require an initial Concentration roll of 12+. All actions, including spell casting, suffer a penalty equal to Aura rating due to this pain. A Long-Term Fatigue roll is also required per hour spent in the Wrathful Dominion, but the Fatigue roll suffers a penalty equal to the Aura rating of the Dominion. The Fatigue roll is a stress roll against an Ease Factor of six. If the roll Botches, two Fatigue Levels are lost.

Beasts of Infernal power (that are not strictly demons) automatically lose twice the Aura's rating from their Infernal Might scores for every hour, or fraction thereof, spent in the Wrathful Dominion. Loss of all Might Points usually means a demon's destruction or banishment. Even if the demon can somehow continue to exist, it loses one Body Level per hour or fraction thereof. Lost Might Points and Body Levels cannot be regained until the creature escapes the Wrathful Dominion. All rolls made, including Soak, also suffer penalties equal to Aura rating. Infernal beasts cannot use their powers in the Wrathful Dominion.

Characters with Infernal Flaws also suffer in the Wrathful Dominion. A character who is Tainted with Evil gains a Reputation for that taint, rated at three. A character who is Demon Plagued (but because of her own evil actions; good people haunted by demons are not affected), Demon Tainted, or has a Diabolic Upbringing suffers -1 to all rolls for every point in the Aura's rating.

Characters with the False Faith Trait (see *The Maleficium*, p. 131) are driven from a Wrathful Dominion as if they are demons.

### Magical

Wizards of the Order of Hermes, and other magic-wielding people like shamans (but not including diabolists, who are dealt with under *Infernal*, above), suffer detrimental effects to their magic in a Wrathful Dominion. Their Gift automatically manifests, Gentle or not. Three is added to the penalty already in effect upon social rolls they make toward Christians (one of the common penalties suffered by victims of a Wrathful Dominion). If Magi have the Blatant Gift their social roll penalty equals Aura rating + 6. Any spell cast requires a Concentration roll made against an Ease Factor of nine.



As for use of shamanic magic within a Wrathful Dominion, a Concentration roll is required to go into trance, before entering the spirit world. The results of a successful or failed Concentration roll during Rituals is discussed in the *Ars Magica* supplement **Shamans**, under the Ritual power.

A magical creature within a Wrathful Dominion suffers the effects of that Aura more gradually than does a faerie or Infernal creature. The Aura rating of the Dominion is subtracted from the beast's Magic Might score for every day spent in the Dominion. Magical powers can still be used within the Dominion, but Magic Might Points spent or lost cannot be regained until the magical creature leaves the Wrathful Dominion.

Characters who are not Magi, but possess Virtues and Flaws like Latent Magical Ability or Failed Apprentice — ones that imply an inherent magical power — suffer a -3 penalty to all actions performed in a Wrathful Dominion.

## Divine

Clergy and Divine minions may instantly know when an area or soul encountered has been subjected to the Wrath of God. Priest characters may also be able to discover exactly what situation inspired the Temper, and may offer advice toward correcting the problem. Perception + Piety stress rolls, as discussed under *Piety and Perception*, Chapter Three, are used to sense the properties of a Wrathful Dominion.

## THE MERCY OF GOD

The Merciful Dominion is a peaceful, harmonious example of how God can forgive, heal, console and shelter those in need. In its subtle way, either focused on a person (or group) or on an area of land, the Merciful Temper makes healing, meditation, concentration, prayer and aid easier. The Temper does so by lowering the Ease Factor of any helpful or merciful action by two.

In addition, a priest under a Temper of Mercy who performs the Sacrament of Unction, and makes a Communication + Piety simple roll of 10+, can induce the healing of one Body Level of Light or more severe damage. The healing does not occur immediately, as if by miracle, but heals with a good night's sleep. (Damage equivalent to the Hurt Body Level heals on its own overnight, and thus does not counted toward this priestly healing.)

In a Merciful Dominion, requests for favors or mercy from pious Christians tend to be fulfilled more often than usual. Social rolls to make such requests receive a +3 modifier.

Furthermore, as the Merciful is the most loving, kind and forgiving Temper of the Dominion, people seeking to cause harm within it have their efforts curtailed. Violent actions of any kind (including combat actions) suffer two additional Botch dice (beyond any extra ones rolled for belonging to a supernatural power other than the Divine, as per the *Ars Magica* rules, p. 308). All Attack and Damage rolls also suffer a -4 modifier.



Finally, a feeling of harmonious peace emanates from those who are faithful to the Church and dwell within the Merciful Dominion. They receive a Peaceful Personality Trait of +1 while the Merciful Temper persists.

### Example of the Merciful Dominion:

A group of outlaws led by a diabolist sweeps through a village, raping, pillaging and burning. The next day, friars from the local monastery come into the village to give aid, bringing food and wine to help the ailing. The village priest prays that God bless the village, and in turn a Merciful Dominion comes into being at the place.

Soon word of the village's tragedy spreads and people from all around help rebuild and heal the folk. The local lord also sends some of his men-at-arms to protect surviving villagers and those bringing them aid. And so, because of the mercy of God, the village is spared permanent destruction.

## Merciful Effects on Other Powers

The Merciful Dominion has different effects for beings of the different supernatural powers that come in contact with the Temper. These effects are cumulative with those described above, which are "standard" for all beings in contact with a Merciful Dominion. Also keep in mind that though the Dominion's Temper is Merciful, uses of foreign magic and power (e.g., Faerie or Infernal) still suffer the Aura penalties

discussed in the *Ars Magica* rules, p. 308. That is, roll penalties and extra Botch checks are still required based on Divine Aura level.

## Faerie

Faeries have quite an easy time of it in this, the most gentle and accepting of Dominion Tempers. In fact, all Seelie faeries can traverse the Merciful Dominion with virtually no problems at all (beyond the normal ones for being in a Divine Aura—*Ars Magica*, p. 308). It is under a Merciful Dominion that most urban faeries take up residence; once they are tied to their churches and houses they can withstand the daily onslaught of the Dominion, Merciful or not (although they still cannot bear the Wrathful Temper). Even church bells rung in the Merciful Dominion do not harm faeries.

Unseelie faeries, on the other hand, feel very uncomfortable in a Merciful Dominion, but that discomfort is more a factor of personality and behavior than an actual physical manifestation (it involves roleplaying, not game mechanics). However, the Merciful Dominion is still far more comfortable for Unseelie faeries than the normal, Calm Dominion.

If any faerie creature invokes a power that is harmful to others, use of the power costs twice normal Might Points.

Characters with Faerie Virtues or Flaws are affected by "traditional" Merciful modifiers, including penalties for being in a Divine Aura (taken from the *Ars Magica* rules), as discussed above. They suffer no special penalties.

## Infernal

It is sad to say, but even the minions of the Infernal find the Merciful Dominion easy to penetrate. They are careful not to show themselves or be obtrusive, though. In fact, efforts to corrupt humanity are largely foiled under a Merciful Dominion; people tend to be sympathetic to each other, not malicious or sinful. However, the mere presence of a Merciful Temper does not allow all within to resist temptation. Indeed, those of lesser devotion can still be swayed toward Darkness, just with more subtlety than usual.

On the other hand, just because Infernal beings can traverse and act within the Merciful Dominion does not mean they want to. They often find its attitudes of compassion and humanity distasteful, and can be driven away by overt shows of love.

Infernal creatures that use harmful powers in the Merciful Dominion find their use debilitating. Might Point costs for such powers are tripled.

Diabolists find the Merciful Dominion to be the most vulnerable of the Church's Tempers. Under this Dominion diabolists can go about their foul business, largely in preparation for a greater plot. Christians living under a Merciful Dominion are somewhat insulated from temptation, so diabolists use that time to prepare for another time when the people are less virtuous.

Overtly harmful actions performed by diabolists in a Merciful Dominion are impeded. Spells that cause harm or destruction suffer a penalty equal to twice the Dominion's Aura rating. They also incur twice the normal number of Botches (i.e., probably twice the Aura rating of the Dominion).

## Magical

Magical powers are tolerated in the Merciful Dominion (though standard Aura penalties from the rules still apply). Only spells of war, destruction and harm (particularly *Perdo*) are unusually inhibited. Rolls to cast such spells suffer penalties equal to twice the Aura rating of the Merciful Dominion.

Conversely, helpful and healing spells cast under a Merciful Dominion are made easier to use. Standard Divine Aura penalties from the *Realms* Chapter of *Ars Magica* do not apply. In fact, the Levels of healing and other beneficial spells, particularly those which aid others, are lowered by five for spell casting roll purposes (actual spell potency is not decreased), making Level Five spells virtually automatic, save for Botch checks.

Magical creatures that use harmful powers in the Merciful Dominion must extend themselves to make the action. Might Point costs for such powers are doubled.

## Divine

Clergy and Divine minions may sense the presence of the Merciful Dominion with an appropriate Perception + Piety roll (see *Piety and Perception*, in Chapter Three). The person's first instinct is probably to offer whatever aid is needed in the place.

# THE JUSTICE OF GOD

This Temper is invoked during Church tribunals, Inquisitions, and investigations. It grants those with the Piety Ability the power to sense lies, deceptions, and the like (on a Perception or Intelligence + twice Piety roll, as discussed below). It also hampers magic that might disrupt just proceedings. Torture is accepted as part of Justice's procedure. Oaths sworn in the presence of the Just Dominion (oaths made before God) are binding in a spiritual sense. If such an oath is neglected or broken, grave retribution surely follows. Perhaps retribution is as simple as a temporary Wrathful Dominion imposed upon the oathbreaker. Perhaps it means death, or a Divinely inspired curse.

### Example of the Just Dominion:

A series of murders in a baron's castle leads to an investigation by an itinerant monk, Brother Harold. Harold asks the Baron, Lord Brys, to gather all the suspects in the great hall so he may ask God to point out the murderer. Before starting his interrogation of the suspects, Brother Harold prays and asks God for Justice. At that point, the Dominion in the area changes to Just. Brother Harold questions each and every suspect, keeping his spirit open to God's word. While questioning the Baron's cousin, Lord Therry, Harold senses something is wrong with Therry's answers (Harold makes a Perception + twice

Piety roll against an Ease Factor of 8—an Ease Factor imposed by the Storyguide based on the situation). Looking down at Therry's boots, Harold notices they are covered with red mud. The only red mud in the area is that of the earthworks outside the rooms of the slain. God's guidance helps Harold find the truth, and justice prevails as Brother Harold accuses Therry and, under strict questioning, the man confesses to his crime. Through a combination of the Just power of God and his own perception and intelligence, Brother Harold reveals the criminal.

## Just Effects on Other Powers

The Just Dominion has specific effects upon beings belonging to the different supernatural powers that come in contact with it. Ordinary penalties for Aura rating (discussed above and on *Ars Magica*, p. 308) still apply.

### *Faerie*

Faeries don't like the Just Dominion, for it is very difficult for their magical powers to hide them in it. In order for a faerie power of deception to function, it must have a Level of effect higher than twice the Just Dominion's Aura. When faeries are revealed they look plain, drab, and cannot use any Faerie powers which allow them to lie or change the truth. Faeries must spend two Faerie Points an hour merely to remain within

the Just Dominion. Faerie Points lost in this way cannot be recovered until the faerie leaves the Just Dominion; if all Points are lost, the faerie is forced to go underground.

### *Infernal*

Satan, as the Father of Lies, and his minions cannot affect a Just Dominion by distorting the truth. If a minion of Darkness is captured and questioned under the Just Dominion, the minion will probably refuse response or escape the world than speak the truth, so inimical is truth to Dark Ones. Beings of the Infernal often request the Just Dominion, however, when suing for the right to claim someone's soul.

Although demons cannot lie while under a Just Dominion, they can inspire panic in others being interrogated. A demon might, for instance, inspire another to lie and draw attention from the demon (the demon could do so using its influential powers, and is probably in disguise throughout the interrogation, so immediate suspicion is not placed upon it).

Demons under a Just Dominion lose five Infernal Might Points for every hour, or fraction thereof, spent under the Dominion. Points lost cannot be regained until the demon leaves the Dominion. If all Might Points are lost, the demon is sent back to Hell and its respective devil, or returns to the Shadow Empyrean (as discussed in *The Maleficium*).

A diabolist in a Just Dominion cannot use magic that conceals the truth. The same is true for characters with Infernally related Virtues and Flaws, like Tainted with Evil.







## Magical

It is quite impossible for a wizard to cast a spell to conceal the truth in the Just Dominion. Therefore, any spells which seek to do this automatically fail. The same is true for the deceptive powers of magical creatures.

## Divine

Clergy coming in contact with a Just Dominion can recognize its presence and the purpose behind its existence with sufficiently high Perception + Piety rolls (see *Piety and Perception*, Chapter Three). If their own business is not pressing, priest characters may assist in local investigations.

Clergy (and non-clergy with the Piety Ability) within a Just Dominion become alert for falsehood. The Divine imbues them with an ability to recognize what is deceitful or hidden. Thus, Perception or Intelligence rolls to recognize falsehood and the hidden (including sensing lies and finding secret objects) are modified by twice Piety. Ease Factors for these rolls are determined by situation, based on how clever the lie is, or how well-secreted the item is.

## THE SWORD ARM OF THE CHURCH

Despite the clear powers of the clergy, particularly with their ability to alter the Dominion, the power of the Church to summon up crusaders is what causes the Order of Hermes to pause in its doings. Having seen firsthand the effects of the crusades on other places, and knowing the clergy's unerring sense could help crusaders hunt them down, Magi seek to avoid widespread confrontation with the Church.

To add to the power of the Church's crusades, a special Dominion Temper follows crusaders, lending God's will to their already potent military might. This Temper is called the Righteous Dominion, and many Covenants would fall were the Righteous Dominion to wash over them.

## The Crusaders

From all over Mythic Europe the crusaders come. They are men of noble birth, equipped with heavy weapons and armor and the riches of their families, dedicated to the service of the Church in reclaiming the Holy Land and other lost Christian lands. They come out of greed, piety, a desire for adventure, and loyalty to the Church.

Each crusader is promised expiation of sins for his service. He is also absolved of sin for murdering the enemy, before he has even committed such sin. In a special ceremony, the crusader's armor, horse and weapons are blessed. Furthermore, clergy often ride alongside crusaders and holy knights, like the Knights Templar, ministering to the crusaders. Crusaders are therefore a very potent military and religious force.

Because crusaders are the ultimate manifestation of the Dominion's power, they represent a special case of that power. They embody a Dominion – the Righteousness of God—and carry it with them on their campaigns. Indeed, the Righteous Dominion only manifests when focused on a crusader, and even then, only when that crusader is fulfilling the will of Church and God. Thus, if crusaders go astray, as did those who invaded Constantinople, the Righteous Dominion is lost (see The Will of God, below).

## The Righteous Dominion

When a member of the clergy blesses crusaders, two things are accomplished. First, the crusaders are allowed to carry a Dominion Aura with them. It's a small one that encircles each crusader and his horse when he's mounted. The Aura grows in size when many crusaders ride together, thus creating a massive moving Dominion. This "mobile Dominion" is rarely very strong (usually Aura rating one to three), but crusaders<sup>5</sup> Divine conviction is a fearsome sight for both Magus and infidel.

Secondly, the clergyperson sets the Temper of the Dominion to that of Righteousness. Those under the Righteous Dominion add +2 to their Attack rolls and +2 to their Damage rolls versus anyone not of the Church. They can also make Perception + Scan rolls against an Ease Factor of six to spot and instinctively recognize the infidel, be it Saracen, Moor, Jew or Magus. Blessed crusaders also heal faster than usual, receiving a +5 bonus to rolls made on the *Wound Recovery Table* (Ars Magica, p. 160) for wounds inflicted by the infidel.

Crusaders under the Righteous Dominion also receive +2 Righteous and Brave Personality Traits, or two is added to Righteous or Brave Traits already possessed. Those subject to the Righteous Dominion feel totally charged with energy, are quick to anger, and usually let passion rather than reason guide their actions. This is not, however, a "berserker" state. Reason is not entirely precluded.

Leaders of crusader forces are invested with greater authority and influence. The Righteous Dominion enforces the concept of God's Laws, under which knight is subservient to lord. For any roll between crusaders of different rank that involves Communication, Presence or the Leadership Ability, the Piety Ability is added as a bonus on the leader's behalf (assuming a leader has the Piety Ability).

Note: The Righteous Dominion does not distinguish between Muslims, Jews, pagans, faeries or Magi. The crusading mentality considers all to be enemies of the Church.

## The Will of God

Although the power of the Righteous Dominion is great, the will of God is what truly perpetuates it. If for some reason a crusader deviates from that will, he suddenly finds the Righteous Dominion gone, and the Aura does not return to him until the crusader comes back in line with the will of God.

## Righteous Dominion Strength Chart

Number of Crusaders	Aura Level
1-50	1
51-100	2
101-1000	3
1001-10,000	4
10,001-100,000	5
100,001+	6

Such abandonment by the Dominion is what occurs when crusaders get sidetracked from their true crusades. Of course, since the armies of God are powerful fighting forces to begin with, they can still pursue their deviant goals as powerful fighting forces; the carnage they seek only takes longer to accomplish.

Since the Righteous Dominion is a result of God's will, evoked by the clergy's blessing, the Righteous Temper is a special one that only occurs in relation to crusaders. Clergy do not have the power to alter any Dominion to Righteousness. Only the particular rite of blessing a knight, his weapons and his horse causes the Righteous Dominion to spring up around the warrior and his comrades.

## Righteous Power

Since Righteous Dominions are created as unique forces (they are not simple Divine Auras changed to another Temper), they have magnitudes of their own, not based on the magnitude of another Dominion. The strength of the Righteous Dominion is determined by the number of blessed crusaders riding together. The *Righteous Dominion Strength Chart* outlines relative Aura powers.

## Righteous Effects on Other Powers

Since the Righteous Dominion is carried by crusaders, they literally deliver it upon other supernatural powers when confronting them. Thus, crusaders receive the bonuses described above, while devotees of another power suffer penalties. These penalties are cumulative with those suffered for contacting the Dominion (i.e., spell rolls and other supernatural ability rolls suffer penalties as determined on p. 308 of the Ars Magica rulebook, and one extra Botch die is rolled for every point of the Dominion's Aura).

Since the Righteous Dominion is mobile, and is inspired by the will of God (who has supreme power over all things), the Righteous Dominion overcomes all other supernatural Auras. Thus, if an area has a Magical Aura of five, and is invaded by crusaders, the crusaders<sup>5</sup> Righteous Aura takes precedence where they stand (none of the normal Magic Aura bonuses are received by those with magical powers). After the crusaders have departed from the invaded supernatural Aura, that Aura resumes its former status, assuming the crusaders have not somehow destroyed its source.

## *Faerie*

A faerie making contact with a crusader or crusaders suffers twice the Righteous Aura rating plus a stress die (no Botches) in damage. This damage is Soaked normally, but is incurred each Round spent in contact with the Righteous Dominion.

A Righteous Dominion also cancels out any Faerie magical effect that is in place at the time, and denies faeries use of their powers. Thus, a magically hidden faerie glen becomes revealed, and faeries within the glen cannot use their powers in the crusaders' presence. Characters with faerie ties, like the Faerie Blood or Faerie Sight Virtues, are also made obvious as faerie-kin, and may be persecuted. Curiously enough, the Tuatha de Danaan (noble faeries) are exempt from the damage caused by the Righteous Dominion, but their powers still fail them and their existence is made clear in Righteous presence. In fact, contact with the Righteous Dominion forces the Tuatha de Danaan to change into wild, angry creatures who fight crusaders with a berserk fury (they acquire the Fury Flaw), even when their Fay magic leaves them.

(Note that, if the Storyguide wishes to use the previously published *Ars Magica* Story A Midsummer Night's Dream, and decides that the Albigenian Crusade of the Story is indeed Righteous, any Faerie protection obtained by the players' Covenant may be severely compromised by the Righteous Dominion.)

## *Infernal*

Infernal creatures of all kinds, including demons, beasts and diabolists, suffer three times the Righteous Aura rating plus a stress die (no Botch) in damage each Round spent in the Dominion. Soak applies normally.

Demons in disguise, hidden Infernal creatures, and incognito diabolists can be recognized by the Righteous with a Perception + Piety simple roll of 8+, regardless of those beings' efforts to hide themselves. Even demons possessing humans or animals can be recognized with this roll. Also made recognizable are those humans who possess Flaws like Demon Tainted, Diabolic Upbringing, and Demon Plagued (at least those plagued for reasons of their own sin). People with the False Faith diabolic Virtue (see *The Maleficium*, p. 131) are automatically made obvious to the Righteous.

Astasians — Infernal messengers — are immune to damage suffered for being in the presence of the Righteous Dominion. However, their presence in that Dominion is made clear on a successful Perception + Piety roll.

Crusaders who fight Infernally-related foes receive their normal +2 Infidel Attack bonus (above), but instead of receiving a +2 Damage bonus, they receive one equal to three times the Righteous Aura rating. Even arrows from a Righteous archer cause three times Aura in damage, plus normal damage for the arrow.

No Infernal powers can hold sway in the Righteous Dominion, nor can diabolists cast spells when faced with it. Obviously enough, demons and diabolists prefer to flee the Righteous Dominion than stand and face it.

## *Magical*

The Righteous Dominion is one reason why the Order of Hermes does not control the world. Use of magic in the presence of the Righteous Dominion incurs a penalty to the roll equal to twice the Aura rating of the Dominion. Magical beings must also make two extra Botch rolls for every Aura point in the Dominion (these extra rolls already include the initial one that accompanies any contact with a Divine Aura).

What's more, it is physically painful to use magic in the Righteous Dominion, or to even hold a magically enchanted thing. A Concentration roll against an Ease Factor of eight must be made each Round magic use is attempted, even if from a magical object which normally functions automatically. If the Concentration roll fails, no magic can be used that Round. In the case of a magical object that has its function muted, one of the object's "charges", or "uses per day," is lost. If a magical effect, such as a spell, is operating when the Righteous Dominion enters an area, that effect is clearly outlined in white light. Even spells like Veil of Invisibility (*Perdo Imagonem* Level 30) are made evident, surrounding the subject in light that makes him visible.

Note: Use of magic does not simply involve Hermetic spells, but also shamanic rolls made to enter and operate within the spirit world (as discussed in *Shamans*), assuming the shaman's body remains in the presence of the Righteous Dominion.

Creatures with Magic Might scores have their power stifled in the presence of the Righteous Dominion. Two points are lost from Magic Might for every Aura point in the Dominion, per Round that magical creatures are exposed to the Dominion. Lost Might Points can only be recovered when distanced from the Dominion (from the crusaders). If all Might Points are lost in the presence of the Dominion, the magical creatures can no longer use their powers. (So, magical creatures can still use their powers under a Righteous Dominion, but that use is limited.)

## *Divine*

To those of the Dominion, the crusader is a noble sight, full of purpose and bent on pursuing the will of God. The very sight of a crusader, with the glory of the Righteous Dominion upon him, is enough to cause the pious to cry out in awe and the impious to consider changing their ways. To heretics, the Righteous Dominion makes the crusader appear as a stern warrior bent on the destruction of their way of life. Thus, those devoted to the Church receive a Devout +1 Personality Trait when in the presence of crusaders, and those of Christian society who are not devoted to the Church acquire a Doubt +1



Personality Trait, as they question their own values. Personality Traits pass after crusaders depart from an area of Divine Aura.

### Reason

As the Righteous Dominion is mobile, it is the only kind of Dominion that may intrude upon an area of Reason (the Reason Aura, in turn, cannot intrude upon other supernatural Auras as followers of Reason have no powers or manifestations to inflict upon those areas). Righteousness might be delivered upon areas of Reason as people in those places assume new and "heretical" perspectives on the Divine, ones outlawed by the Church. People of Reason also conduct experiments that the Church prohibits, such as the dissection of human bodies.

When an area of Reason is invaded by crusaders, the area loses its Aura as usual, so all works and experiments become indecipherable or unintelligible, even to the rational minds studying there. However, such works remain clearly heretical. Only people with True Reason can retain understanding of scientific works and ideas in the presence of the Righteous Dominion. Indeed, people with True Reason can still resist the effects of Divine powers (as discussed in *Ars Magica*, p. 333), but bonuses gained by crusaders under the Dominion, like combat bonuses, cannot be resisted.

Aside from the "evil" books and devices with which they work, members of an Aura of Reason cannot be discerned from normal mundanes, even by crusaders with Divine perception.



J. Kobb

# THE CLERGY

## CHAPTER THREE



From the Pope to the simplest village rector, the clergy pervade the society of Mythic Europe. Because the Church accepts many people into the clergy (you don't have to be a mental giant to be a village priest, to till a monastery's soil, or to pray in a monastery's church), the Church's ranks are legion. Many nobles consider the Church a convenient place to deposit extra heirs, unmarried daughters, and dowager aunts. A calling in the priesthood is also well thought of by the commoners. Indeed, many perceive the peaceful life of the cloister as paradise on earth.

Perhaps in an effort to open its ranks, the Church seeks to spread its influence beyond current borders. Whenever a lord conquers a previously pagan land, the Church is quick to establish new monasteries and churches, seeking to win over pagan folk and baptize them into the faith. The Holy Office of the Inquisition employs Dominican monks to strengthen Christian faith, both within and without firmly established Church bounds. In the vast anthill of the Church, clergy are the worker ants, distributing the word of God and the authority of the Church wherever they go. Even Covenants, in their high mountain fastnesses, or within their strange faerie forests, are not without the occasional pilgrim, mendicant friar, or even Episcopal Procession—a bishop and his retainers riding in full regalia, coming to visit the "strange college of astrologers."

## CLERGY AND HERMES

Among their many other roles, the clergy are Mythic Europe's spiritual protectors. They defend the souls of their charges against powers and forces not originating or believed to originate from God. Hermetic magic is considered one of the greatest of these threats. Clergy who have investigated the Order know Magi have powerful ritual spells that can lay waste to entire countrysides, that can rot a forest from within, and that can wreak havoc on the delicate structures that keep Mythic Europe stable and secure. Indeed, over the years the Papacy has collected several tomes of arcane lore, including books describing destructive spells.

To protect the souls of Mythic Europe's innocents, some clergy seek to undo the Order of Hermes. Although there are no formal seminaries as yet, the Universities of Paris and Salamanca sometimes have special classes on the power of the Order. There is also a great deal of Hermetic lore exchanged among clergy: descriptions of certain Hermetic spells and powers, and the belief that it's more difficult (impossible, some believe) for Magi to cast spells with hands bound and mouth gagged.

The Papacy also has an eye on the Order of Hermes, and has issued a secret communique to all bishops to report any evidence of great powers exhibited by Magi. In particular, the Pope's agents are on watch for diabolic activity.

How the general populace would react to the Order, with full knowledge of its true power, is unknown. Perhaps there would be an uprising or call for a crusade. Some conservative factions in the Church wish to work slowly against the Order, to contain it, and perhaps smother it one day. Others in the Church see the Order as a potential ally in the fight against the armies of Hell.

In the end, the Order itself will decide its own fate, as the clergy cannot risk a direct confrontation on their own soil. So they watch. To maintain the peace for now, representatives from House Jerbiton explain the Order's activities. Yet, there are still happenings and "incidents" that cannot be explained. It therefore grows increasingly apparent to the clergy that the Order is a barely controlled group of anarchic powermongers who seek only knowledge of destruction.

## CLERGY AND COVENANT

Because of the ubiquitous nature of the Church, it is important that even lofty Covenants possess a means of dealing positively with her clergy. Perhaps a Covenant has *consortis* who are particularly charming or well-educated, maybe belonging to the nobility. Perhaps Covenants are composed of Magi who have the Gentle Gift and are non-threatening to clergy, appearing as scholars more than wizards. However, for aid in dealing with the Church, there can be no better help than the clergy itself.

## Clergy as Companions

Most normal clergy (priests of secular and higher rank) do not choose to serve a Covenant. Similarly, few Covenants are eager to invite God's chosen inside their walls (the Auras of the two clash). However, itinerant beggar monks and the like might be attracted to a Covenant, to act as missionaries, to take advantage of the Covenant's mundane library, or to act as spies for a local bishop. Remember, even if they bear no ill will, beggar monks are ordained priests, able to administer the Sacraments and perform other Christian rites.

How do you create a priest character who is itinerant to a Covenant? Well, monks typically have higher Intelligence, Perception, Communication and Presence scores than they do scores in physical Characteristics, although a high Stamina is often a side effect of the rigorous schedule a monk is expected to observe. For a good example of this kind of Companion character, see the Friar Vocation on p. 40 of the *Ars Magica* rulebook. Monks are often educated to some degree (with the Educated Virtue), possessing at least a few Knowledges, and possess the +3 Background Virtue, Clergy.

Another possibility is a particularly enlightened or daring Episcopal Aide, an ordained priest who is the Covenant's ally. The character understands that Magi are not necessarily sin-

## Clergy as Storyguide Characters

Unless Hermetic characters are complete isolationists, they are bound to travel into the mortal world and encounter its inhabitants. As Storyguide, it is important for you to people Mythic Europe's cities, villages and rural communities with priests and cloistered orders of the Church. These orders and people should abound in accordance with medieval authenticity, and they should challenge Magi's diplomatic skills. Being the educated of Mythic Europe (outside the Order of Hermes), the clergy offer Magi their greatest mental challenge. Clergy are often the shrewdest and most discerning rivals that characters may encounter, and losing a battle of wits with a churchperson might lead to greater Church conflict.

Clergy react to open displays of magic as most people do, with fear and anger. Magi who fail to recognize the chaos their magicks cause find relations with priests strained at best. If a character has some Flaw (like a curse, Blatant Gift, or Faerie Eyes) which is outwardly magical and inconcealable, Church relations are further hampered. To avoid charges of witchcraft and diabolism, such a character is wise to find some well-mannered, perfectly normal-looking ally to act as representative.

Although the temptation to make characters' lives miserable is there (and Mythic Europe certainly lends itself to misery), you should not make all clergy shortsighted folk bent on condemning Magi. Clergy come from a wide variety of backgrounds. Some are well-traveled, educated and quite liberal. Others, like village priests, live around faeries and enchanted creatures of the forest. Both understand there are supernatural forces in the world that aren't necessarily Satan's. Even a bishop may have met one of those Magi who follow St. Nerius—Magi who are pious—and may realize that not all magic is Dark. Ultimately, each of Mother Church's ministers has a slightly different view of how magic and Magi should be dealt with, and not all agree with official doctrine. Fortunately for Magi, the Church has not yet made a final ruling on the status of the Order. Perhaps nothing short of a papal bull will one day decide the Church's position, condemning or condoning.

ners and seeks to cement relations between Church and Order. Perhaps the character is even a secret agent, working for the characters and spying on the local bishop! See the Episcopal Aide Virtue in the new Virtues section, below, in order to better understand this character option.

## TRAITS OF THE CLERGY

Clerical characters are created with the same rules that all Companions use. Provided here is material that expands upon what clergy are and can do. New Traits are discussed first; these may be integrated into what you're familiar with from the rules.



After new Traits, like Piety, are discussed, old Traits, specifically Virtues and Flaws, are presented, but with a new bent toward the Church.

As previously stated, clerical characters tend to have higher scores in intellectual and social Characteristics than they do in physical ones (except for Stamina). Such characters also have the Clergy Virtue, which must be purchased normally, and they are usually Educated (+1 Trait Virtue).

The religious dedication of priest characters depends on the individual priest. While all priests are Pious (each must purchase a score of at least one in the Piety Ability, discussed below), only a small number have True Faith. This disparity arises because True Faith is something that is arrived at separately from the teachings of the Church. It is a numinous faculty that comes from having one's faith confirmed, and from finding a personal relationship with the Divine, something that is not necessarily encouraged in the hierarchical Church. Having True Faith can also require one to abandon day-to-day practicality and security, as in the case of devout hermits. Indeed, those with True Faith are often thought of as eccentric or even a little mad.

In terms of Abilities, all priests have Piety. Normal priests (those that are non-Episcopal) have Church Lore. More educated ones (some monks, and all bishops, abbots, cardinals and the Pope) also have Church Knowledge (although some of them may be so removed from the day-to-day Church that they may not have Church Lore). Village priests often have Faerie Lore, to understand the beings with which they coexist, and usually have Area Lore for the vicinity of their parishes, as the priests must often travel to their parishioners, not the other way around. Village priests might even have Legend Lore or Fantastic Beast Lore Abilities, depending on where they spend their time and whom they talk to (village priests often have close friendships with village elders, who impart such knowledge). Sometimes a venerable village priest becomes a repository for local wisdom, and passes it down to his religious successor, who is often chosen from among villagers.

A list of Virtues and Flaws, below, provides some new Traits for clerical characters, but also discusses familiar Virtues and Flaws in terms of Church dedication.

## The Lord Works in Mysterious Ways

The powers of the clergy are not flashy or showy, as the powers and spells of Magi, faeries, demons and angels (who are beings of pure Light) can be. The powers of the pious are internal in nature. They are quiet, tending to effect subtle changes in the heart and the fundamental spark of the Divine in all people's souls. Still, when paired with the power of the limitless Divine, these innocuous abilities provide the Church with the power it needs to protect itself and those who seek its protection.



Among the subtle tools used by the Church are the piety of its members and the abilities of its priesthood, abilities to administer the Sacraments and care for the souls of the Dominion. Changing the Temper of the Dominion (explained in Chapter Two) helps clergy gain more power to deal with problems, be they precocious faeries or rogue Magi. For those who have True Faith, there are other avenues of power, avenues which allow priests to break old boundaries and perhaps bring current believers a new perspective on the world. Such is the way of change.

## PIETY

Piety is an Ability associated with the knowledge and familiarity that comes with being exposed to Divine will. It is not True Faith, which is a much more universal (and powerful) Trait. Piety represents the day-to-day devotion and genuine service that a pious person gives the Divine. A priest, cardinal, bishop, and even the Pope can have a Piety Trait and not necessarily have True Faith. In fact, most don't have both. Still, Piety is absolutely necessary for clerical characters. They cannot perform the Sacraments without it, and it reflects their very way of life.

Piety should be used as a catch-all Ability that represents the spiritual side of the clergy's service. Piety is the result of meditation, study, devotion, prayer, stewardship, attendance to duties and Mass, participation in the Sacraments, and general "holy" behavior. Among other things, Piety may indirectly affect the Temper of the Dominion (see *The Dominion and its Tempers*, in Chapter Two, and Piety's Functions, below). Unlike other Ars Magica Abilities, Piety is limited by the behavior of the person who possesses it. See the *Piety Penalties Chart*, below.

Levels in Piety are bought at character creation like any other Ability, with Experience Points based on age, and thereafter with Experience Points gained during life. However, after character creation, Piety cannot be increased by expending normal Experience Points. Piety increases are purchased with Piety Experience. Ideas and rules for the acquisition of Piety Experience are presented below.

As Piety is an Ability, characters may take Specialties. Such Specialties deal in simple faith toward the Church and can be directed toward Church ceremonies. Piety Specialties might include: *Sacraments*, *sensing Tempers*, *recognizing other Pious folk*, *breaking Hermetic limits* (this last being for Pious Magi — see Chapter Six).

As with all Specialties, those of Piety add +1 to rolls that involve Piety in appropriate situations (when the Specialty is applicable). Thus, even if a roll is not involved in a situation—maybe Piety is applied as a modifier to a to tal—Specialty bonus may still be applied if appropriate.

## Who Has Piety?

Piety is an Ability possessed only by human beings or the sainted spirits of human beings. Every new priest, upon Ordination, has a Piety score of one to five, depending on how devout the person is (this allotment of points is reserved for Storyguide characters). Ordained Troupe characters must purchase starting Piety Ability scores with Experience Points. If a character is ordained during the Saga, after character creation, a Piety score of one is gained automatically, based on the religious devotion that must have preceded the character's Ordination. All further Piety points acquired after that point must be purchased with Piety Experience Points, as usual.

No matter how impious an ordained person may be, he or she always retains a Piety Trait of at least one. This point is retained because, upon Ordination, the very soul of the person is changed and devoted to God and Church. See *Piety Penalties*, below, for more information.

Laypersons can have the Piety Ability. Such people are usually older noblemen and women who spend much of their time contemplating God or praying. Magi do not normally have Piety as they do not usually operate within the confines of the Church. A nonclerical character's possession of Piety must be justified during conceptualization, and Piety score must be purchased with starting Experience Points. If religious devotion is acquired during the Saga by a layperson, a score in Piety can only be purchased through the acquisition of Piety Experience Points — the character must partake of pious actions to get a Piety score.

Although laypersons with the Piety Ability can sense changes in the Dominion with Perception rolls (as clergy can — see below), they are unable to change the Dominion, specifically its Tempers. They are likewise unable to administer the Sacraments. Finally, the Piety of laypersons is easily lost unless they are truly devout to Church and God (Piety scores of non-clergy can fall to zero while those of clergy are at least one at all times). Think of Piety as how close a person is to the ideal of simple faith.

## Functions of Piety

Piety can be used in many different ways, from performing good deeds to ensuring the success of a religious service. Most Piety functions are discussed here, but others are discussed elsewhere in this book. All are listed under *Summary of Piety Functions*, below.

### *Piety and Perception*

Piety, coupled with Perception, can be used to sense the presence of supernatural powers and Auras, even beyond the Divine. That is, a character with the Piety Ability who contacts an area imbued with a Magical, Infernal, Faerie or Rational Aura can sense the existence of that Aura. The same sense applies for encounters with *regio*, and when a person with Piety makes contact with a person or item imbued with supernatural power.

The Ability can also be used (with Perception) to recognize areas and items of Divine power. Recognition of those areas and items is easier than for areas and items of other powers, though.

The talent to perceive other powers is not particularly discerning; a Faerie place and a Magical place might cause a Pious person the same discomfort, with nothing to distinguish the precise nature of each. In fact, many priests simply assume all foreign supernatural forces encountered are Infernal.

To sense a supernatural power the character makes a Perception + Piety stress roll, and consults the *Piety and Perception Chart*. If the roll Botches, an Aura encountered is assumed to be Divine, even if it's not. Neither the type of power nor the extent of its Aura can be sensed. If the roll is zero to three, no sense of a supernatural Aura is gained.

Note: Perception + Piety rolls should be made by the Storyguide on behalf of players, so players cannot be sure of characters' perceptive powers.

## *Piety and Stamina*

One's Piety can make one stronger, especially when Fatigue is a problem. Priests, and especially monks, spend long hours in prayer. Through this they learn the techniques of allowing the Holy Spirit to enter them and direct their work,

giving them stronger constitutions and greater stamina. Through their own rigorous religious lives, laypersons with Piety also gain this bonus. Thus, Piety score is added to all Stamina rolls, including Soak and Fatigue.

## *Piety and Other Traits*

Piety can come into play in many situations since it is an Ability which affects an entire way of life. Thus, if the Storyguide allows it, a Pious character can add Piety score to most good, Godly endeavors.

## *Piety in Services*

Although the Church maintains that a Sacrament is efficacious whether it is administered correctly or not, there are times when a priest is particularly concerned that a rite should go well. In these cases, Piety can be applied to the situation's roll, where Piety adds die legitimacy of holiness to die situation.

For example, when the Baron forces marriage upon his enemy's daughter, and the ceremony has to be performed "by the book" to be respected by the populace, the attending priest may seek to ensure that he does not fail in the eyes of his audience. Piety can be applied as a bonus to the priestly roll, as an outward demonstration of the holiness of the ceremony.

A Communication + Church Knowledge (or Lore) + Piety stress roll determines how effectively the rite is carried out (this formula can be used to test the effectiveness of any priestly ceremony). Generally, on a roll of 9+, a rite goes extremely well,

## *Piety and Perception Chart*

- 4+ A vague feeling of unease about all non-Divine powers. This is also the minimum roll needed to detect the local strength of the Dominion (the player is told the Aura value of the local Dominion).
- 6+ Can pick out the direction of the "feeling's" origin. This is also the minimum roll needed to detect the exact strength and Temper of die Dominion.
- 8+ Can tell a true Infernal Aura from any other supernatural power. This is the roll needed to recognize the Celebrant of a Divine Aura, and die roll required to sense the extent of the Dominion's boundaries (but only if the character is at the center of the Dominion — at its source, like at a church altar).
- 10+ Can distinguish between Infernal, Magical, Faerie and Rational powers if they are strong (Aura rating 4+, although their precise Aura values cannot be determined). Can sense the Aura rating, Temper and extent of the Dominion from far away (up to five miles).
- 15+ Can tell the exact supernatural affiliation of a person, place or thing, and gauge it as more or less powerful than any given Divine Aura with which the character is familiar.



but only 4+ is necessary for basic success. A failure means something minor goes wrong (a stammer, or the wrong passage is read). A Botch means a major failure occurs: a book is dropped or a candle is knocked over, something that puts the rite to an immediate halt.

### *Straight Piety Rolls*

The Piety Ability reflects a person's simple faith in God and dedication to the Church. It does not reflect knowledge or skill so much as it does conviction, feeling and intuition. As Storyguide, you can tell anyone with Piety to make a Piety roll to simulate the mysterious, numinous presence of God, and thereby gain special protection, insight or help where none would normally be possible.

*Exempli Gratia:* A Magus sneaks into a cathedral while invisible, hoping to get past the rector and into the area under the altar, where a rival Magus has hidden magical tomes. There is no reason why the priest in charge of the cathedral should be able to detect the presence of the Magus, who is shielded with powerful magic. Yet, the priest feels a tingling along his spine and his throat runs dry. He decides to check on the sacristy and, when he emerges into the dark cathedral, is astonished to see three leather books rising from a secret trap door in the floor!

In this case, the Storyguide allows the priest character to make a straight Piety roll against an Ease Factor she imposes. Since the roll in this situation is successful, the priest character

gets an intuitive sense that something is wrong in his cathedral. Straight Piety rolls can be simple or stress, and based on any Ease Factor the Storyguide deems appropriate.

Straight Piety rolls should not be abused, for intuition, especially Divine intuition, is never a reliable or regular phenomenon. Nonetheless, straight Piety rolls do effectively simulate the unpredictable power of the Divine; even the most foolproof plan can be seen through or undermined by someone with potent Piety and God's blessing. Indeed, Piety can be used as a threat to keep even Hermetic Magi on their toes. Magi may think twice about acting against priests if those priests may suddenly be aided by the gifts of the Lord.

### *Piety and Magic Resistance*

By performing a special blessing (the action of which is discussed under Blessing, below), a priest can imbue a believer with Magic Resistance. The Ease Factor for the blessing is 9. If the blessing attempt succeeds, the Magic Resistance bestowed by God equals the Celebrant's Communication + Piety + the subject's Piety. The total is the blessed believer's Resistance number when spells are cast or powers are used upon her. Thus, a stress die is added to the above total when used.

This Magic Resistance is based on the subject and priest's faith in the Lord, and is therefore subject to failure based on faltering faith. Every time the Magic Resistance operates (successfully stopping incoming magic or not), faith is tested. The subject makes an Intelligence + Piety stress roll against an Ease Factor of 9 to retain the blessing. If the roll fails, the Magic Resistance fades. If the roll Botches, the subject has a significant lapse in faith and permanently loses a Piety Point (if she has any). If the roll succeeds, the Resistance persists until the next test of faith.

Generally speaking, any time a blessed character has a breach of faith (whether from a failed Intelligence + Piety roll, sin, or doubt of conviction), Magic Resistance is lost. Any loss of Piety points while blessed also means the loss of the Magic Resistance blessing.

Finally, Pious people always add their Piety scores to their Natural Resistance rolls against magic. This defense stands regardless of blessing, and Divine Magic Resistance and Natural Resistance can both function for the same person (offering two protection rolls against magic).

### *Changing the Temper of the Dominion*

Piety can be used to change the Temper of the Dominion (see Chapter Two for complete rules on Tempers and their functions). To change Temper, a Pious person must first be affiliated with the Dominion Aura as the Celebrant of that Aura. This means the priest, in striving to change the Dominion's Temper, conducts Mass at the local church, or that the priest is a bishop or Pope presiding over that Dominion (and the Pope presides over all Dominions). Laypersons with Piety cannot change Dominion Tempers.





## Summary of Piety's Functions

Heal a Body Level of Light or more grievous wounds in Merciful Dominion	Communication + Piety simple roll	10+
Sense false or hidden thing in Just Dominion*	Intelligence or Perception + twice Piety	Ease Factor appropriate to situation
Rolls between crusaders that involve Communication, Presence or the Leadership Ability receive Piety as a bonus on the leader's behalf (assuming the leader has Piety)		
Recognize Infernal being by the Righteous (crusaders)	Perception + Piety simple roll	8+
Sense supernatural Aura	Perception + Piety stress roll	and consult <i>Piety and Perception Chart</i>
Piety is added to Stamina rolls, including Soak and Fatigue		
Piety can be added to other Trait rolls that involve Godly endeavors (like using Communication rolls to convince bandits to release their captives)		
Piety can be added to religious services performed by a priest, to imbue the power of religious devotion to those services. Standard service roll: Communication + Church Knowledge or Lore stress roll versus 9 for great success and 4 for bare success*		
Straight Piety rolls (i.e., unmodified Piety rolls) are made to represent the unpredictable power of God to deliver help toHis followers (allowing awareness or capabilities otherwise unavailable)		
Bless another with Magic Resistance*	Communication + Priest's Piety + subject's Piety equals Resistance (modified in story by stress die)	
Test faith of Magic Resistance	Intelligence + Piety stress roll versus 9 to retain blessing	
Piety is added to all Natural Resistance rolls against magic		
Change Dominion Temper*	Communication+ Piety or Presence + Piety	Refer to <i>Temper Change Chart</i>
Administer blessings*	Communication + Piety stress roll or Presence + Piety stress roll	results compared to <i>Blessing Chart</i>
Sense a Possessing Demon	Perception + Piety stress roll	versus Demon's Infernal magnitude (Might score divided by 5/rounded up) + Possession Skill
Exorcist casting out a possessing demon	Stress die + Hierarchy + Piety + True Faith	versus Stress die + <i>Current</i> Infernal magnitude (Might score divided by 5, rounded up) + Possession Skill
Sense a Hidden Possessing Demon	Perception + Piety stress roll	versus twice Demon’s Infernal magnitude + Possesion skill
Added to Pious Magi's Spontaneous spell casting rolls, before dividing, to bring about effects that exceed Hermetic spell limits (see Chapter Six)		
Pious Magi sensing the features of a Dominion	Perception + twice Piety stress roll	And consult <i>Piety and Perception Chart</i> (see Chapter Six)
Inventing, learning and copying Pious Magic Formulaic spells	Piety is added to <i>Lab Total</i> (see Chapter Six)	
Use of Raw Vis by Pious Magi	Cannot use more pawns at one time in spell castisg than their Piety points. Cannot use more pawns of raw vis in a single season than Vim +Magic Theory or Vim + Piety, whichever is lower (see Chapter Six)	

Entries marked with an asterisk (\*) are limited to use by clergy only. Laypersons with the Piety Ability cannot perform these actions or receive these bonuses, but receive all other listed Piety benefits (except those restricted to Pious Magi).

## Temper Change Chart

Target Temper Is:	Calm	Wrathful	Merciful	Just
Current Temper Is:				
Calm	—	6+	4+	6+
Wrathful	8+	—	10+	6+
Merciful	4+	10+	—	8+
Just	6+	4+	8+	—

### Modifiers to the Temper Change Roll:

- +1 if the change only applies to part of a Dominion
- +1 if the change is for a specific person or item
- +1 if the Temper has been changed in the last month
- +2 if the Temper is conditional (i.e., reverts to the former Temper once a condition is fulfilled)
- 2 if a bishop
- 6 if the Pope

To change Dominion Temper the presiding priest must have reason to encourage the change, and must select the Temper to be nurtured. For instance, if a priest seeks to sway his parishioners from recent, rampant sin, he might seek to inspire a Temper of Wrath to put the fear of God in his people. In changing the Temper (let's say from Calm), the priest has both motive and intended Temper.

In order to change the Temper of the Dominion over which the clergyperson has authority, he or she must roll either a Communication + Piety or a Presence + Piety stress roll, depending upon the situation. For example, if a priest is condemning an outlaw via a public proclamation (altering the Dominion to Wrathful for that outlaw), a roll of Communication + Piety is required. If, however, the priest is confronting that same outlaw on the street, wordlessly bringing the Lord's wrath upon the outlaw, the priest's attempt involves Presence + Piety. Essentially, if the priest has to speak to pronounce the Temper change, the effort is based on Communication. If no pronouncement is involved, Presence is used.

The Ease Factor of changing the Temper of the Dominion is based on the current Temper and the target Temper. See the *Temper Change Chart* for the Ease Factor of an intended change.

If the change attempt fails the current Temper persists and the Celebrant cannot attempt another change for one week (as the populace continue to pursue their former religious attitudes). If a failed Temper change is applied to a single person or item, another attempt may not be made for a week; God's will seems resistant to the change and only passage of time and prayer can sway His will (allowing another Temper change attempt).

If the Celebrant's Temper change attempt Botches, the parishioners of the area are confused by the Celebrant's intent. His or her Presence and Communication (regardless of which was used in the change attempt) suffer a -2 modifier in the area where the change failed. Another attempt to change the local Dominion's Temper can only be made after a month's time (with the -2 modifier still imposed). If the next attempt

succeeds, Presence and Communication return to normal. If the attempt fails, Characteristic penalties persist until a successful Temper change is made (in this case, after another week as the most recent roll was only a failure). If the next attempt Botches, another -2 Characteristic penalty is imposed (which is cumulative with the last) and another month passes before a Temper change can be attempted).

Successive Botches may give the Celebrant a bad Reputation and undermine his public support. Parishioner attendance may decline and sin in the area may rise as demons take advantage of the wayward flock. A Celebrant who suffers from prolonged Presence and Communication penalties resulting from Botched Temper changes may even be relieved of Church rank and excommunicated (although the Pope himself can only be replaced upon death or a successful coup).

It is best if the Dominion remains Calm at most times. This state represents everyday, peaceful life. It is also the Temper at which a Celebrant's influence is most secure.

Note: Dominion Temper can also be changed by characters with the True Faith Virtue. Rules for doing so are discussed below, under *Powers and Benefits of True Faith*. Changing Dominion Temper with True Faith involves the Communication and Presence rolls discussed above, but True Faith Points replace Piety Points. Characters can certainly have both Piety and True Faith. If this is the case, both are added to Presence and Communication rolls.

## *Increasing Piety Score*

Piety is an Ability, a Trait gained through careful study, meditation and religious service. Piety is also highly personalized, a reflection of an individual's faith and dedication to God. Since Piety is based on spirituality and individuality, the Ability can only be raised through certain personal, religious circumstances. That is, Piety cannot be increased by means of ordinary Experience Points, only by means of special Piety Experience Points. There are a number of ways to gain Piety Experience,

all of them part and parcel of basic spiritual service to the Church. Storyguides can also award Piety Experience through exemplary roleplaying on the part of a player.

For the number of Piety Experience gained for certain story events, see the *Piety Experience Point Chart*. The chart divides potentially rewarding situations between those applicable to all people, those applicable to clergy, and those applicable to laypersons. Of course, you are welcome to expand this list and extrapolate Piety Experience rewards for other events that occur in your Saga.

## *Piety Penalties*

Whereas characters can increase their Piety scores by performing devout acts, they can also lose Piety Points by straying from devotion. These points are only temporarily lost if the character repents. But, if wayward behavior persists over a prolonged period, Piety Points may be lost permanently, and may only be recovered by renewed dedication to Church and God. Piety Points lost due to sin or distraction from service are outlined on the *Piety Penalties Chart*. These penalties apply to both clergy and layperson characters.

Lost Piety Points are not measured in terms of Experience Points as are Piety increases. Rather, Piety is lost in full Ability points. So, if a character has a Piety of five and loses three points, two Piety Points remain.



## Piety Experience Point Chart

### General Situations

- 10 points for preventing a bloody battle
- 10 points for being visited by a true Divine Vision
- 5 points for being visited by a dream from Heaven
- 5 points for fighting the forces of Hell in the flesh
- 2 points per year for remaining genuinely faithful to the Church
- 2 points for preventing others from acting on major sinful impulses or for getting them to confess sins and seek absolution
- 2 points per year of regular self-flagellation (performed once every month)
- 1 point for assisting a bishop, cardinal or the Pope with some service (includes crusading, but in that case 1 point is gained per month)
- 1 point per year of regular meditation (performed once every other day)
- 1 point per three weeks of fasting

### Clergy Only

- Demon's Might magnitude (Might divided by five, rounded up) for exorcising the demon — see Exorcism rules in Chapter Five for more information
- 10 points for being elected bishop
- 10 points for establishing a cathedral
- 5 points (one-time bonus) for visiting Jerusalem
- 5 points (one-time bonus) for visiting the Papal States
- 2 points for establishing a new place of worship
- 2 points for preventing the desecration of an altar
- 3 points per year of leadership of a congregation

### Non-Clergy Only

- 10 points for being visited by an angel
- 5 points (one-time bonus) for visiting Jerusalem
- 5 points (one-time bonus) for visiting the Papal States
- 1 point per year for tithing (that is, giving one-tenth your income to the Church)
- 1 point per shrine visited and donation given on pilgrimage

Certain people also have minimum Piety scores. Clergy, including monks and nuns, always have a Piety of at least one. All other people have minimum Piety scores of zero, which implies no remarkable religious devotion (although people whose Piety scores drop to zero can still recover their former scores; they don't lose the Ability altogether unless impious actions are performed over a long period).

The Storyguide decides how long a character must behave impiously before Piety penalties are permanent. If a sin is absolved through the Sacrament of Absolution (see *An Outward Sign*, below), the sin's Piety penalties disappear. Any penalty

## Piety Penalties

Seven Deadly Sins	-5 (being lustful, being proud, being wrathful, being covetous, being envious, being gluttonous, or being slothful)
Cardinal Sin	-4 (breaking one of the Ten Commandments, treason)
Minor Sin	-1 to -3 (from lying to minor versions of the above)
Absence of regular Service	-1 to -3
No Communion in more than a month	-1
in more than a Season	-3
in more than a year	-5
Diabolism.	Piety score becomes a permanent Hierarchy score (see The Maleficium), and Piety cannot be restored unless sincere repentance is performed, and then Piety begins at a score of zero

All Piety penalties are cumulative and are subtracted from your current Trait score. So, if two cardinal sins are performed, eight points are subtracted from your current Piety score.

that remains in effect for more than one year (counting from Advent to Advent) may be considered permanent. Generally speaking, characters with high Piety scores (4+) are more likely to lose points for minor infractions against their faith, and permanently lose those high points after a shorter periods of sin than do those with lower scores. People with higher Piety scores have greater purity of faith, which becomes increasingly precarious in such a harsh, sinful world as Mythic Europe. The Piety of those with lower scores is more "hearty."

## TRUE FAITH

The following material is based on the account of the True Faith Virtue discussed in the *Ars Magica* rules (p. 329). However, Pax Dei expands upon True Faith, offers more insight into it, and allows more expressions of it. True Faith is a numinous and mysterious faculty. It is a blossoming of God within the soul of a human being. True Faith is, in many ways, a one-to-one connection with God: a direct line to the pure Divine, unrestrained by liturgy or tradition. Those with True Faith have no need of the Church or clergy to get closer to God (although many have True Faith and belong to the clergy, finding close proximity to God through Church and themselves).

True Faith does not automatically imply Christian orthodoxy. In fact, those with True Faith are sometimes heretics. They possess such an intimate relationship with the Divine that they ignore the common teachings and holdings of the Church. In fact, in the time before the Muting (the Birth of Christ), many who possessed True Faith were priests and priestesses of gods and goddesses (deities who participated in a sliver of the True Empyrean and who could grant miracles and power). Some of those priests and priestesses survive today, even though their deities may be long forgotten.

True Faith is perfect belief without proof. Proof is not necessary for one with True Faith, and rational argument is useless. What's more, it is a rare True Faithful who proselytizes, for a True Faithful cannot verbally explain her relationship with the Divine. Absolute faith is not something that can be easily conveyed through words and language. Music and art can often help portray the relationship one feels with True Faith, so many of the True Faithful often have musical or artistic skills.

True Faith seems to be a combination of inborn tendency, devotion and personal sacrifice. It is a perfect trust, an

## *The Hand of God is Upon You*

While God allows many great sins to go unpunished in life, it is the Seven Deadly Sins to which He pays special attention. Characters that continually commit one of the Seven Deadly Sins eventually attract the attention of the Divine, who first warns and then smites the offender.

Such Divine persecution can form the subplot of a major story in your Saga: Torres is a warrior who continually seeks and has carnal relations with the women he meets, whether they are married or not. Brother Ambrose, a friar visiting the Covenant, recognizes Torres's behavior and speaks to the warrior about the virtue of Chastity (the opposite of Lust), explaining that Lust is one of the Seven Deadly Sins. Torres laughs and continues his wanton debauchery. Later, Friar Ambrose again warns him. Finally, Torres is almost caught one night by a local knight and barely escapes, fleeing the bedchamber of the knight's wife. This close encounter is God's subtle warning to Torres. Not heeding God's warning, Torres continues with his sin by arranging another assignation with the knight's wife. Who discovers them but the knight himself, armed to the teeth and surrounded by his guard. Torres may now find his soul in Hell, suffering from his sins in life.

The Seven Deadly Sins are Pride, Anger, Lust, Envy, Covetousness, Gluttony and Sloth, as detailed in *Mythic Europe*, p. 32.

God also takes a hand in the desecration of tombs, altars and other sacred places. God sends punishment, in very subtle ways, to those who defile His holy grounds. Indeed, God may even use the characters' Covenant as His tool of punishment; for example, against diabolists who gain Hierarchical prestige by destroying and desecrating churches. Vengeance is mine, *saiih the Lord. I will repay.*



unrelenting sense that the Deity is there, and is close. There is no True Faith, however, without a periodic Testing, or trial (see *Gaining Faith Points*, below).

## *The Path to Faith*

In game terms, True Faith is never gained through play except under two very special circumstances. The first requires that the player purchase True Faith through the auspices of the +3 Supernatural Virtue, True Faith. The second is that the Storyguide, without prompting from the player, awards the state of True Faith upon the character.

The ArsMagica rules, in *The Divine Realm* section (p. 327), explain what characters might go through to attain some Divine status. There are very few avenues that characters can take which lead them to True Faith. First, a character must exhibit signs that he is worthy of a direct relationship with the Divine; then he has to do something which puts him in close proximity to the Divine. This proximity might arise from witnessing any miraculous event, from an awesome cataclysm of divine retribution to the miracle of birth.

Characters can also acquire True Faith if their faith is sorely tested, but they survive the torture with belief in tact. This means of acquiring True Faith is called the Testing. Testing is fully discussed under *Gaining Faith Points*, below.



## Temper Change Faith Point Chart

Last Person to Set Temper	Faith Points Required
Non-Episcopal Priest (village priest, Episcopal aide, monk, nun)	2 Faith Points
Bishop	5 Faith Points
Cardinal	6 Faith Points
The Pope	7 Faith Points

## *Powers and Benefits of True Faith*

As stated in the Ars **Magica** rulebook, True Faith acts like Confidence, except that the reasons for its acquisition are based on religion rather than self-determination. True Faith can also be used to counteract supernatural powers encountered by the Faithful.

True Faith has other properties. First of all, Tempers of the Dominion, for good or ill, do not affect those with True Faith. Divine areas encountered by characters with True Faith are always considered to have a Calm Temper. Not even the Righteous Temper affects a person with True Faith, so crusaders do not receive their combat bonuses against people with True Faith.

Second, characters with sufficient Faith Points can alter the Temper of a Dominion, even one over which the character does not preside. Indeed, characters with True Faith do not even have to belong to the clergy to alter a Dominion's Temper. For example, a knight with True Faith can change Dominion Temper. To change Temper requires that the character have a sufficient number of Faith Points to "supersede" the authority of the local Dominion's Celebrant (specifically, he who last set the Dominion's Temper). The *Temper Change Faith Point Chart* indicates the number of Faith Points needed to change a Temper.

The number of True Faith Points a character has also determines how large a Dominion the character can influence. If a character has two Faith Points, she can alter the Temper of a Dominion as if she were a priest for the area. If the character has five points, all the Dominions controlled by a bishop can be altered. Of course, these same scores are required to alter a Temper in any part of a Celebrant's Dominion, depending on who last set the Temper. That is, if a Dominion's Temper was last set by a bishop, a character needs five Faith Points to alter any smaller Temper within the bishop's jurisdiction, even if an area has its own normal presiding priest.

Successful change of a Dominion's Temper also requires a Communication or Presence roll, as it does for a Celebrant changing Temper. Faith is substituted for Piety when rolling. See *Changing the Temper of the Dominion*, above, for all rules on Tempering. If the character has both Piety and True Faith, both are applied to the roll.

Characters with True Faith are able to manipulate any Dominion's Temper because, although the fundamental power of the Dominion is fueled by the belief of folk living in the area, and is controlled by the Celebrant of the Dominion, inspiration



for the Dominion comes straight from the Divine. Since characters with True Faith have a bond with the Divine beyond that of worldly clergy, such characters can impose their will on Dominions.

Where True Faith is concerned, people can even work together to influence the Temper of a Dominion. Ordinarily a Dominion's Celebrant, who has only Piety, must work alone to set local Temper. By contrast, several Faithful working in unison may combine their Faith scores to determine their influence (i.e., if combined Faith Points equal seven or more, even the Pope's influence over the Dominion can be undermined).

If a Temper change is made by those beyond the Church (i.e., by those who have True Faith but do not belong to orthodox Christianity), the Pope can move to excommunicate the area. An excommunicated area is ostracized by the Church and its Dominion fades. If the Pope later decides to acknowledge the area again, its Dominion returns and is once more under his Temper control.

When a character (or characters) with True Faith sets the Temper of a Dominion, only a character with more Faith Points (or a group with a higher Point total) may change the Temper. Or, a Celebrant who has higher equivalent Church ranking than the character with True Faith may change the Temper. That is, if a character with five Faith Points (the Temper setting equivalent of a bishop) changes a Temper, that Temper may be changed again by a cardinal or the Pope (see the *Temper Change Faith Point Chart*).

### *Gaining Faith Points*

One may only gain Faith Points by enduring circumstances which test one's Faith. A character gains Faith Points when the Storyguide deems her to have been particularly faithful, especially in trying times. A maximum of one Faith Point may be awarded from each such circumstance, and even this should be rare.

A more severe form of trial, one which can cause a character to gain or lose more than one Faith Point at a time, is a Testing. A Testing is a trial through which God puts a character in order to test her Faith. During the Testing, the character loses all benefits of True Faith and can neither use nor gain Faith Points. During that time, the character probably feels as if the Divine has abandoned her. This is not the case, and in fact a seraph (see the section on Angels in Chapter Four) watches her. God is totally aware of her actions during the Testing. When the Divine determines that the Testing is complete, the Divine may award two or even three Faith Points to one who has remained faithful.

Of course, there is no proclamation made to the character that a Testing is underway. Faith Points simply fail to function, without warning, and cannot be called upon throughout the Testing period. The Storyguide must decide if the character falters in his faith to God, or accepts God's will and strives to

survive in the belief that God has His purpose. The player's reactions to a lack of Faith Points might be used as a guide toward character response. If a player complains about lacking Faith Points, the character probably fails the Testing and permanently loses two or three Faith Points.

The duration of a Testing is entirely up to the Storyguide, based on Saga events and your intentions. A Testing might persist for a single story or several stories. A character who passes a long Testing probably receives three Faith Points when access to True Faith is renewed.

If a character loses all Faith Points during a Test, the character loses the True Faith Virtue and cannot regain it. No new Virtues can be purchased to make up for the three-point Virtue disparity created. A character falling from True Faith still retains Piety, if that Ability was already possessed. The character may now have Confidence Points, but starts out with none. Confidence Points can be gained as a measure of how the character comes to terms with falling out of God's favor. They can also be gained through normal story events in which the character affirms his importance.

Probably the best example of a Testing may be found in the Bible's *Book of Job*.

## *Magi and True Faith*

Magi can have True Faith. Forming their own relationships with the Divine, largely outside Church orthodoxy, these people might justify their magical Arts as gifts from God or tools to do the Lord's work. Faithful Magi do not have the hierarchy and static form of the Church to fall back on. Instead, Faithful Magi have intimate, dynamic, everyday interaction with the Divine. Magi with True Faith are very close to the exalted state of Pious Magus, but do not fully achieve that lofty status (although Pious Magi can have the True Faith Virtue).

The state of the Faithful Magus's soul is not in question: as long as she retains one Faith Point, that Magus's soul goes directly to Heaven, avoiding the pale fires of Purgatory. However, the Magus cannot use Faith Points to cast Pious Magic spells. Pious Magic spells are limited to use by those special Magi. The Magus with True Faith can utilize Faith Points when casting her spells, just as if she had Confidence Points. Furthermore, the Magus with True Faith is still fully affected by the limiting effects of the Dominion (penalties to spell rolls and extra Botch dice — *Ars Magica*, p. 308), even though he is not affected by the Temper of the Dominion.

To fully understand the difference between Pious Magi and those with the mere True Faith Virtue, see Pious Magi in Chapter Six.

## Rounding out the Dominion Character

There are certain Virtues and Flaws that characters devoted to the Church are likely to have. These can be Traits which led to the characters' religious devotion, or Traits which result from it. Listed below are some new Virtues and Flaws appropriate to these characters. There are also some traditional Traits — from the rules — listed, but modified to indicate how they apply to clerical life.

### Hermetic

Magus characters who are devoted to or somehow related to the Church may choose these traits.

#### Virtues: +3

**Affinity with the Divine:** Your magic seems to stem from some sliver of the True Art. This probably means you were baptized at birth. Treat all Dominion Auras as two less in power with regard to you. Although you are not a Pious Magus, if you ever become one you receive the +4 Magical Affinity Virtue for free.

As long as you do not turn from the Divine or commit heinous sins, you continue to benefit from *Affinity with the Divine's* bonuses. However, if you ever perform a considerable sin, like a Cardinal Sin, the Virtue is lost and cannot be regained except by sincere repentance.

Although you are closer to the Divine than most Magi, your soul is still in danger, for your magic defies God's law (at least according to the Church). In instances where clergy are encountered, they tend to deal with you before others, but persecute you for your activities more vehemently than they do other Magi. Maybe clergy recognize your inner potential and are angered that you do not seek God's grace in the proper sense-

#### Flaws: -3

**Disgusted by Magic:** It's possible that the disgust you feel toward magic arises from an unconscious association with the Divine, which constantly reminds you of the weakness of the "pseudo-art" you study,

#### Flaws: -4

**Susceptibility to Divine Power:** This Flaw might point to your Infernal past, or it might point to a future as a Pious Magus; the Divine evidently singles you out for special attention.

### Passions

The Passions of Lust, Greed (Covetousness), Rage (Anger), Jealousy (Envy), and Rebel (Pride) are all directly tied to the Seven Deadly Sins. It is possible that someone committing such sins on a regular basis (as someone with Passions of these

kinds do) attracts Divine attention. See the boxed insert, *The Hand of God is Upon You*. Other Passions, like Love and Honor, might indicate a close affiliation with Divine benevolence.

## Physical

The will of God sometimes manifests itself in the world and physical form. Physical Traits resulting from the Divine might be gifts or afflictions, the latter intended to test faith.

### *Flaw: -8*

**Leprosy:** It's likely that only the power of the Divine (a miracle, or a Divinely inspired spell from a Pious Magus) can cure you.

## Mental

Characters with Strong-Willed, Student, Common Sense, Learn from Mistakes, and Free Expression, and who are young, are constantly being recruited by priests and friars for service in the Church. The qualities of these recruits are valued by the clergy, and new initiates may be sought both within and without the Dominion.

### *Flaws: -1*

**Simple-Minded:** Many village priests have this Flaw.

### *Flaws: -3*

**Fury:** A priest, particularly a zealous one who hunts heretics, may have this Flaw. However, more temperate priests might disagree with the zealot's ways and may condemn him for sins of anger and hatred.

A priest can also aid someone with this Flaw by placing a Merciful Temper on the person. Rolls to resist furious behavior, made under such a Merciful Dominion, receive a +3 bonus.

**Noncombatant:** Many clergy (especially nuns) have this Flaw.

## Supernatural

The Divine is the supreme supernatural power. Characters with close ties to the Divine might have several supernatural Virtues and Flaws, but most tend to be subtle in nature, as Divine power usually is.

### *Virtues: variable*

**Purifying Touch:** This Virtue is most definitely delivered from God unless it is a pale mockery of the True Power. Many saints possess this Virtue. St. Patrick drove the snakes (and Druids) from Ireland with his magic-destroying, purifying touch-

### *Virtues: +3*

**True Faith:** This Virtue is very powerful. See True Faith, above, for this book's elaborations on the Virtue. Note that True Faith does not come with an "owner's manual." It





probably does a character good to explain how much she knows about her Numinous Faculty. And, it would be interesting to show how the Truly Faithful character goes about learning to use her Faith.

## Virtues: +5

**Relic:** Divine relics can take many forms. They are frequently the remains of saints which are infused with True Faith Points that protect their bearers and increase the chance of a miracle occurring.

**Guardian Angel:** Everyone has a guardian angel, but you can listen to yours. Read the section on Angels, in Chapter Four, to get a better idea of how to "play" your angel's interaction with you. Angels can offer great solace, so your guardian angel may often Enfold you in its arms, infusing you with feelings of peace and love. By doing what your angel says, you can resist the attacks of demons (Temptation, Obsession, Possession, *Psychomachia*), or at least see demons for what they are. An angel, however, cannot aid you once you become possessed, although it might try to bring aid to you, if you were truly possessed through no fault of your own (i.e., you heeded the angel's advice and were possessed anyway).

## Flaws: Variable

**Curses:** Curses can generally be undone through the power of God, a miracle, or a Divine Ritual spell performed by a Pious Magus. Note that it is not always God's will that curses be undone, and a person may have to go far and do much to have one lifted.

## Flaw: -2

**Tainted with Evil:** A person who is Tainted with Evil, even if ordained as a priest, can never have a Piety Ability score higher than one, and preservation of even that score requires strict meditation, worship and constant absolution (in other words, a clergyperson's Piety can drop to zero where *Tainted with Evil* is concerned). If a clergy person ever loses all Piety Points, the character is probably drummed out of the clergy and might be excommunicated.

## Flaws: -3

**Sense of Doom:** Perhaps an angel has appeared to you and shown you what will happen in your future. You think your fate is inevitable, but it may not be.

## Flaws: -4

**Demon Plagued:** This Flaw can be expiated only through the services of a Grand Exorcist or a Pious Magus (see the sections on *Exorcism*, Chapter Five). Even then, another demon probably comes to take over where the exorcised one left off, unless the Exorcist or Pious Magus deals specifically with Michael or one of the Watchers in Hell to discern the reason for the plague, and then works to prevent any perpetuation of it.

## Flaws: -6

**Demon Tainted:** As *Demon Plagued*, above, except that a miracle must occur before Hell leaves you alone.

## Social

As the Dominion is a function of a community of people, you may have Virtues and Flaws that help or hinder your actions in the social Dominion.

## Virtue: +1

**True Friend:** True friendship falls under Divine jurisdiction since anything True (even True Reason) emanates from the True Empyrean. You may not be particularly religious, but your True Friendship ultimately brings you closer to the Divine through the virtue of Love. In fact, a specific angel has been assigned to watch over your friendship, and it is possible that this angel may Enfold one or both of you from time to time, providing you with gentle memories of each other.

**Inspirational:** An inspirational clergy person, preaching to a group, can temporarily raise all Pious Ability scores within earshot by one. To do so requires a Communication + Piety simple roll of 8+, with the +3 Inspiration bonus still applicable. The Storyguide determines how long this Piety bonus persists.

## Virtues: +3

**Leadership:** A Companion who has this Virtue, in addition to the +3 Clergy Background Virtue, may be an important priest, such as the rector of a baronial cathedral or the abbot of an small monastery. Although your character's clerical career may suffer from association with a Covenant, you might come to be thought of as an expert on the Order of Hermes and thus be given important "missions" for which your particular perspective is ideally suited. However, see the new Background Virtue, Episcopal Aide (below), for information on those who aspire even higher.

## Traits

Association with the Divine can manifest itself in many ways, even in a character's game scores.

## Virtues: +4

**Mastered Knowledge:** Educated priests with this Virtue add the +4 modifier to any rolls they make if their Mastered Knowledge is Church Knowledge or Church Lore.

## Flaws: -2

**The Divine's Gift of Talent:** Any Exceptional Talents, Knacks, Aptitudes, and Mythic Characteristics you have are the result of a gift from God. Your talents are tied into your personal piety, and if you are impious or sinful all your talents (listed above) go away for a time, until you are shrived and return to

God. If you use any one of the above Traits for Infernal or sinful purposes you lose all forever. Some of the people who are now saints had this Flaw. Magus: n/a.

## Background

Your origins might explain how you became involved with the Church, and might explain how the Church has affected you since.

### Virtues: +2

**Indulgences:** As a member of the Church you have indulgences to sell. However, if you sell your indulgences to anyone, word of your deeds may spread and the Pope may deny you further indulgences, and may punish you (or at least take your money).

**Faerie Blood:** No one with Faerie Blood can ever gain the Piety Ability. Indeed, the ordination of someone with Faerie Blood causes them to cry out in pain and run screaming from the church.

### Virtues: +3

**Clergy:** Necessary if you are a member of the clergy.

### Virtues: +4

**Failed Apprentice:** As a failed apprentice you have access to simple faith (you can have the Piety Ability), for you do not have the Gift or cannot fully manifest it. Full Magi do not usually have the Piety Ability.

### Virtues: +6

**Episcopal Aide:** Incorporating the Virtues of Greater Leadership, Clergy, and Educated (you get those Virtues!), this Virtue means you are a special attendant to a bishop. You may even be in line for the episcopate! This means your activities with the Covenant are limited: you cannot live there, and cannot just drop your duties to aid Covenant folk. Because of your intimacy with the bishopric, you add +2 to any Church Lore or Church Knowledge roll you make.

## Flaws: variable

**Vow:** Characters who break their vows to God have their Piety limited to one point, regardless of other pious actions performed, and lose one to two True Faith Points (if any are possessed).

## Flaws: -2

**Diabolic Upbringing:** Your parents were diabolists. This means you have an unreasoning fear of the Church and her officials, for, during your youth, the Church represented your own destruction.

## Equipment

Possessions you own can be close to the Divine, usually through blessing.

### Virtues: +2

**Blessed Armament:** The Protection value of your armor or Damage score of your weapon is increased by two. Against Infernal opponents your armor offers four extra points of protection, and your weapon's damage is increased by four.

This Virtue is a result of extended battle as a crusader, and repeated blessings by the clergy, or the result of a blessing you have personally sought out or been rewarded with for good deeds. The common crusader does not have this Virtue, but still receives blessing bonuses as a result of carrying a Righteous Dominion. If you join a Dominion of the Righteous Temper (i.e., join crusaders who pursue God's will), your weapon and armor bonuses are cumulative with the combat bonuses offered by the Dominion.

To preserve the benefits of your armament's bonuses you must live a reasonably pious life (perhaps you have taken a vow of chastity). Otherwise, your armament's blessing vanishes.

This Virtue can be taken twice if you want both blessed armor and a weapon.

# An Outward Sign

Although clergy have many Traits that indicate their personal devotion to God, they also possess abilities that demonstrate their outward devotion to God. Specifically, priests, nuns and monks can perform the Sacraments and blessings, both of which are infusions of the Divine into the world through the ordained character. (The character must be ordained in the Church to perform Sacraments and blessings; more than mere Piety is required.)

## THE SACRAMENTS

Perhaps one of the most important functions of the priest is the administration of the Sacraments. Indeed, it is the clergy's most important function, for the very souls of the common folk depend upon the rites. The ability to perform the Sacraments is so important that the Church can wield considerable power by refusing to perform them for people and countries. Excommunication and Interdict are potent tools in Mythic Europe.

The Sacraments are the outward signs of an inward grace, mysteries in and of themselves. Perhaps the greatest of these mysteries is how simple wine and wafers become the blood and body of Christ. As far as game effects for Sacraments go, there are no practical effects except those included in the listings below. It is not necessary to roll to determine the success of the Sacraments. The Church believes them to be efficacious even if applied improperly (but they must still be applied by an

ordained clergy person with a Piety score of at least one). The only time a roll is applied to the Sacraments is to determine how well the rites are received. Piety in Services, above, discusses these rolls.

Each Sacrament is a very special rite designed to bring participants closer to God.

### *Baptism*

Baptism usually takes place shortly after a child's birth, for an infant is tainted with original sin and its soul will never see Heaven if it dies before it is baptized into the community of the Church. Baptism is also used as a first step toward initiating pagan folk into the Church.

### *Confirmation*

The Sacrament of Confirmation brings a person into full membership of the Church. It also serves to mark people as adults, able to make their own decisions and subject to the Sacrament of Absolution.

### *Marriage*

The Sacrament of Marriage marks the joining of a man and a woman, the start of a new family. This is (usually) a very happy occasion. Sometimes a Just Dominion is invoked during



this Sacrament to serve witness to those swearing the oaths of fidelity and love (with appropriate results if those oaths are broken).

## Absolution

The Sacrament of Absolution is the process by which a priest intercedes through God to remove the stain of sin from a sinner, who confesses his sins and makes a promise to part from former evil ways. Penance is usually assigned by the priest at that time. When penance is fulfilled, absolution is in effect, and the participant is shrived and can receive the Eucharist.

## Communion

The Sacrament of the Eucharist is the most sacred and holy of the Sacraments. During the Sacrament's performance, the Celebrant changes wafers and wine into the body and blood of Christ. Participants eat of the Body of Christ and the priest drinks of the Blood of Christ. For a brief time after Communion participants receive a blessing (as per Blessings, below). They retain the effects of this blessing until any sin, no matter how minor, is performed.

## Ordination

This is the Sacrament which elevates a layperson to the order of the priesthood. It also gives said person an initial score in Piety, as it is a form of testing, and serves to forever mark the soul of the person being ordained. (Starting clerical characters must still purchase their Piety scores, though.)

## Unction

This Sacrament, sometimes called the Last Rites, speeds the soul of a dead person on its way to the next world. That world may be Heaven, Hell or Purgatory (although sinners who die go directly to Hell even without the Last Rites as demons come to claim them). Unction has been used in the past as a means of healing (in a Merciful Temper, using healing rules provided in the *The Mercy of God* section, above). The Archangel Uriel has special watch over this Sacrament and seraphim often arrive to escort its recipients to their reward in Purgatory.

# BLESSING

God sometimes manifests raw power through his clergy, through the auspice of blessing. Blessing is a way God can affect the real world according to His own rules.

Blessing is an ordained clergyperson's request of God to purify and protect something or someone. The Sacrament of Marriage is really just a blessing upon the union of man and woman. Before going on crusade, a knight receives a blessing from a parish priest, who blesses the knight's sword, armor, horse, and finally the knight himself. Animals are blessed for continued safety and fertility. The consecration of holy ground and the act of consecrating an altar is that of blessing. Blessing

## Blessing Chart

- 0-2 No effect. God is unimpressed by the Celebrant's sincerity. As far as the Celebrant knows, God's will is in effect, so no more blessing attempts are made
- 3+ The subject feels a brief shiver when blessed. The subject receives a Personality Trait of Harmonious +1 until harmed (until a Body Level is lost) in the current story
- 6+ The subject gains one extra Confidence or Faith Point, usable until the end of the current story, at which point it vanishes. This Point can only be gained once per story. If the subject has True Reason or False Faith, one Point is lost from the Trait for the duration of the story
- 9+ The subject feels safe and secure. Once per scene during the current story, the character receives +3 to Dodge, Parry and Soak totals for one Round. The blessed player announces the blessing's effect at the beginning of the Round in which he wishes to invoke these bonuses. A scene is considered a stretch of narrative in which setting and time are constant.
- 12+ The subject is especially calm and happy. Assign a temporary Personality Trait of Amiable +4 for the duration of the story.
- 14+ Target is Enfolded by a nearby angel. See *Angels*, in Chapter Four, for effects of Enfolding. For every unit of five, or fraction thereof, that the blessing roll exceeds 14, the subject is Enfolded for one minute. Thus, if the roll is 21, the subject is Enfolded for two minutes.

Keep in mind that this chart is merely a reference. You are encouraged to create whatever blessing result you like, as befits the blessing roll. After all, the Divine operates under no formula. For instance, a blessing recipient might receive a Divine Aura of rating one, carrying that Aura wherever the recipient goes. The Aura is lost when the recipient performs a sin. Recipients of the Eucharist can carry such an Aura.

is the single most practical and common thing that a priest does, yet it is a numinous force which can have a very real effect in the medieval paradigm of Mythic Europe.

## Storyguiding Blessings

It is important to remember that priests are not spell casters. Rather, they (including monks and nuns) are the focus for and controllers of the esoteric power of the Divine on earth. They focus and control the force of the Dominion. Because of this, a clergyperson who blesses something is not consciously



attempting to achieve a specific effect. He is not specifically trying to cure or heal, ward or guide. The clergyperson simply asks God to help the subject of the blessing in the way that God deems best.

The relative success of the cleric's efforts in requesting a blessing are reflected by a die roll. For a wordless blessing, use Presence + Piety + a stress die. For a worded blessing, spoken aloud in a clear voice, use Communication + Piety + a stress die and refer to the *Blessing Chart*. No Botch checks are made with these stress rolls, as God does not impose a punishment in response to a request for mercy. (Faith Points cannot be used to bring about a blessing because True Faith is a personal phenomenon, not one that can be imparted upon others.)

Playing a clergyperson can be quite frustrating, however, if one has absolutely no control over what one's blessing does. In play, clergy can have a certain amount of control over a blessing's effect if their blessing requests are particularly humble. The control factor lies mainly in the type and name of the blessing. The player states what effect is desired and the Storyguide assigns an Ease Factor based on the magnitude of the request. The Storyguide never reveals that Ease Factor as doing so would be revealing God's will. The Storyguide may also know that God has a different fate in store for a subject than requested by a blessing priest. The Storyguide may therefore disallow a blessing request from the outset. The requesting priest does not know his blessing has failed until the desired effect has clearly failed to manifest.

Note that the Blessing Chart is for the blessing of Christians, their possessions, and their animals. For the effects of blessings on non-Christians and those belonging to other supernatural powers, see *Blessing the Other Powers*.

It's advised that the Storyguide make rolls on the *Blessing Chart* on players' behalf. The will of God is beyond humanity, so players should not have an idea of blessing results until they manifest.

## Sanctification (Long-Term Blessing)

When something is blessed, it is set aside in the eyes of God as something that is particularly holy. A subject that is blessed often, and retains that blessing, is considered sanctified. Sanctified places, people and things are usually of particular importance to the Church. For instance, sanctification is performed on church altars and grounds, as they are blessed at specific times throughout the ecclesiastical year. Furthermore, when a king is crowned he is sanctified. He is blessed throughout his reign, both to ensure that he reigns with a just hand, and to remind him that the Church is the dominant force behind his power. Though a king rules, he rules by Divine Right.

The effects of sanctification are more an element of the story than game mechanics. However, sanctification can be reflected in game terms by many means. Subjects of repeated blessing might receive blessing rolls (above) with twice the Celebrant's normal Piety score. Sanctified subjects might also have Divine Auras of two to three, radiating to a ten-foot radius. A sanctified altar, on the other hand, usually has an even higher

Aura rating because of its constant use in holy rituals. Generally speaking, sanctifications can be interpreted in game terms by whatever means you, as Storyguide, require to tell a story.

An item usually remains sanctified until its repeated blessings are no longer carried out, or until it becomes sullied in some way. For a sanctified person, any blessings may be lost upon performance of a sin, no matter how minor.

Some people, however, stay continually sanctified, such as when a king is crowned, or a knight aspersed for crusade. It is not surprising, then, that these two both defend and promote the temporal power of the Church. Sometimes those who are sanctified develop Divine Virtues that they see as gifts from Heaven, such as the power of a king to cure scrofula. These Divine gifts are assigned by the Storyguide and vanish when the sanctified state is abandoned.

## The Physical Act of Blessing

Blessings usually take place in the following manner: the priest prays, asking the Divine to focus His attention on the priest. The priest then asks God to bless the object, person or place in question, sometimes describing a need or reason. The priest then indicates the person, place or thing through some form of body language — usually a touch but sometimes a sacred salute. Sometimes holy water, incense or chrism (sacred oil) is used, either sprayed in the air by hand or sprinkled using a pine bough.

Of course, all this is ritual. The important part is the intent, and if a member of the clergy intends to bless someone, it matters little whether the blessed one is aspersed with oil or with holy water, as long as the priest is clear and sure as to what he (or she — nuns can bless too) is doing.

## Blessing the Other Powers

Since the power of the blessing flows from the True Emphyrean, which is the supreme force, the other, lesser supernatural powers can be affected by blessings. Each reacts in a different way.

### Faerie

Blessing a faerie causes it discomfort, pain and even injury in extreme cases (loss of a Body Level on a blessing roll of 8+). Blessing can cause a faerie to revert to its true form, and faerie coinage and food that are blessed vanish or change back to their true forms.

Faeries do not bother or harm those who have recently been blessed. They even seek to undo a blessing before it can be performed. Those which exist in the Dominion have been known to put wine in church holy water, to prevent local clergy from chasing faeries from their homes, as when irritated housewives request that priests come to "asperse" houses of the Fay.

Powerful faeries (those with Might scores of 25+) aren't hurt as much as they're angered at being blessed. They may still be exposed for what they are, and driven off by a blessing, but,



they cause considerable hardship and damage in the process. Note that the mortal habit of "blessing" someone who sneezes is extremely offensive to faeries, who take all blessings very seriously, whether sincerely meant or not.

Characters with faerie-related Virtues and Flaws are not necessarily harmed or made uncomfortable by blessings, but their faerie nature is made evident. The priest administering the blessing recognizes the Fay within the character, and may draw others' attention to it.

A sufficiently effective blessing (roll of 10+) performed on a Faerie locale usually reveals the place for what it really is. If a Faerie clearing is hidden from mundane people, but its vicinity is blessed, the priest can find the clearing while the blessing is effective. The blessing is effective until a human performs a sin in the clearing, or until a few hours or days pass (or when night falls).

### *Infernal*

Blessing someone or something associated with the Infernal usually causes said entity great discomfort and pain. If the blessing roll is 6+, the subject must make a Brave stress roll against an Ease Factor of 6. If failed, the subject flees in terror from the priest. If the Brave roll is Botched, the subject suffers a Body Level of damage as well. If the blessing roll is 9+, it causes the subject a Body Level of damage and escape is mandatory. Depending on the situation, powerful demons may be able to endure this pain and refrain from fleeing. Demons that possess

people may also remain in their hosts during a blessing (Exorcism rules in Chapter Five are required to drive out a possessing demon).

These Brave rolls and lost Body Levels apply to all beings of the Infernal, including most demons, diabolists (anyone with a Hierarchy score) and creatures of Hell. Characters with Infernal Flaws might also be harmed by a blessing, but are more likely to be driven from the area instead.

A Infernal locale that is blessed (on a roll of 9+) has its Infernal Aura reduced by one to three. If the Aura is already one to three, it is reduced to zero and temporary loses all Infernal bond. The Aura remains in this state until some sin is performed in the area.

Infernal items can be blessed as well. Their powers do not function under a sufficiently effective blessing (roll of 9+); this blessing can last for a matter of hours or days.

### *Magical*

Blessing a Magus truly annoys him or her, for (on a blessing roll of 10+) it makes the Magus the centerpoint of a Calm Dominion, level one to three (Storyguide's choice, based on the relative success of the blessing roll), for as long as one to three hours (usually the length of time between one liturgical office and another). Of course, the blessing can be undone if the Magus makes a specific effort to sin grievously in the interim, at which point his or her soul is put in more pressing danger (see the boxed insert, *The Hand of God is Upon You*). The blessed Dominion imposed radiates outward from the Magus and has the same effect as a normal Dominion (see *Ars Magica*, p. 308). It is perhaps for this reason that Magi avoid allowing clergy into their Covenants, and often request that clergy not bless them.

A similar blessing placed upon a magical creature causes it to suffer a penalty to all rolls equal to the Aura rating of the imposed Dominion (one to three). An additional Botch die is also rolled for each point of that Dominion.

A blessing (roll of 10+) placed upon a Magical place gives it a Dominion Aura of one to three. A Divine Aura resulting from a blessing upon a place supersedes the natural Magic Aura of the place until the blessing can be undone. The blessing can be undone by large-scale use of magic (such as a recasting of a Covenant's *Aegis of the Hearth* spell), or by a large-scale sin performed by many area inhabitants.

A blessing (roll 10+) placed upon a Magical item renders the item useless unless its powers are applied to some corrupt or sinful action, at which point its Magical properties are returned. However, the sinful action required might draw the attention of demons and the wrath of God. The arrival of a particularly magical day of the year might also lift a blessing from an item, as it might from a place.

### *Reason*

A blessing (roll 10+) placed upon an area of Reason imposes a Divine Aura, rated one to three, on the place. Under this Aura, scholarly books seem composed of gibberish, and

### CHAPTER THREE

uses for instruments of investigation are forgotten. Only people with True Reason retain their former knowledge. The blessing can be undone by a proclamation of rationality, which undermines orthodox Church doctrine, or by the quotation of scholarly works by someone from the area of Reason (this person is probably one with True Reason).

Blessings performed on single objects of Reason cause said objects' functions and content to be obscured (on a roll of 8+).

Blessings performed on a single person (roll of 8+) who belongs to an area of Reason make that person forget his former understanding. (People with True Reason cannot be made to forget by a blessing.) A person who has forgotten his former knowledge may reacquire it by being once more immersed in Reason; this is usually performed by someone with True Reason (i.e., the person with True Reason reads from scholarly texts in the blessed's presence).

## Excerpt of a letter from Maril, of House Bonisagus

*To Amicus Marius, Greetings!*

Long have we discussed the simple questions that seem always to elude us, and I wish now to answer the question you last put to me.

You asked me how I came upon the sweet path of light that I now tread. Though I cannot explain the very innermost workings of my soul, I feel it is only fitting that I offer you a narrative of the events that transpired to give me the peace I now have. Perhaps my words will serve to start your own feet down the same path. I can only pray that it will be so.

Like many of my Bonisagus colleagues, I have often pondered the problem of vis's limited nature. I sought to work within our Art to add volume to that quantity which I already possessed. Working with the Laws of Similarity, I sought to call like to like, creating vis out of the ether with a *Creo Vim* spell, Doubling the Mystical Substance. Such a working, is, of course, outside the lunar veil, and thus truly beyond the scope of the Arts. However, I was given over frequently to the sin of Pride, and felt that with my superior experience, I could, given time and experience, pierce the veil.

The spell itself was long and required my fullest concentration, being ritual in nature. At the critical moment, I focused my whole Gift on the sum total of vis I myself possessed. It seemed to me that there was some change; unfortunately (or fortunately, considering how the event has inclined my heart and mind to God) the spell went awry at that point. There was an explosion of a sort not usually seen even within a Flambeau enclave. Though I managed to escaped unburnt I could not evade the mystical backlash of the vis-rich spell. When my colleagues in the Covenant found me I was near death.

They placed me in my bed, within my own chambers, expecting me to die or pass into Twilight by that evening. Instead, I lay still for many days before I awoke. It was during this time that I had a vision — or perhaps my soul did briefly flee my body. Whatever occurred, the experience had a profound effect upon me.

I was lying in my bed. Suddenly I could see myself as if I hovered, bodiless, above my own dying form. I looked upon my body for a short while, then I seemed to drift upwards. As I rose into the darkness I felt myself lighter than the lightest feather. At



last, I stood somehow before the great gates of a city. My whole being was filled with joy at the merest sight of the city; I approached the gates to enter into it, sure that bliss lay before me.

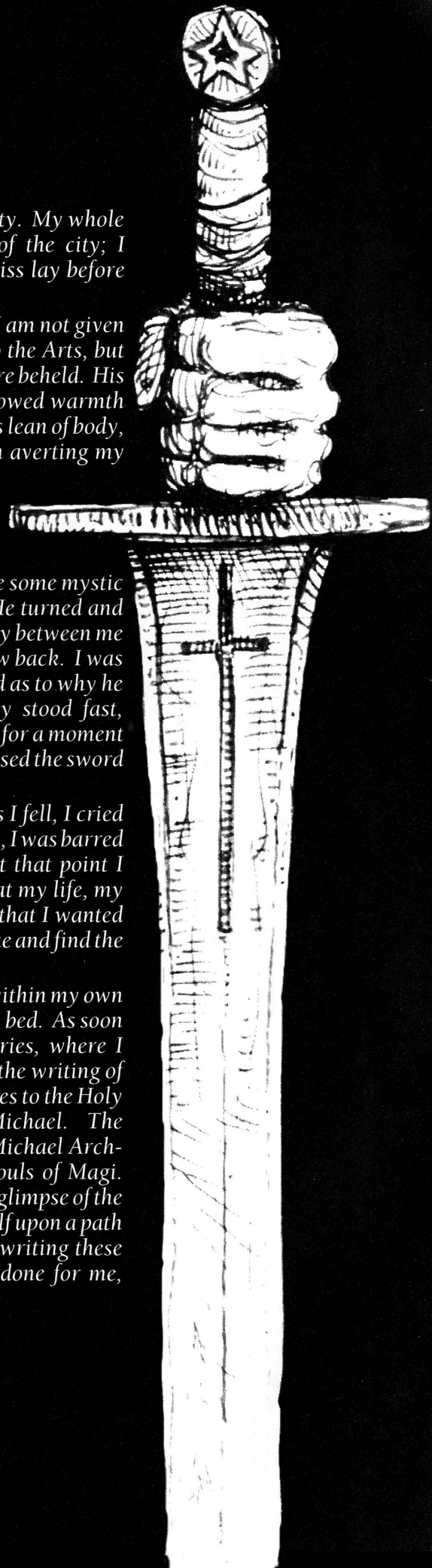
At that moment, a being appeared before me. I am not given to admiring the physical form, devoted as I am to the Arts, but his face was radiant with a beauty I had never before beheld. His expression was stern, but within his eyes there glowed warmth and — I must say it — a love unparalleled. He was lean of body, clad in armor so bright I could barely keep from averting my eyes. The apparition leaned upon the hilt of a long sword that gleamed brightly with golden light. Behind him flowed a golden-red light, like the illumination from a great fire.

I moved to the gate, thinking this being must be some mystic escort, come to take me into the wondrous city. He turned and pulled his sword, extending it to the air so that it lay between me and the city. The blade burst into flame, and I drew back. I was confused and looked to his face, seeking some word as to why he barred my way. He did not speak. He simply stood fast, regarding me with a dispassionate gaze. I thought for a moment I saw a hint of sorrow cross his face, and then he raised the sword toward me, and I fell back.

I felt myself falling as over an endless cliff. As I fell, I cried aloud, for I knew that having seen that place of bliss, I was barred from it, for reasons I did not yet understand. At that point I despaired as I had never done before, for I saw that my life, my work in the Art, was all but a game. I knew then that I wanted nothing more from my life than to return to that gate and find the way open to me, whatever the price.

Abruptly I awoke to find myself whole again, within my own body. It was some days before I could rise from my bed. As soon as I could do so, though, I sought out the libraries, where I attempted to make meaning of my vision. Within the writing of our own blessed Saint Neriuss I discovered references to the Holy Warrior and Guardian of the Gates of Eden, Michael. The commander himself of the Heavenly Host, Saint Michael Archangel has special dominion over the imperiled souls of Magi. Reading the words of Neriuss and remembering my glimpse of the bliss of God's holy realm, I decided then to set myself upon a path that would give me a share of that joy. I hope in writing these words, I can do for you what Saint Neriuss has done for me, guiding you onto that same sweet path to God.

Your sister in the Arts,  
Maril





# THE UNSEEN WORLD

## CHAPTER FOUR



beyond the everyday world of rocks, trees, air and grass, there lies a world that is unseen, unknown, but not unheard of. Every Christian in Mythic Europe has heard tales of this unseen land this New Jerusalem, this True Emyprean where God and His angels dwell, where the blessed saints along with Mary ,Mother of God live and praise His holy name. This place is the ultimate reward. This is what gives each peasant the strength to continue, to muddle through a life of pain,, toil, struggle, ignorance, famine and bitterness. It is only through the veil of tears that the true reward eternal peace and rest, happiness and perfection in the True City—maybe glimpsed.

Heaven, angels, saints and all things of the Unseen World are what make up the focus of this section of Pax Dei. Without the essence of the Divine that permeates the realms, all would seem dull, lifeless, without color or flavor. Even Hell would burn dim were it not for the light of Heaven.

We begin our explanation of the Divine with a brief discussion of the nature of the universe, and where everything is located, so the reader may learn the true place of things.

### THE TRUE EMPYREAN

Far "above" the world there is the True Emyprean. It is the Aura of Divine might in which Heaven resides. The True Emyprean is unreachable through Hermetic magic as it is outside the Lunar Sphere. Still, characters may journey near to that realm through the auspice of Divine *regio*.

It is thought by some Mythic European theologians and philosophers that the True Emyprean casts both the Shadow Emyprean (earth's power) and the Ash Emyprean (Hell's

power), like the sun casts shadows on a winter's morning. The True Emyprean spiritually illuminates our world. One of the ways it does so is through the power of the Dominion. The Dominion is an Aura of Divine power focused and propagated through faith and belief in God. Because it is so "filtered " the power of the Dominion is not the same as the Divine power of the True Emyprean. The Dominion cannot create *regio*, for the nature of the Dominion is to spread outward, not "upward." Only through the mysteries of the Divine itself— angels True Faith, and the saints — can Divine *regio* come into being and these places are areas of reality that come closest to reaching the True Emyprean. Indeed, the highest Divine *regio* enable travel near the realm of Heaven.

### THE SHADOW EMPYREAN

The Emyprean which surrounds Mythic Europe's reality is the Shadow Emyprean. Many realms exist in it, floating like bubbles in water. Among these realms are the spiritual Near and Far Lands, the Twilight Void, Arcadia, Purgatory and many of the special lands of the Old Gods. The Shadow Emyprean is also the source of Hermetic magic, as source of the Platonic Forms which enable the Hermetic Forms to manifest. However, as the True Emyprean is the greatest of all forces, the Shadow Emyprean would not exist unless God willed it to. The vaunted powers of Magi exist only through God's sufferance. Since the Dominion is a reflection of the True Emyprean's power, the Dominion suppresses the power of Magi on earth.



## THE FALSE (OR ASH) EMPYREAN

Hell is the nadir of the Light and is the place where the Shadow grows into Darkness. Hell resides within the False Empyrean, basking in the unholy glow of maelic fires. Still, this place of damnation and hellfire exists by the will of the Unmoved Mover, who created it as a place of punishment for Lucifer, the brightest of His archangels. Through the grace of God exists the Ash Empyrean, and it would not exist if God did not wish it so.

## THE OMNIPOTENCE OF THE DIVINE

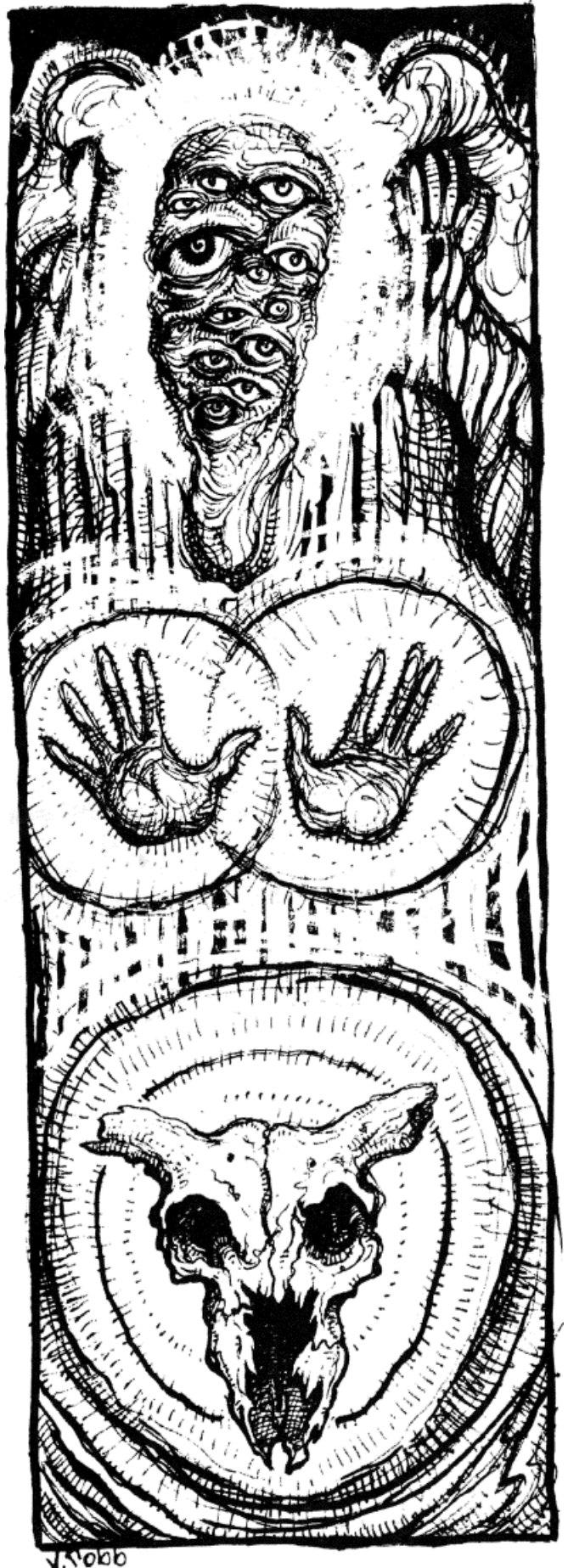
It is through the grace and might of God that all things exist. If God did not wish it so, the earth would not be. God could eliminate Satan and all his dark powers with but a snap of His fingers. Why He does not do so is a central mystery of the Church. Why He allows Satan to interfere with humanity while He only rarely does so (and even then at the request of the faithful) is also a mystery. In fact, most things about the Divine are so mysterious that no one, not even the holiest of holy folk, understands them.

The Divine is all-powerful, but you, as Storyguide, should resist the urge to overwhelm characters and players when introducing the Divine into a story. God seeks to work silently, in the background, without causing much disturbance. Why this is another mystery. Since God works in such mysterious ways, you do not have to rationalize why God does or does not do something. God is an enigma. Because He is so mysterious, He does not have to explain His actions. Neither do you.

Speaking in terms of game mechanics, there is very little one can do to hurt, injure or drive away the Divine, including its angels. No Aura of the True or Shadow Empyrean – including the Divine, Faerie, Magical or Rational – hinders truly Divine beings. That is, beings belonging to the True Empyrean itself are not affected by lesser powers. On the other hand, creatures of Divine power that exist on earth are still affected by other supernatural Auras (as indicated in *Ars Magica*, p. 308). The only supernatural power that does cause truly Divine beings trouble is the Infernal. God does not want His angels dwelling in Infernal Auras (as the Infernal is where the fallen angels reside), and so Divine angels shrink away from Infernal places (they suffer the Aura penalties discussed on p. 308, and suffer some other effects discussed in this chapter).

## PARADISO: TRAVELS IN THE TRUE EMPYREAN

Although it is not possible for characters to enter Heaven bodily, it might be possible for the holiest among them to





experience visions of it, and of the True Empyrean which surrounds it.

The closest that a bodied-soul is able to come to Heaven is Purgatory (which is accessible to bodied-souls, although extremely difficult to find and harder to break into, as it is guarded by Saint Uriel, the Angel of Death). Once in Purgatory a bodied-soul can even reach the gateway to the city of New Jerusalem, but cannot pass through. Those approaching Heaven's gateway are turned back by Saint Michael.

## THIS MORTAL COIL

Peasants endure the everyday toils, pains and problems of a world where they are powerless and considered slightly better than cattle, in the hope that they will be rewarded in the next life, in Heaven. If nothing else, the Church teaches peasants that their function in the natural scheme of things is to toil and work, and that in Heaven there is no toil, no disease and no sorrow. This is a powerful lesson, one readily accepted by common folk. In turn, hope for salvation makes peasants even more loyal to the Church, the gateway through which they must pass to attain their reward. It is perhaps in hope of salvation that commoners do not constantly try to raise their social status. Hope for salvation might also explain why peasants are wary of contacting Magi, who themselves endanger their immortal souls.

Although still commoners, covenfolk often mistrust Church doctrine, particularly that which restricts social status and salvation. Church doctrine seems particularly questionable when covenfolk are encouraged to rise in rank according to their prowess, intelligence and skills. Allowed to succeed based on their merits, common covenfolk are allowed to realize their full potential, which the Church would deny. And, allowed freedom of thought and belief, covenfolk are not so superstitious of Magi. If the Church unfairly inhibits the common man, maybe it unfairly promotes hostility toward Magi, who deny its social dogma by their existence. Despite all this, the societal conditioning covenfolk retain from their previous lives often stays with them, even after observing the wonders of magic. Not all are as open-minded as their fellows, while some may actually believe the Church is the only way, seeing Magi as lords no different from any others who would abuse them.

## NEW JERUSALEM, THE CITY OF HEAVEN

What does Heaven look like? Heaven is perceived differently by each person who seeks it as reward. For instance, some in the south of France view Heaven as a place where the souls of virtuous women are courted and wooed, just as they were in life, by the souls of virtuous knights, making Heaven one huge celebratory ball.

In 13th Century Mythic Europe, Heaven is commonly thought of as a great city, like Paris or Rome, surrounded by mountains dedicated to the majesty of God. There are beautiful

mansions everywhere, as everyone in Heaven has a beautiful palace in which to live. The streets are lined with true gold, which is like glass in its transparency and purity.

In the center of the city there is believed to be a great cathedral, where God, the Father, sits enthroned with Christ at his right and the Holy Spirit at his left. The souls of Christian dead who have ascended into Heaven look up at the Godhead in wonder and openly worship Him. Angels flit back and forth carrying messages and singing His praises. Occasionally a sinner on earth repents great sin and comes into the fold of God's community, at which a great chorus of angels is assembled to sing hosannahs. And, when the Church is threatened on earth, the City's huge cathedral bells ring out. Saint Michael marshals a flight of angels in spiritual form to descend to the Shadow Empyrean and aid those who defend the Church.

Mary, Mother of God, can be seen in the City's cathedral with all the other saints. Each of these souls has a place of repose where he or she is able to listen to prayers brought by cherubim, and may proceed to the Court of Heaven to intercede on behalf of petitioners. Mary's place of repose is a beautiful flower garden, with a deep pool of healing water and a deep cave opening nearby. The water makes musical sounds that fall pleasantly on her ear as she is waited on by angels and those souls who were particularly devoted to her in life.

## EDEN, THE GARDEN OF PARADISE

Eden is forever forbidden to mankind, as God cast Adam and Eve out of their earthly paradise. Two angels, seraphim under the command of Michael, stand guard outside the gates to the Garden of Eden. Great treasures wait within, and it is possible that, since Eden is an actual physical place (although definitely located within a Divine regio) it might be possible to circumvent the Heavenly watchers and enter the Garden. A journey into Eden would be wondrous indeed, allowing humanity to once again run along the perfect paths, streams and deep blue pools of that unspoiled land. Or, perhaps Satan himself holds sway and has transformed it into a place where plants and trees rip at flesh, the sky is dark, and everything is foul and rotten (except where God's power remains). For one version of Eden, see the *Ars Magica* Second Edition supplement, *A Winter's Tale*.

## PURGATORY

Purgatory is the interim place where souls buried in Christian ceremony go to do penance for the sins of their lives. After that penance they ascend into Heaven. Holy folk, however, like saints-to-be and those with True Faith, go directly to Heaven upon death. In Purgatory there are fires just like those of Hell, but these fires are slightly more bearable, for the tormented soul is assured of going to Heaven after spending her allotted time and after performing her allotted penance.

Upon death, a soul is collected by the Archangel Uriel (see the *Ultimate Divisibility of Archangels*, below) and taken to the River of Life, where the soul is left in the care of a seraph under the archangel's command. The seraphim herd newly dead souls into a barge and set out on the great Dark River. The barge sails into a deep fog as the seraphim pole the craft along until it reaches the Nether Shore, the uttermost extent of the country of Purgatory. Once there, the souls are herded into lines that pass through a temple-like structure. In the temple other seraphim record each soul's entry and describe the years and kind of penance each must do during its stay in the country. Seraphim escort the penitents to their specific areas of punishment, where souls endure the cleansing flame of purging. Above the souls, the holy light of Heaven shines like the sun on a hot summer day. All who suffer look to that Light, looking forward to the day their penance will end and they will be able to rise into the City of Heaven.

In Purgatory, those tainted with sin are literally heavy with it, and colored dull gray. When they lose their sins, or atone for them, they gradually grow brighter and brighter, lighter and lighter, until they literally fly up, ascending into Heaven. This flight is usually accompanied by seraphim or cherubim who provide a gende escort.

Since souls in Purgatory are not completely corrupt, seraphim or cherubim sometimes Enfold (see below) a tortured soul, offering brief respite from penance. The angels show unfortunate souls that God is indeed merciful, and that a lifetime of virtue is meaningful.



On the other hand, moderately sinful people are often given special punishments to help them reform. For example, lazy people are forced to work at mindless tasks until they overcome their laziness. It is not possible for a soul in Purgatory to lose its standing as a penitent unless it ascends. The fate of the penitent is frozen once the penitent is dead, and if the soul in Purgatory does not reform, it remains there forever. People who say masses and prayers for departed souls can help shorten the departed's time in Purgatory, thus expediting entry into Heaven.

Purgatory lies on the border between the Shadow Empyrean and the True Empyrean. Purgatory is therefore a very important place, not just because of its value to Christian souls. As God dwells in the True Empyrean, and the True Empyrean is separated from the Shadow by Purgatory, God must interact with His creations at a distance (He could come closer, but His own rules deny Him from doing so). Thus, He interacts with Creation by using His Divine arms and legs, the messengers of His will that can travel anywhere. These messengers are called angels.

Purgatory lies on the fringe of the Shadow Empyrean and has no corresponding place in the material world. Travelers of the spirit world can reach Purgatory, but journeys there are considered to be unfamiliar destinations in the Far Lands, regardless of whether the person sought was known if life or as a spirit. (Spirit world travelers can never travel to Heaven or Hell themselves, though.) Part of the difficulty of the journey to Purgatory is getting past the guard, Uriel, and if a Travel roll to the place is successful, but Uriel still blocks the way, the attempt automatically fails. People who physically enter the spirit world cannot travel to Purgatory.

Note: Souls, including those with spirits attached, that have gone on to Purgatory are beyond the reach of people still in the physical world. Such souls cannot be contacted from the living world by means of magic because they are now in the Divine purview. However, traveling to and entering Purgatory does allow a living person to contact a soul, though that soul cannot leave Purgatory except by means of transcendence to Heaven.

## Angels

What are angels? The word angel comes from *angelos*, or messenger. Angels, however, are not mere Divine messengers, but rather manifestations of God's will embodied in spirit form. Angels are outside the bounds of physical reality and are tied directly to the True Empyrean.

An angel's perception is causal-based. That is, an angel sees not just something or someone, but also "sees" all the causes and effects that make up that something or someone. An angel does this intuitively and automatically. Angels are not logical, and do not understand logical progression. To them, things are or they aren't, according to the will of God. See the boxed insert on *Causal-Based Perception* for an example of how this perception operates.

## Causal-Based Perception

Because angels see things the way they do, they do not always impart information as humans do. Angels have access to the knowledge of God, and are thus nearly omniscient, and do not need or understand explanation of things beyond what they already consider obvious. Thus, humans blessed enough to communicate with angels might not fully understand angelic intent. It is possible that a given angel, used to the linear perception of mankind, might be able to relate better to humanity than some, but most communicate as in the example below.

Angel: *"Beware the man in the gray hat."*

Magus: *"Why? Because he's got Infernal power? Because he's going to hurt me? Because he's from Doissetep?"*

Angel: *"Beware that man."*

Magus: *"What if I run away from him?"*

Angel: (silence)

At that point a man in a gray hat trips, falls, and splashes an entire mug of beer on the Magus.

The angel is able to see that the Magus is going to undergo an unpleasantly, and may even guess that if the beer is spilled on the Magus, the bishop that the Magus is supposed to meet later that day might think him intemperate, and refuse to help him. However, this warning is not imparted by the angel bit-by-bit through a logical string of inferences. It is given by the angel completely and totally, all at once. It is for humanity to speculate at what an angel intends. Thus does much of the Divine Mystery arise as well.

Note: Angelic communication is an excellent means for you, as Storyguide, to give out information in a way that does not endanger plotlines or ruin stories, because the information does not seem "complete." For example, an angel does not say "why" something is wrong, just that something is wrong. It's for the characters to learn what is wrong and to try to undo it. When the characters do something "right" the angel knows immediately, and is able to say so, but might not do so directly.

## THE COMMON PROPERTIES OF ANGELS

Angels do not normally possess physical bodies. It is another mystery of God that they can manifest bodies, swords which cut, and harps which cause the air to vibrate. It is literally impossible to kill an angel. It is possible that a character possessing Infernal power might cause an angel to leave an area or a place, but not out of fear. (It is God's will that His angels do not become exposed overmuch to the Infernal.) Angels in spirit form therefore do not have Body Levels, and are not physically damaged by anything (however, those assuming bodily form can have that form damaged — see *The Mantle of*

*the Angels*, below). Spirit-form angels do not need to eat, sleep or drink, either. They can speak any language ever created, including, if need be, the Black Tongue of Hell. Angels are infallible vessels of the word of God. That is, they know the word and will of God perfectly.

## THE MANTLE OF THE ANGELS

Angels can physically manifest in the world to pursue God's will by taking on a mortal Mantle. These Mantles are pure light made physical, though angels cannot stay in the realm of the Shadow Empyrean for long. Consequently, angels rarely physically manifest in the world. When they do manifest, angels have Body Levels and physical Traits. As they achieve a state as close to perfection as possible in the flawed world, angels' manifested bodies are very strong, agile and hearty. It is not usually the will of God that His angels be seen and understood, so He often cloaks them in guises of children, peddlers, old ones, goodwives and other innocuous forms. These bodied angels move from place to place in the Dominion, usually without being recognized for what they truly are. Still, an act of unrelenting kindness shown toward a bodied angel results in the kind person receiving a blessing of one kind or another.

## ANGELIC APPEARANCES

Angels sometimes manifest in a way other than spiritual or physical. They can suddenly appear to bodied-souls in the material world, glowing with Divine light. None can look directly at angels who assume (his form. When angels appear in this way they manifest a Dominion Aura (usually rated seven to nine) that spreads out from them to a specific distance, determined by their rank in the Host. This revelation of angels' spiritual bodies is the closest any mortal can come to glimpsing the True Face of God (before seeing it for him or herself). An angel who manifests in this way is said to "appear in full raiment."

As angels appearing in full raiment reveal something of their true selves, and appear in the physical world, it is possible for them to be harmed by an attack from an Infernal being or substance. Normal physical attacks do not cause harm, but Infernal ones can, assuming spell or power Penetration rolls equal or exceed an angel's Magic Resistance (Divine Might score + a stress die). Even these attacks do not actually damage the angel, but cause immense pain. The results of such pain are left to you, the Storyguide, to determine, but the angel might have to make a Concentration roll to perform whatever task is set before it. After suffering pain, the angel immediately flees the scene (according to God's will, to avoid angelic exposure to the Infernal).

## Angels and Wings

Angels are not required to have wings. Angels who wear Mantles usually take on forms which are quiet and unassuming: a wandering friar, a quiet child, a man in a cloak. The idea that angels have wings comes from the fact that, when they appear in full raiment, the glory of God streams out from them like wings. It's true that some angels, especially the cherubim, do have eagles' wings, and Michael's fiery wings are legendary. Angels can always fly, no matter what form they take, and regardless of whether they have wings. Treat this flight power as the equivalent of a Rego Auram spell, Level 30.

## ANGELS AND FREE WILL

Angels do not have free will, and thus are unable to sin. In this they are literally the Hand of God made coherent in spirit form (and physical form when they assume it). Angels do not allow anyone to worship them, do not crave worship, and correct anyone who tries to venerate them. They are not saints to be implored for intercession or aid. Angels act because God wills them to do so.

## The Moracula

There is a point in each angel's existence, after its creation, at which the angel must decide between God and Satan, whether to turn from God or to serve Him. This moment is

called the *moracula*, and it forever locks an angel into its chosen path. Those who choose Satan fall from Heaven, through the earth, and into Hell, becoming *depravati angeli*. Those who choose God remain in Heaven, receive their full raiment, and become *beati angeli*.

## ANGELS AND WAR

Another role that angels fill is that of the host of Heaven, the defending army of New Jerusalem, the City of Heaven. Saint Michael, Archangel (see below), is General of the host. Saints often serve in the host as advisors and *aides-de-camp*. If Heaven were ever to be invaded by some trick of the Dark One (not altogether impossible considering the power of the Shadow Empyrean when mated with the Ash...), the angels would array for battle and fight the hordes of Hell. Indeed, they already have. (See Chapter Three of The Maleficium for details on the first revolt in Heaven.)

## THE ENFOLDING

Angels are comforters as well as messengers. When they encounter suffering directly, and see (through their causal senses) that the suffering is not directly due to sin, angels sometimes Enfold bodied souls in an embrace. This Enfolding usually does nothing but give the soul a moment of peace, a breath or two of mercy. Sometimes it has the effect of inspiring the soul to greater achievements. While Enfolded, a soul is





perfectly safe, even if the soul's body is not. No magic or demon can lure the soul of a person who is Enfolded. If a character is Enfolded, his player may actually take a "timeless" moment out of play. The game pauses for this moment and the character may gain new insights into his situation given that he has no momentary earthly concerns (the player is allowed an opportunity to ponder ways out of a situation, and the Storyguide might offer some hints). Of course, in the chronology of the Saga, the Enfolding takes but a twinkling of an eye.

Sometimes an angel's Enfolding also heals or protects the physical body of a person. Some of the angels profiled below are capable of this physical mercy. A person who is wounded or dying can be Enfolded by an angel; this act gives the dying person's soul and spirit the solace needed to prepare for the next life. In this case, the Sacrament of Unction is superfluous.

Many saints were Enfolded by angels who appeared to them. Would-be saints may also experience such visitations.

## THE ENVISIONING

Angels (especially archangels) often manifest in the dreams of people. They bring with them symbols and places that are meaningful either to God's will or the subject's experience. Dream visions are a way for angels to impart messages from God. Cherubim are fond of Envisioning infants who are asleep, giving them dreams of the Kingdom of Heaven. Seraphim sometimes Envision themselves in the dreams of the clergy, pointing out potential problems and failures. It is far easier for

## Charal, Protector of the Host, Cherub of Communion

**Divine Might:** 20

**Vital Statistics:** Size -3, Intelligence (clever) +2, Perception (alert) +3, Strength (infused with energy) +2, Stamina (devoted to duty) +4, Presence (cross) -2, Communication (chastising) -2, Dexterity (nimble) +4, Quickness (swift) +3

**Personality Traits:** Dedicated +3, Merciful -1

**Confidence:** 6

**Combat Totals:** None

Dodge Defense +15 (21 Action), Soak +2 (8 Action)

**Encumbrance:** 0

**Abilities:** None

**Powers:**

Warn Rector, ReMe 10, 10 Points – If Charal has enough Might Points, he attempts to wake up the rector of the cathedral or otherwise alert the rector that the Host is being tampered with.

Control Small Door, ReHe 5, 2 Points – This power allows the angel to slam shut the lid to the Host if someone tampers with the sacred wafers.

**Description**

Charal does not manifest physically in the world, remaining in spirit form. However, he can be encountered by shamans and seen by others with specialized abilities. As a spirit, Charal appears as a glowing light about one foot across.

**Story**

Charal is in charge of protecting the wafers and reserved wine of the Holy Sacrament until they are needed or can be properly disposed of. This means he occasionally has to slap the hand of a clergy person who would illicitly partake of the holy wine. Charal also keeps Communion Toads from stealing pieces of the host.

an angel to Envision than it is for it to manifest in any other way. Even non-Christians can receive dream visions from angels (although Envisioning in the minds of diabolists is rare and often involves frightful scenes of damnation).

If an angel Envisions someone when that person is awake, the vision comes to the subject as a waking dream, and people may think the recipient mad. The person receiving the vision believes it to be reality and interacts with it and it alone, ignoring the outside world. The results of this upon the subject's material body are up to you to determine. The recipient's physical form might be spared harm by the equally protecting angel, or allowed to blunder into harm if many sins weigh upon the subject. It was a vision of a spearhead, the Longine's Spear (that which pierced Christ's side), that started



## Galariel, Cherub of the Candle

Galariel is responsible for annually blessing all the candles used in the parish of Southtown. She often listens to the rector practice his homily, applauding certain points and wrinkling her nose at others. She also watches the candle-makers at their craft and occasionally Enfolds one when he makes a mistake and burns himself. Galariel enjoys making sure that no small child is ever burned by the wax of the church candles, and makes sure that the lamp which hangs behind the altar continually stays lit. Galariel has had occasion to chase an astasian demon out of the chapel's cellar, but otherwise has faced little trouble. Even the church faerie, who also resides in the cellar, gets along with the cherub.

**Divine Might** 15 (she regains one point per Round spent in a holy fire, like that of a candle on an altar, or that of any blessed flame)

**Vital Statistics:** Size -5, Intelligence (quick-witted) +3, Perception (curious) +4, Strength (hearty) +1, Stamina (tenacious) +5, Presence (warm) +2, Communication (quiet) -3, Dexterity (graceful) +2, Quickness (flitting) +6

**Confidence:** 6

Personality Traits: Caring +3, Mischievous +1, Judgmental +3

### Combat Totals:

She has a tiny fire-dagger with which she can defend herself when she physically manifests, though this is rare.

**Fire-Dagger Totals:** First Strike +10, Attack +6, Damage +2 (Any successful strike starts a small fire which causes 1d10 + 10 damage in the Round following the successful Attack roll. Fire damage is +15 for Infernal opponents.)

Body Levels: OK, -3, Banished

Dodge Defense +15 (21 Action), Soak -4 (2 Action)

**Encumbrance:** 0

**Abilities:** None

**Powers:**

**Enfolding** — Galariel Enfolds those who burn themselves or who drip hot wax on themselves. Her physical embrace heals one Body Level from any kind of burn.

**Flit, ReAu 10, 1 Point per day** — This power allows Galariel to travel from candle to candle, flying quickly and in a reasonably straight line.

**Start Fire, Crlg 10, 1 Point** — Galariel is able to relight holy candles that have been extinguished for one reason or another.

**Peer into Flame, Inlg 20, 3 Points** — This power allows Galariel a glimpse of the future, and she can use it to warn those she cares about of danger, although she only does so if she feels it to be in accordance with God's will.

### Description

Galariel is a tiny cherub, looking almost like a little faerie girl with tiny, fiery wings and golden-red tresses. She stands about four inches tall, and her fire-dagger is always safely tucked in her belt. She has been mistaken for a will-o'-the-wisp. Galariel particularly loves scented candles and Enfolds anyone who brings her one to burn.

### Story

Because of the Magi's nature (which piques her interest), and because one of their party prays to God for assistance in getting a fire started in the dead of winter with wet wood and wet matches, Galariel appears to the characters. They probably assume she's a faerie, but her angelic nature is revealed if anyone is susceptible to or can sense Divine power. Galariel starts a fire if everyone in the group, including the Magi, prays to God in thanks for warmth.

the First Crusade. The holiness of the dream was proven when the spearhead was located by crusaders, in the very spot described by the vision.

## THE VOICE OF GOD

At times angels are completely filled with and taken over by God, who speaks directly through them in a booming voice. When this happens the angel glows brighter than the sun, forcing viewers to avert their eyes or be blinded. Since all are made in God's image, those hearing the voice of God cannot mistake it.

## The Host of God

There are many kinds of angels. Only three kinds of angels — the cherubim, the seraphim, and the archangels — fall into the perspective of this supplement because they interact most with humanity.

## THE CHERUBIM

The cherubim are usually clothed in the raiment of various Divine animals — lions, oxen, eagles — and are sometimes winged, sometimes not. Sometimes they look like small children. The cherubim are the lowest of the host, although they have the most duties as a whole. It is thought that cherubim carry particularly holy and earnest prayers directly from humanity to appropriate saints or the Divinity.

The cherubim, like thousands of tiny lights, constantly wander the earth's Dominion, watching out for those who have been baptized. They also keep an eye on Infernal beings, faeries and even Magi. Indeed, the astasians (demons that carry messages between Infernal beings) are sometimes blocked by cherubim who patrol the boundaries of the Dominion. The cherubim are God's eyes and ears. The holy beast in *The Winter's Tale*, p. 41, is a cherub.

Sometimes cherubim, in passing, Enfold those who behave virtuously (thus giving rise to the phrase, "an angel passed...," when conversation is at a lull.) The cherubim act as support forces, chief messengers and scouts for the heavenly host.

## THE SERAPHIM

Seraphim are usually garbed in the image of God—that is, in the image of humanity. It is the seraphim who constantly sing hosannahs in the City of Heaven, and it is the seraphim who are the major agents of the Divine on earth. Each consecrated altar, from the lowliest village shrine to the Lateran Church of the Pope, has at least one attendant seraph who watches over it. Furthermore, anyone with a Piety Ability score of 4+ has an attendant seraph who watches (and may subtly guide) the person. Angels of peace (guardian angels) are also seraphs, and tend those with the Guardian Angel Virtue. Any demon with an Infernal Might of 30+ that manifests on earth is also watched (but not interfered with) by an attendant seraph.

The seraphim are the sources of power behind the Tempers of the Dominion, in that they are the ones who supply each Temper with its powers and effects. Without a seraph of Mercy, the Merciful Dominion would not be possible. Thus, the Piety or True Faith of the Dominion's Celebrant attracts the proper seraph so the Dominion can be altered. Since seraphim (like all angels) have the ability to peer at a Celebrant and determine whether or not a change in Temper is warranted, they refuse to aid those Celebrants who would use the power of God for their own ends. Seraphim also Enfold people who are pious and virtuous in the face of oppression, sin and temptation. In addition to the other effects of the Enfolding, any virtuous Personality Trait of the person Enfolded receives a permanent bonus of +1.

In the plan of God's host, the seraphim are the noble knights. In battle they ride winged steeds made of pure light and wield swords made of God's wrath.

## THE ARCHANGELS

Though there are more than four archangels, the four most important and famous are Michael, Gabriel, Raphael and Uriel. Chapter Six discusses in detail how these archangels interact with Pious Magi.

### Saint Michael of the Sword

Guardian of Heaven, Watcher of Hell, Ward of the Order of Hermes, General of the Army of Heaven

Michael is the first of God's angels in the hierarchy of Heaven. Michael's former better, Lucifer, was defeated by Michael in single combat when Lucifer organized a revolt in Heaven. Michael can often be found in the high watchtowers of Heaven, ever vigilant for signs of attack on the Holy City. From his lofty perch, Michael commands the host, and seraphim constantly surround him, waiting silently for his word.

## Haniel, Angel of Peace

Haniel is said to have been Saint Nerius's guardian angel. She (for this angel usually assumed female form) often appeared to Nerius as he was on the verge of undertaking a dangerous mission, pointing Nerius in the right direction. Haniel apparently learned much lore from her direct superior, Uriel, through whom she received the knowledge of magic and magical formulas so that she could better protect and advise Nerius.

**Divine Might:** 60

**Vital Statistics:** Size 0, Intelligence (wise) +4, Perception (patient) +5, Strength (inspired might) +3, Stamina (vigorous) +5, Presence (alluring) +5, Communication (smooth voice) +1, Dexterity (even-handed) +3, Quickness (determined speed) +4

**Personality Traits:** Caring +3, Shrewd +2, Direct +3, Tolerant -2

**Confidence:** 7

**Combat Totals:**

Flaming Broadsword Totals\*: First Strike+10, Attack+15, Damage +20, Parry Defense +10 (16 Action)

**Body Levels:** OK, 0/0, -1, -3, -5, Banished

Dodge Defense +10 (16 Action), Soak +8 (14 Action)

\* see below

**Encumbrance:** 0

**Abilities:** None

**Powers:**

*Moving Through the Invisible*, ReCo 40, 5 Points — This power allows Haniel to take "short cuts" through Uriel's land, allowing instantaneous travel anywhere.

*Infernal Interdict*, ReVi 40, 8 Points — This power gives Haniel the ability to erect an Infernal ward around a person or persons at the request of those protected. The ward appears as an iridescent dome and prevents possession, *psychomachia*, obsession, and other magical Infernal attacks (except those which exceed Haniel's Magic Resistance). Haniel is unable to use this Divine Power unless she is specifically asked for aid.

*The Unrelenting Sword*, CrTe/Ig 25, 5 Points per Round — This power allows Haniel to invoke a huge flaming broadsword which she uses to protect those things of God that are under attack.

**Description**

When she appears in spirit form Haniel is a purplish-blue seraph with iridescent wings that seem to drip rainbow-colored light. Haniel physically manifests as a beautiful red-haired woman with everchanging rainbow eyes.

**Story**

Haniel is the watcher of the Order established in Nerius's name (see Chapter Six), and is responsible for watching Neriusians and potential Neriusians, and for protecting them when she can. Haniel often goes to Uriel for aid when she needs it. It is said that Haniel has fought several demons to protect the sainted Nerius's burial tomb from desecration.

## Akashak Angel of War

Akashak is an angelic warrior under the direct command of Saint Michael. He is often given the duty of delivering messages to God's army on earth — crusader knights as well as other holy warriors of God. Sometimes he manifests in order to fight demons who have also manifested. Akashak is knowledgeable of earthly weapons as well as heavenly ones and his skills reflect that knowledge. He often Enfolds those who have died giving their life for the Church, so that their last moments are peaceful and they may go directly to Purgatory or Heaven.

**Divine Might:** 60

**Vital Statistics:** Size 0, Intelligence (astute) +1, Perception (hawk-eyed) +4, Strength (broad shoulders) +5, Stamina (enduring) +6, Presence (noble) +4, Communication (silent) -3, Dexterity (swift actions) +5, Quickness (powerful stride) +4

**Personality Traits:** Stern +4, Unrelenting +3, Brave +4

**Confidence:** 8

**Weapons and Armor:**

Full Chain Mail

Greatsword Totals: First Strike +14, Attack +13, Damage +21, Parry Defense +10 (16 Action)

Light Crossbow Totals: Rate 1, Attack +10, Damage +10

Broadsword Totals: First Strike +12, Attack +14, Damage +18, Parry Defense +7 (13 Action)

Knight Shield Totals: Parry Defense +8 (14 Action)

**Encumbrance:** 0

**Other Combat Totals:**

Body Levels: OK, 0/0, -1/-1, -3, -5, Banished

Dodge Defense +8 (14 Action), Soak +19 (24 Action)

**Abilities:** None

**Powers:**

*The Heavenly Herald*, ReVi 30, 5 Points — Akashak can summon a cherub to his present location, who may then carry a message anywhere in the twinkling of an eye.

*Eyes of the Divine Hawk*, Mm 20, 2 Points — This power enables Akashak to see objects and people in great detail, even over long distances. This power penetrates illusions, particularly Infernally inspired ones.

*The Discerning Strike*, InVi 40, 2 Points — By touching (or striking) someone, Akashak can gain a great deal of information about the state of the victim's eternal soul, including whether or not the soul is currently destined for Heaven or Hell. This enables Akashak to make decisions about further action for or against the person.

*Saint Michael's Fiery Blessing*, Crlg/Te 25, 5 Points — With this power, Akashak can touch a mundane sword made of common steel and cause it to burn with holy flame. It then does +18 damage, or +25 against Infernal targets. These swords burn until sunrise or sunset, whichever comes first. The flame does not burn the sword's holder, nor does it mar the sword's steel in any fashion.

*Rally the Crusading Horde*, ReMe/Co 40, 20 Points — With this power, Akashak can cause a routed army of crusaders to receive Divine strength and confidence. This enables them to regain morale and resume their attack on a collective Brave Personality Trait roll of 3+. The power also heals each crusader of one Body Level of damage.

*Gift of the Perfect Mount*, MuAn 30, 5 Points — Akashak calls upon the power of the True Empyrean and infuses a living horse with it. This causes the horse to change, becoming stronger, faster and more hearty — a perfectly trained warhorse even if it was previously a common palfrey or a swaybacked pack horse. The horse usually changes to an all-white color and becomes highly intelligent. It is said that the King of France has one such blessed horse in his stables, although it will not allow him to ride it.

### *Perfect Mount*

**Divine Might:** 15

**Virtues and Flaws:** None

**Vital Statistics:** Size +3, Cunning (intuitive) +1, Perception (alert) +1, Strength (bulging muscles) +4, Stamina (enduring) +5, Presence (regal) +1, Communication n/a, Dexterity (graceful) +2, Quickness (pounding hooves) +2

**Personality Traits:** Spirited +3, Loyal +4, Brave +3

**Confidence:** 2

**Combat Totals:**

Hoof Totals: First Strike +8, Attack +8, Damage +12

Body Levels: OK, 0/0/0, -1/-1/-1, -3, -5, Incapacitated

**Fatigue Levels:** OK, 0/0/0, -1/-1/-1, -3, -5, Unconscious

Dodge Defense +2 (8 Action), Soak +12 (18 Action),

Fatigue +8

**Encumbrance:** 0

**Abilities:** None

**Powers:** None

**Vis:** 8 Vim, body

**Description**

Akashak's Mantle is that of a tall, muscular knight clad in silver armor, with perfect shining weapons, mounted on a noble horse that has received the *Gift of the Perfect Mount*. Akashak speaks very little, if at all, appearing stern and unflinching. He swiftly attacks any nearby enemies of God, including Magi who prove infidels.

**Story**

Characters in Iberia, at the scene of a battle against the Moors, witness a warrior stampeding through the enemy. None of the crusaders can identify the knight, but quickly rally behind him. Characters who can sense the Divine might recognize the power within Akashak. Characters who are at the battle in support of the Moors might find themselves face to face with Akashak. Even those who simply observe the battle, without helping Christian forces, may have to justify their inaction to the knight. Akashak's mere touch verifies the characters' moral imperatives, and he may act on his findings, good or bad.



less commands. Even in times of peace, Michael is never without his sword, the sword of God forged in the light of the True Flame, the Holy Spirit. Michael carries the sword even when he manifests on earth.

Michael commands the Watchers of Hell through nine lanterns; one is located on each level of Hell. (The Watchers are those devils who tally accumulated souls and enforce Infernal law.) These lanterns are thought to be the only light in that eternal dark, revealing the tortures the damned receive as punishment. Michael is able to manifest in Hell as well, and it is this ability, used to rebuke the Watchers, that keeps them in line. Because of Michael's post as highest Watcher of Hell, he presides at the Court of Judgment in Purgatory, where demons come to Accuse souls and take those who have sinned to Hell. Michael is charged with the guardianship of Eden. Two of his lieutenants always watch the gates of the Garden (see *A Winter's Tale* for more details).

Michael is the Ward of the Order of Hermes. He sends seraphim to watch Covenants and intuitively knows when a Magus tests the boundaries of lunar magic, attempting to intrude upon the domain of Heaven. Michael deals with these Magi himself through Envisioning (see *Envisioning*, above).

Michael is a puissant warrior, having defeated Lucifer even when the now-fallen angel was at the height of his glory in Heaven. Michael's symbol is the seraph, showing his ultimate dominion over the host. Michael appears as a fiery angel, wielding a great sword that is also of flame. His wings are twin fanned flames. His eyes are orange and yellow. Michael is steadfast, grim, unmoving and silent. He does not show mercy. He is stern and commanding.

Although Michael is traditionally recognized as a saint, he does not directly answer prayers addressed to him, for his duties as an angel preclude such. Seraphim are usually sent to handle prayers to him. In Heaven, a messenger seraph bearing a scroll with the fiery seal of Michael is given special privilege and is never hindered on its path.

## Saint Gabriel of the Horn

Herald of God, Keeper of the Book of Life, Governor of New Jerusalem, and Most Favored of Mary

Gabriel is destined to sound the horn on the Day of Judgment which will mark the end of the world, as described in the *Apocalypse* of John. As Herald of God, Gabriel is responsible for knowing the names of all those who enter the Kingdom of Heaven. He stands at the gates of New Jerusalem and calls aloud the name of each soul that enters.

As Herald, Gabriel is also responsible for the compilation of the Book of Life, which will be used at the judgment of the Quick and the Dead on the Day of Judgment.

He is the Governor of New Jerusalem, responsible for the upkeep and welfare of the City of Heaven's grounds and citizens. In the event of his being apprised of an Infernal attack on Heaven (most likely by Michael's warning), Gabriel will

sound his horn and call out the City's seraphim militia to defend the gates. As he is Governor of the Heavenly City, Gabriel is also patron of governors and those who care for cities.

Gabriel is the Guardian of the Holy Grail and it is only through his auspices that it may be recovered. As Grail guardian, Gabriel is directly responsible for the code of chivalry; chivalry is inspired by the ideals and virtues Gabriel has promoted through the Grail and its legends.

Gabriel is the most favored of Mary because he first appeared to her to announce, "*Hail Mary, full of Grace*" the annunciation of the Immaculate Conception. As Mary's favorite, Gabriel often attends her before the Divine Seat, and is personally responsible for seeing that prayers of supplication reach her.

Gabriel often Enfolds and Envisions women and children who are in danger, or who are in need of solace or wisdom. He has been known to Enfold women who cry out his name in the night, saving their physical lives.

Gabriel's symbol is the lion, which demonstrates his courage, nobility and strength, all of which are bestowed by God. In the army of God, Gabriel is always at Michael's right hand. He appears in a soft blue raiment, with blue-green wings that seem to pulse softly with rippling light. His eyes are soft green-blue.

## Saint Raphael the Merciful

Harper of the Heavenly Host, Lord of the Tempest, Archangel of Healing, Music, Peace, and Weather

Perhaps in contrast to Michael, Raphael bears no weapon, and is not a warrior. Raphael, in his guise as a healer, brings solace of mind, body and soul. He is concerned with every act of the Sacrament of Unction and is called on to aid in healing of all kinds. Raphael has on occasion come into conflict with Michael, specifically during cases when a soul pleads for mercy.

Raphael is also the scholar of Heaven and thus serves the Holy Word, Logos, directly. Through this service, Raphael can impart flashes of knowledge to mortals on earth; he often Enfolds and Envisions those who study the word of God, to encourage them. Raphael has a special place in his heart for the followers of Saint Neri.

Raphael's music heals, brings peace, lights the darkness, and causes the soul to take flight. He is the angel of the sun, and it is Raphael's duty to see that the sun rises every morning. He is often called upon to perform for the assembled multitudes of souls in the Great Cathedral of Heaven. Under his command, cherubim fly to die four winds and he directs them; the four winds are under Raphael's direct control. (Raphael has a special fondness for sailors and fishers, for they depend upon the wind. He occasionally intervenes directly in cases of fishermen caught in storms at sea.)





Raphael is concerned with the world and often travels there to study its events. He is perhaps the most approachable and most talkative of all the archangels in the sense that he is perfectly willing to share conversation with anyone who can comprehend him. Indeed, he enjoys exchanging information with mortals as the experience is quite novel for him. Even a few Magi have managed to call upon him from time to time, although the supplication they perform to bring him forth hardly compels him. Raphael is simply curious why someone might need him so badly that a ritual is performed just to reach him.

Although Raphael is peaceful, he can be angered. Abuse often raises his ire. When angered, Raphael's control of the everpresent air makes him a powerful foe. Even the gentlest of winds can sometimes turn into a terrible hurricane. Raphael's full nature, then, is embodied by his symbol, an eagle: proud, noble, flying high, but deadly.

## Saint Uriel the Wise

Watcher of Earth, Dark Angel, Angel of Death  
Uriel is the archangel most interested in the world and all that goes on in it. He oversees the Empyreans, making sure that the *mundus beati* (the world's holy) are safe, and is most often in the realm of Purgatory, where he ensures that the disposition of souls goes smoothly. Saint Uriel sees to it that souls destined

for Purgatory get there. Because he spends much time in the company of elderly and aged souls that he bears to the afterlife, Uriel has come close to the wisdom of God, and is considered extremely wise.

Because Uriel is the Angel of Death he is not particularly popular as a saint. It was Uriel who brought the final plague upon Egypt, on the night when the firstborn sons of all Egypt were slain. Uriel is the Governor and Watcher of Purgatory. As such, it is his responsibility to see that souls entrusted to his care are not harmed or molested, and to see that each and every soul works toward release from Purgatorial obligation. Travelers of the spirit world sometimes encounter Uriel or his lieutenants when trying to enter Purgatory.

Uriel's symbol is the ox, or bull, which represents the toil and work of life and the reality of Purgatory.

## The Infinite Divisibility of Archangels

Archangels can literally divide themselves into two or more utterly perfect copies, so that they may attend to more than one duty at a time. Thus, Michael can be guarding in the watchtowers of Heaven, commanding the army of God, and warding Hell all at the same time. There is no limit to the number of divisions an archangel can assume, because its essence is tied directly to the word of God, and God can command infinite actions simultaneously.



J. 1006

# MADE MANIFEST ON EARTH

## CHAPTER FIVE



he mysterious power of God exists in the True Empyrean, in Heaven, but sometimes small portions of that ultimate power are demonstrated on earth. These demonstrations do not make the Divine more tangible or measurable, nor do they offer insights into the Divine Mystery. Indeed, if anything, the miracles of God on earth make Him even more perplexing to humanity, as humanity cannot understand the motivation behind such events. However, such demonstrations of Divine power do remind the faithful that their dedication is not in vain.

### The Saints

Although angels are part of God's invisible army, moving silently through the world and acting as God's eyes and ears wherever they go, they are forbidden to intervene directly in the lives of the faithful save through carefully controlled circumstances. There are other members of the army of God, however, who have no such restrictions. They are those virtuous men and women who have ascended into Heaven and who can intercede on behalf of those who directly ask for aid. These beings are the saints.

Although the Church states that God loves the world, the Divine is far removed from humanity. Furthermore, the Divine cannot directly speak to most mortal souls, according to God's own restricting rules. Few humans therefore understand the Divine. One of the ways that the Divine can get closer to humanity is through the auspice of the saints.

The Apostle Paul spoke of members of the Church as if all were saints, and to some extent this is true. However, in Mythic Europe, only members of the Church who completely participate in the Divine ideal become recognized as saints. The first of these saints were martyrs. The word "martyr" means "witness," and early Christians gave up their lives as witness to the power of the Divine. The early Church would gather at the gravesites of these fallen Christians and venerate their names. Christians then began to gather on the anniversary of martyrs' deaths, to renew their memories of the departed, now born into heavenly Jerusalem. Eventually people came to believe that these martyrs could intercede on their behalf before God. What's more, martyrs' anniversaries became more and more glorious, turning into celebrations of the Christian souls' triumph.

Thus it is in the 13th century that most of the saints have a holy day and people continue to pray to them, based on a saint's particular virtue, or in hopes of gaining intercession before God.

### BECOMING A SAINT

Although the great age of the saints is past—few saints are declared anymore—people in the 13th century can still aspire to the Divine and may be recognized as saints. There are many means by which a person can aspire to the Divine and gain recognition for her virtue. Keep in mind, though, that saintly status can never be achieved through conscious effort. It is

gained for truly humble, pious deeds, not feats of self-advancement. The following are possible means to attain saintly status, and ones for which even players' characters could be recognized.

## The Ascetics

After the great age of persecution, after public faith in God was no longer punishable, the Church's holy men and women had to find new ways to witness God's power. Martyrdom was no longer a possibility. One school of thought believed a means to God was hardship, toil and pain in the ascetic life of the desert. This course was taken to emulate those who had been tortured and imprisoned for their beliefs.

Ascetic lifestyles are still practiced by some in the 13th century. Those who inflict self-flagellation upon themselves or live as hermits may seek unity with the Divine. However, in this late age the number of people living the ascetic life and truly abiding by its tenants is much reduced compared to earlier times.

## Virginity

Another way of life thought to bring closer proximity to the Divine involved the preservation of virginity. Many people who died for the Church also tended to be virgins, and at first their virginity was not a factor of praise. However, chastity did come to be valued and by the sixth century Paris was honoring Saint Genevieve. Chaste men like Saint Ambrose also found their way into the liturgical calendar of saints' days.

In the 13th century chastity is still valued by the Church and Divinities. However, amid the corruption of Mythic Europe, where any small pleasure is an escape from hardship and turmoil, few preserve their virginity.

## The Bishops

Although the early bishops were also martyrs, some of the later bishops, ordained after the acceptance of the Church, grew to be venerated alongside the first saints. These clergy were ranked among the saints because of the tortures they endured, the missionary tasks they undertook, and the fact that they accepted great responsibility in founding the Church.

The bishops of later Mythic Europe, though they have the potential to be virtuous and exuberant in their duties, rarely are. Those who perform their duties with veneration, and seek to preserve faith in the Divine, are recognized for their piety, but are rarely canonized. Even if they are, it is usually after death.

## Saints of the Gospel and Theological Reflection

In the fourth century and beginning of the fifth, the natal (natal day) of Jesus Christ was designated as a holy day, and with Him came his New Testament disciples and the saints of the time: Saint John the Baptist, Saint Stephen, Saint James, and Saint John the Evangelist. This canonization of saints was in

response to the Arian and Nestorian heresies, which were results of the Church's wish to honor individuals who had been the closest living servants of the word of God. Later, at Ephesus in A.D. 431, the cult of Saint Mary began as a result of further theological reflection. Finally, the archangels were also revered as saints; specifically included among them was Saint Michael, the archangel protector of Heaven.

What new saints may arise in the future is uncertain. Certainly many new factors in the Church and world may influence the process. The rise of the Cathars, for example, is accompanied by considerable reinterpretation of the Scriptures and the nature of virtue. Saints may therefore be canonized by new measures based on new religious thought. What's more, the infancy of new scientific thought may have some bearing on how the saints are perceived and respected. Reason applied to acts of faith may result in the devaluation of faithful acts, or may give rise to new respect for formerly "non-virtuous" acts.

## THE VENERATION OF SAINTS

Prior to A.D. 1171, when Pope Alexander III decreed otherwise, the celebration of saints' days was largely a function of which liturgical calendar each individual church chose to follow. Many martyrologies were written but many were inaccurate, perhaps as a result of Infernal tampering. In the decretal of 1171 the Pope commanded, "*Do not presume to decree religious veneration for anyone without the consent of the Roman Church.*" The Church took official control of how and when saints' days would be celebrated. However, in 13th century Mythic Europe there's no telling how many celebrate the saints according to the old ways, particularly in remote places where the Pope's decrees are only faintly heard.

Regardless of the precise day of worship, saints are venerated in two major ways. First and foremost, their names and lives are celebrated through the Church in its Mass, performed on special holidays for each saint and on days such as All Saints' Day (November 1). Saints are also regarded as role models. As such they are often requested, through prayer, to intercede before God on behalf of those for whom the petitioner cares. This intercession can involve somediing as practical as praying "*for the safety of my husband as he goes off to war,*" or something as spiritual as praying for a soul's salvation. The latter form of intercession may even be performed on behalf of a Magus who dies without coming to God by some other means.

The lives of the saints, or the ways in which they were martyred or gave witness, usually determine the saints' patronage. For example, Saint Gregory the Great was a chanter and teacher, and is the Patron Saint of Singers and Readers. Saint Sebastian was martyred by a rain of arrows from all sides. He is the Patron Saint of Archers. The cult of Saint Mary is exceedingly strong as Mary is a saint higher than most, often called *Regina Dei*, the Queen of Heaven.

## Some Important Saints

Listed below are some of the more famous Mythic European saints. You may use these saints in your stories or may create others. It's likely that most in the characters' Covenant have heard of these saints. Listed with each saint is his or her Piety score in life, which is preserved in Heaven.

**Saint Benedict** is creator of the Rule under which monasteries and nunneries across Mythic Europe exist and labor. Even those that take a different path from Saint Benedict base their Rule on his seminal work. Saint Benedict can be asked to intercede by monks and other religious people, and to keep them disciplined in the face of Satan's temptation.

Piety Rating: 10

**Saint Francis of Assisi** is a newly canonized saint. In life, he preached restraint, love, understanding, and the belief that knowledge and learning are means to grow closer to God. Those who pray to Saint Francis can expect to receive gifts of enlightenment. In addition, since the saint was well-known for his love of animals, he blesses and protects animals if asked to.

Piety Rating: 15

**Saint George** was a warrior and is very popular in England. With his flaming sword he slew a great dragon. Those knights who ride on crusade often ask Saint George to intervene for them, to keep their blades sharp. Wives also pray to him to spare their husbands in wartime. As he had a Divine lion as a companion for a time, that lion has become Saint George's symbol.

Piety Rating: 20

**Sante Fabia** of the Rose is an example of a regional saint who may or may not be accepted by the Church. Although Sante Fabia has been initially approved by the local see where she is venerated, her cult has not yet been accepted by the Pope, and it is die Pope who makes a saint in die Church. If the Pope does not accept Sante Fabia it is possible she will become a heretical saint. In this case, those who assemble to venerate her (like the sisters who live in an abbey dedicated to her) will be forced to disband.

Piety Rating: 8

## CREATING SAINTS

There are many saints and it is beyond the scope of this book to describe them all. Instead, we provide means by which you may define your own saints.

The chief virtue of a saint is his or her story, that which demonstrates the person's piety. Each saint should be involved in a tale of challenge and self-sacrifice in which the glory of God is preserved by the saint's actions. The story offers an example to those who listen to and put credence in the tale. Many readily available references describe the lives of saints. If one of these books cannot directly provide you with the saint you seek, the





example provided will certainly guide your creation of saintly figures. This book's account of the life of Saint Nerius provides another example of a hagiography.

Saints usually have quiet beginnings, although this is not always the case. Some, for example, are heralded by the appearance of angels upon baptism. Although their beginnings may be humble, saints often stand apart from humanity at a very early age, perhaps speaking of visions, or seeing angels or miraculous events. As saints are blessed, they are often misfits throughout their lives. They might not fit into the profession chosen for them by their parents. Because they do not fit into traditional society, saints are often misunderstood by common folk and may even be outcast. Such ostracism might be part of a saint-to-be's test of faith.

Of course, those who ostracize do not realize they drive out a saint. These folk believe they drive out a madman or threat. Only at a later time (often posthumously), or after a truly miraculous event, is the piety of the outcast's life recognized and valued.

Alternatively, saints may be recognized for their performance of miracles and respected as holy people from the outset. Some are known as travelers who spread the word of God in stirring speeches. Those saints who were recognized as such during life are truly holy folk.

In game terms, saint figures should possess True Faith and Piety while still alive, and their tales should reflect their possession of these qualities. Saints often have some of the

stranger Exceptional Talents, like Sense Holiness and Unholiness or Visions, as well. Perhaps they have Virtues like Guardian Angel. Perhaps their faith in God gives them a Mythic Characteristic (as per the +5 Trait Virtue). It is important to note that if your characters discover a saint-to-be in the game, they should understand the person to be nearly superhuman, able to do things that other people cannot. What a lifelong challenge it would be for a character to learn, through some divine providence, that he or she is a saint-to-be.

## THE POWER OF SAINTS

The power of saints is chiefly defined by the power of intercession they have. Divine influence is one reason why Mary is powerful. As Mother of God, Mary can intercede on sinners' behalf where other saints would or could not. Different saints also have different areas of influence in which they may aid petitioners. One may be particularly receptive to wayward children, having tended children in life. Calling on the saint of a particular group or virtue may improve the chances of receiving Divine aid.

The saints' chief restriction is that they must remain in Heaven, working through the angels assigned them. If a saint does "appear" on earth, the figure is probably that of an angel assuming the saint's appearance. Although not the saint herself, this figure is virtually the same, being a medium of the saint's will, just as angels are extensions of God's will. The appearance of Sante Fabia, in the Second Edition supplement *The Stormrider*, is a result of angelic assistance.

If a saint is not particularly well-known, the saint does not have many cherubim or seraphim to aid his or her work. Saint Mary, on the other hand, has a huge army of cherubim who do her bidding, carrying prayers to her and sending special blessings and miracles back to the mortal world.

## WHAT MAKES A SAINT?

Most importantly, saints must be witnesses to the glory and greatness of God. Furthermore, they are typically believed to be and are orthodox with respect to Church belief. However, with the changing perspectives of the world orthodoxy may not long remain a tenet of canonization.

Saints-to-be range the gamut of backgrounds, from beggar to lady-in-waiting. They usually come to the Church early in life, but this is not always the case. Since A.D. 1171, only the Pope can recognize saints, through a canonization process. Previously, many communities and churches venerated men and women who were holy, and perhaps even martyrs for their religion, but these figures were not recognized beyond the community. The Church does not consider these figures official saints. Sante Fabia of the Val du Bosque is one such "saint."



## Ideas and Rules for Saintly Life

There are many directions you can take in presenting the lives of saints. Many saints have ignoble beginnings; some begin as dread sinners, thieves, or other evildoers. They are converted from iniquity by some miraculous event or discovery. After this revelation their lives are totally changed and they become devoted to Church and/or God, preaching the word even at risk of their own lives.

For recently canonized saints (ones recognized in the past few centuries), you should decide what kind they are, whether ascetic, bishopropic or perhaps virginal. Tell saints' stories as dramatically as you can. Saints are larger than life. It might be interesting for you to choose one of the Covenant's Companions or Groggs and have that person begin to demonstrate saintly qualities. Maybe he develops True Faith or has visions. How the character responds to these signs is up to him, and he may realize they are Divine and embrace the Church, or seek to undo them. At the least, it would be humorous to have commoners mob the Covenant, all seeking salvation from the holy person within.

By and large, saints and genuine saints-to-be are not haughty wielders of power. They are supplicants themselves, humble before God, and they freely acknowledge that it is only through God that miracles occur. A character who is a true saint-to-be must adopt this attitude.

Generally speaking, miracles and other Divine events follow saints in life, and it is not inappropriate to have an angel appear to those close to a saint, proclaiming the saint's holiness. Sometimes this angel only appears after the saint's death, adding credence to the miracles that the saint performed in life.

After a saint has developed a small cult following, the Church usually intervenes and the Pope arranges to confirm or deny the sanctification of the saint. Such times are incredibly tense for those who hope to see their saint recognized.

The following requirements must be fulfilled for the Church to canonize someone: 1) The person must have been a holy man or woman, a martyr, an ascetic, a virgin, or great bishop in life. 2) The person must have been within the orthodoxy of the Church, following the practices and laws of the Church, preaching no heresy. 3) The person must have evidenced miraculous powers in life and have had at least one miracle attributed to him since death. 4) The person must be recognized by the Pope himself.

Of course, these are the Church's rules on saintly status, and these rules are not necessarily followed in Heaven's recognition of a saint.

In certain cases, however, "unofficial" saints are genuine saints according to God. That is, some pious folk exist in the True Empyrean and can be supplicated to intercede on behalf of mortals, but the Church does not recognize those pious folk. Just as the Church sometimes does not recognize those widdi True Faith, sometimes the Church does not recognize a true saint. Ultimately, therefore, it is God who decides who is a saint and who is not.

The old adage "God helps those who help themselves" is quite apt when speaking of saints. Saints are literally powerless to act unless beseeched for aid. When they are sought out they are able to speak with God directly, on behalf of those who pray to them. It is often the practice to venerate All Saints in hopes that at least one can help. If all else fails, Mother Mary should always be one's first and last prayer, for she has the ear of the Highest and may intercede for a hapless mortal when no other saint can.

## GIFTS FROM THE SAINTS

If a saint does respond to a penitent's prayer, the penitent receives the saint's gift. A saint's response depends on the situation and the nature of the penitent's prayer. Essentially, a saint's response can be determined using the Miracles Chart (see below). If the request falls within the saint's traditional purview, the stress roll for the miracle is modified by +1. Keep in mind, though, that you, as Storyguide, ultimately determine whether a saint comes to a character's aid.

If a saint does help a character, the character receives a gift based on the saint's Piety score (the saints described in the boxed insert have Piety scores listed, and saints you create must be assigned such scores). The character's Piety score is increased by one-half the saint's Piety score for the purpose of carrying out the requested action. Thus, if a character prays to a saint for aid in leading a friend from temptation, and the saint responds, the praying character's Piety score is increased by half the saint's and may be applied to appropriate rolls to save that friend.

The Storyguide has control over when and where this bonus may be applied, and whether Piety even applies to a certain roll. The Storyguide also determines when the saint's gift is lost—perhaps because the penitent character strays from her mission, or the mission is completed.

If the praying character has no Piety score, she receives one equal to half the saint's Piety score, although the whole score is revoked when the gift is lost.

Any character who already has a Piety score, and receives a saintly gift, gains 10 Piety Experience Points. A character without a Piety score who receives a saintly gift may be more inclined to devote her life to the Church after the saint's gift is lost. Such a character receives five Piety Experience Points. However, these points are only gained if the character is successful in the mission at hand, or makes an earnest attempt. Furthermore, these points may be spent to gain a Piety Trait only if the player wants a Piety score.



If a character with Piety strays from her mission or makes a halfhearted attempt, she loses two full Piety Points. A character without a previous Piety score who strays from the mission at hand probably never receives a saintly blessing again, from any saint.

As always, if a Piety gift seems inappropriate for the situation, the Storyguide may create another gift.

## SAINT LORE

The more you pray to a particular saint, the better you know the saint and the more you understand the purposes for which the saint can and cannot intercede. Those who follow a specific saint may wish to spend normal Experience Points towards a new Ability, a Casual Knowledge called Saint Lore. The Ability represents the familiarity you have with the saint in question. You can add your Saint Lore score to Miracle rolls. You may also make Intelligence + Saint Lore rolls to determine whether your saint has authority over a particular realm. You can also roll Perception + Saint Lore to recognize the work of a particular saint. Storyguide and player may work together to find other applications for this Ability. For instance, Saint Lore may be substituted for Church Lore and Church Knowledge where understanding of a saint can offer insight into the Church as a whole.

When taking the Saint Lore Ability, you choose the single saint with whom you are familiar and assign a score for your knowledge of him (just as would assign a score for any Ability). For instance, you might have a Saint Lore Ability devoted to Saint George. For each saint with whom you intend to be familiar, you must choose a separate Saint Lore Ability.

Saint Lore also has Specialties, as all Abilities do. Your Specialty is in a particular realm of the saint's influence or purview. For instance, in the case of Saint George, you might take *fighting dragons* as a Specialty, and when Saint Lore can be applied to a situation, you get +1 to rolls when dragon fighting is involved.

## Miracles

The following material on miracles takes that provided in the *Ars Magica* rules, p. 330 to 331, and expands upon it. Some of this is therefore a reiteration of those previous rules. The intent is to keep all rules applying to miracles in one place, for your ease of reference.

Miracles are everyday events in the lives of saints, but to everyone else they are incredibly rare events. Miracles are the will of the Divine made manifest in the world. The power of a miracle is conveyed by an appropriate number of angels, who act as conduits and channels for the will of God in the world. Sometimes it is possible to see seraphim, cherubim or even archangels acting in the periphery of a particularly grand or potent miracle.

The power of miracles has diminished over the years. This is not due to a lessening of the power of the Divine, but rather represents the more subtle and quiet approach that God seems

## Miracles Chart

How to use this chart:

First, tally the Miracle Ease Factor modifiers (discussed below) Then make a miracle roll, altered by any Applicable modifiers from the second half of the chart.

If the Miracle roll exceeds the Ease Factor of the Request, the miracle is granted, and the Storyguide must decide whether the miracle is of the subtle or grandiose sort. The type is determined based on the Storyguide's needs in the story. If the miracle occurs at the climax of a dramatic Tale, a grandiose miracle of Divine intervention is appropriate. If you are playing the the story of a future saint's life, an elaborate miracle may be appropriate. However, if a miracle is granted for mundane purposes, like the painless passage of a soul from a dying body, a subtle miracle may occur. Keep in mind that long gone are the days when a request resulted in burning bushes or manna from Heaven.

If the Miracle roll does not exceed the Ease Factor of the request, the request goes unanswered. A Botch signifies that a demon is alerted to the supplicant's needs and may Appear to tempt her. See **The Maleficium** for details.

### Miracle Ease Factor Modifiers

#### Base Ease Factor: 20

Previous unfulfilled prayer in this area in the past month:	-2
Previous unfulfilled prayer in this area in the past year:	-1
Miracle granted in the area in the past year:	+5
Miracle granted in the area in the past month:	+5
Divine Aura 10:	-5
Divine Aura 6 to 9:	-1
Divine Aura 5 or lower:	0
Merciful Dominion:	-2
Infernal Aura 5 or lower:	+1
Infernal Aura 6 or higher:	+5
High Holy Day (Easter, Christmas):	-2
Saint's Day:	-1
(if the saint is appropriate)	
To the miraculous request — see <i>The Saints</i> , above)	
Within a Saint's Dedicated Chapel:	-2
Near the Interred Body of the Saint Being Entreated:	-3
Near the True Cross	-4

### Miracle Roll Modifiers

#### (modifiers to the stress roll)

- 20: Supplicant has Infernal or Faerie Ties (e.g., Virtues and Flaws like Tainted with Evil, Diabolic Upbringing, Faerie Upbringing, Faerie Blood)
- 10: Supplicant is non-Christian (e.g., Magus, pagan, infidel)
- 5: Supplicant has a sinful Passion (e.g., Lust, Hatred, Vengeance, Pride) or Personality Trait (e.g., Violent, Bitter, Selfish)
- 1: Supplicant is unshriven
- +1: Supplicant has been shriven and received communion in the past hour.
- +1: Per week the supplicant spends in prayerful meditation, doing nothing else (including eating, but not including drinking water and trips to the privy)
- +2: Supplicant has totally selfless (and maybe self-sacrificing request)
- +1: Per Faith Point the supplicant has
- +1: Per Piety Point the supplicant has
- +1: Supplicant has the True Gift (is a Pious Magus)
- +1: Per point of Meditation Ability the supplicant has
- +3: Innocent believers require justice, repentant believers seek mercy, or helpless believers need strength
- +3: An entire congregation (including the Celebrant) is praying with the supplicant
- +1: Supplicant is in a holy quest
- +1: Supplicant is currently Enfolded by an angel
- +1: Per point of Saint Lore (if that particular saint is supplicated)
- +1: Per point of Archangel Lore (if that particular archangel has jurisdiction over the request made)
- +1: Per point of True Faith in a saint's relic that the supplicant possesses
- +3: Supplicant is under spiritual attack by the Infernal
- +5: Supplicant is under direct attack by the Infernal (that is, an attack made in the physical realm by a manifested demon)

**Note: It is impossible for a prideful or selfish miracle to occur**

to pursue in current times, where He quietly asks the question, "Do you have Faith? Do you believe? Do you trust?" Thus, it's unlikely that another parting of the Red Sea will occur.

On the other hand, to contend with the supernatural forces that the Order of Hermes can wield, it's possible that miracles of Biblical proportion may be required to limit magical manipulations. The Pope may pray for a miracle if it seems the Order has overstepped its bounds, encroached upon the authority of

the Church, or is using its power to destroy the social structure (such as sending a blight against all of Mythic Europe, or summoning a hurricane to devastate a kingdom).

It is impossible to bargain with the Divine for a miracle — either the Divine sends one or doesn't, and there's very little one can do to convince the Divine one way or another. The occurrence of a miracle is based on several considerations. If one is very pious (has the Piety trait); if one has True Faith



(although miracles are sometimes granted to someone in order to convert that individual); if one acts in accordance with and aids the cause of the Divine; if one prays earnestly and selflessly for aid; and if it seems right in the context of the story — a miracle may occur. Once again, the will of God is important here, and only the Storyguide knows that will, at least in terms of the story.

The Divine has one of three responses to a request for aid. The first is that no miracle is granted — *"My child, may your faith in this be tested."* This usually happens when the aspirant (the person praying for the miracle) is insincere, or has caused the trouble for the relief of which she is asking.

The second response is that a miracle is granted, but in a subtle or unobtrusive way— *"I awoke just as the fires broke out! Were it not for that providence, the entire inn would have burned down, taking all with it."*

The third response is that a miracle is granted in a grandiose way— *"A wall of white light rises up around you, and arrows, magic and swords are turned away!"*

Miracles come from a power above the earth, so no force on earth or from Hell can stop them. There is no Magic Resistance roll against miracles.

It might be noted that though a miracle may not occur because its request is exploitative or self-fulfilling, the request may still receive a response. A demon who hears the petition might show up to grant the desire as part of "a deal" (this is often the case with Botched miracle requests).

Refer to the *Miracles Chart* for help in determining when to implement miraculous events.

## Exorcism

Even though miracles prove God's power on earth, there are certain times when God's aid is mandatory. Such is the case when Satan's angels lay claim to a bodied-soul by the act of possession. Since possession violates God's fundamental rule of free will, He gifts His servants with the ability to drive out the Beast, via the rite of Exorcism.

Demons possess humans in an effort to lure those humans and others away from God. A demon cannot actually force a soul to sin, but can tempt it to do so. It's through humanity's freedom to choose, and the subsequent decision to sin, that Hell grows strong. A demon may possess a person to introduce him to the possibilities of evil, hoping the person will follow evil after the possession has ended. A demon may also possess another in hopes of blackmailing the victim's friends. The demon might promise to leave the victim if another performs a sin. The other has the choice to sin or allow a friend to suffer Infernal torture, and the other may freely choose between the two. Whatever the specific reason for possession, demons frequently inflict it upon humans. Even a sneeze is the result of possession by a minor demon. The *Maleficium* offers greater insight into the reasons and tactics behind Infernal possession. What Pax Dei addresses is the means by which Christians may exorcise demons.

## MAN, GOD, AND EVIL

After humanity's fall from Paradise, God established a precise distinction between humanity and the Lord of Darkness. He placed humanity over Satan, even though Satan's continued task was to tempt humanity. Although Satan possesses more power than humanity, humanity is still superior because people have the chance to be saved whereas devils do not. Thus, even if demons seek to possess humans, the demons' efforts are curtailed. Demons cannot possess humans indefinitely; the human spirit and God's will combine to force demons out. Unfortunately, the damage that demons can do while in possession jeopardizes the human soul. Possessing demons carefully disguise their occupancy, hoping to retain control of a bodied-soul for as long as possible (see *Concealment* in *The Maleficium*, p. 63).

Indeed, the most insidious danger of possession is the fact that the victim does not always appear threatened. Some demoniacs (possession victims) may act only slightly differently than usual, perhaps picking up a few quirks, but nothing that immediately demands exorcism services. Even if the victim is motivated to commit crimes by his demon, he may resist but still remain possessed. The next commanded action may not be resisted.

Whether a possession victim realizes his peril is another matter. The victim may *realize* a demon is in control, but cannot overcome the demon's control to seek help. On his



## Finding Demons Out

People with the Piety Ability have a Divinely inspired sense for Infernal presence. They are able to detect the presence of a possessing demon within a person with a Perception + Piety stress roll. The Ease Factor of the roll is equal to the magnitude of the demon (Infernal Might score divided by five, rounded up) + the demon's Possession Skill.

If the roll fails, the possessing demon is not detected. If the roll Botches, the person with Piety may suspect the wrong person of possession, or may suspect him or herself of possession (maybe a demon planted that Infernal sensation!). Even if a roll to sense a possessing demon is successful, the Pious individual is not certain of Infernal presence, but must prove it by some means. Taking the suspected possession victim to Mass might do the trick.

A sense of demonic possession is possible for any character with the Piety Ability, whether a priest or not. Keep in mind that Traits other than Piety can be used to detect possessing demons. Second Sight, Sense Holiness and Unholiness, and Intellego Vim spells might be useful.

own, the victim's only chance is to overcome the demon by force of will, but this is difficult except for the stoutest of heart. The Maleficium (p. 53 and 61-63) discusses rules for individual resistance to possession. The material that follows details how the Church can help free possession victims.

## EXORCISM RITES

There are three kinds of exorcism: purification, casting out and banishment. Only one may be utilized at a time as each bears some elements of the others, making the others redundant.

### Purification

Purification is a passive method of exorcism. The subject is immersed in Divine energies (prayers and rituals) which limit the possessing demon's power and give the demoniac an opportunity to free herself. Purification usually involves the auspices of a priest, although lay folk with the Piety Ability can also make the attempt. Holy incense is lit and censured about the room, the possessed is forced to drink holy water or is anointed with it, psalms are read, and a crucifix or saint's icon is displayed.

Purification allows the possession victim one natural Resistance roll per day to break free. This roll is made at sunrise each day that purification rituals are performed. This roll is in addition to any normally allowed the victim to break control by her own will. The purification roll involves the victim's Stamina + a stress die versus the demon's Infernal Might + Possession Skill (an Ability that rates possession proficiency)



+ a stress die. The victim's Personality Traits and Passions do not apply to purification rolls; purification is an external force working on the demon, not an internal force of the victim's will.

If a purification roll Botches, the demon gets a stronger hold on the victim and the victim is allowed no more attempts to break free based on inner strength (as discussed in *The Maleficium*). Only further outside efforts to liberate the possession victim may free her. If the demon Botches its resistance roll to purification, the demon is driven from the body and may never possess it again.

Purification offers a possession victim hope because anyone of pious nature (with the Piety Ability) can perform purification rituals. A priest is not required, so friends of the possessed can offer help where none might otherwise be found. Unfortunately, many demons are powerful enough to resist purification, retaining their grip on their victim. Indeed, a demon isn't going to lie back and let its host be purified. The demon is going to struggle, spit, bite and claw.

## Casting Out

Casting out is an active method used to expel demons from those who are possessed, either through taunts, threats or holy intervention. Casting out is only properly performed by a specially trained priest, or exorcist. The Church has a number of exorcists, all of them belonging to the secret Order of Saint Paul. Casting out is very much a spiritual battle waged between the exorcist and the possessing demon. The battlefield is a very



fragile one: the possessed's body and soul. In order to fight this dangerous battle, the exorcist has to have training of a unique nature. The exorcist must understand his quarry so well that he is exposed to knowledge that diabolists themselves know. Thus, the exorcist must have a score in Hierarchy (an Ability reflecting knowledge of the Infernal, as discussed in *The Maleficium*). The exorcist must also possess great strength of will and a profound faith to help him defeat the Dark One.

In the process of casting out, the exorcist assaults the possessing demon with an unrelenting spiritual attack, one that begins and may not end until the demon has been exorcised or until the exorcist collapses from exhaustion. The exorcist continually calls for the demon to depart the body, chanting, praying, whispering the secret names of God, aspersing the body with holy water, and enduring the demon's *psychomachia* and *maleficia* (see *The Maleficium*).

To cast a demon out, the exorcist makes an exorcism roll each Round he wishes to continue attacking the demon. This roll is a stress die + Hierarchy + Piety + True Faith. The defending demon rolls a stress die + *current* magnitude (Infernal Might divided by five, rounded up) + Possession Skill. (Current Infernal magnitude is based on the demon's changing Might score, not its Might total.) If the exorcist beats the demon, the demon's Infernal Might score is reduced by the difference between the two rolls. When all Might Points are lost, the demon is banished from the body and returns to Hell or another point on earth. If the demon beats the exorcist, the demon may act this Round free of any intervention. The demon may use its powers to attack the exorcist, or may perform some other action (see below). However, if the demon uses powers that cost Might Points, the demon is weakened in advance of the exorcist's next exorcism roll. If the exorcist Botches, the demon finds a secret opening to the Inferno and is able to regain all its Infernal Might Points. If the demon Botches its roll it is immediately cast out of the body and cannot again possess it.

A possessing demon has very little recourse when confronted with an exorcist's onslaught. The demon's only real hope is to harm or kill the exorcist before the demon can be driven out. The following are a few tricks and actions a demon under exorcist attack can use to defend itself.

## Verbal Assault

The demon can attempt to assault the exorcist verbally, thereby distracting him from the exorcism. Sometimes demons gain fell insights into the souls of those they are near, exorcists included, and can prey upon any moral weaknesses or character flaws. Verbal assault costs the demon nothing and may be its last refuge if Infernal Might Points are running low. The assault must be dealt with by the exorcist using Personality Trait rolls and other game mechanics (maybe some Flaw?), representing the target's emotional response to verbal abuse.

## Testing the Possessed

There are several tests through which potentially possessed people may be put. Most tests involve placing the possessed in contact with Divinely charged objects or places. Touching something holy cause a reaction in a demoniac. Reactions range from obvious aversions to outright sores forming on the skin.

Divinely-charged items include:

Wine and wafers from the Eucharist

Any candle blessed on Candlemas

Any altar dressing

Holy Water

Holy Oil

Holy Incense

Furthermore, possessed people cannot speak the name of the Godhead. If a line of questioning put to a suspected demoniac results in, at best, allusions to God, suspicions of possession might be accurate. But then again, maybe not. . .

## Hiding

The demon can retreat, going deep into the spirit of the possessed person. This action fortifies the demon's defenses and may fool an exorcist into believing he has cast the demon out. Only direct contact with the Divine, such as the possessed's attendance at Mass, may expose the hidden demon. The hidden demon may be recognized by an exorcist who makes a Piety + Perception stress roll against an Ease Factor equal to twice the demon's full magnitude score (Infernal Might divided by five, rounded up) + Possession Skill. The demon may also be recognized by a person with Second Sight or the Sense Holiness and Unholiness Ability. If the hidden demon uses any of its powers it exposes itself again. The Maleficium discusses demon *Concealment* (p. 63) in other ways.

Demons may choose to hide after a long, drawn-out exorcism attempt wherein the exorcist is physically exhausted. Those surrounding the possessed see her return to normal and may praise the exorcist for a job well done. If the exorcist allows pride to well up within him, he may believe their praise. Thus, not only does the hiding demon win a victory, it encourages a prominent Church figure toward sin.

## Draining

Demons threatened with being cast out may also resort to brutal tactics. (As subtlety is foregone, demons who pride themselves on style and strategy may frown upon this tactic.) If a demon is particularly low on Might Points it may siphon life energy from its host. In any Round the demon may drain a Body Level from the host and gain 10 Infernal Might Points as a result. The host cannot resist this damage. The demon cannot kill its host in this fashion, though, as that would result in the demon's immediate expulsion.

A demon may use this tactic to put a halt to an exorcist's activities, for the exorcist might fear causing the host further harm.

## Fleeting Soul

At the beginning of an outcasting, a demon may evacuate the body of its original host and flee to the body of the weakest being in its presence, doing so as quietly as possible. An unwary exorcist may not *realize* another is possessed until it's too late, while a wary one ensures that only strong-willed people and assistants are present for an exorcism.

Rules for the demon's possession of another body are provided in *The Maleficium*.

## Banishment

Banishment is the casting out of a demon through wholly magical means, either by knowing the demon's true name and using that to drive it out, or by use of a spell.

Magi from the Order of Hermes are quite good at destroying demons, attacking their connections to the mortal world by use of *Perdo Vim* spells. If an exorcist and Magus work together, the exorcist can utilize his power to distract or weaken the demon while the Magus casts spells to destroy the demon.

While conservative members of the Order of Saint Paul (see below) believe their brothers should not fraternize with Magi, it's clear that each can learn from the other. Some argue that many Magi are actually religious, and cite Pious Magi as





examples. Others reason that even if Magi have Infernal ties, exorcists can learn more about the Infernal through Magi. Infernal knowledge gained can then be turned against demons and the Order of Hermes. Many exorcists have Hermes Lore, Faerie Lore and Occult Lore.

## Other Tools

Beyond purification, casting out, and banishment, there are other tools that exorcists and those fighting possessing demons can use. These include lodestones, the Dominion, salt, fumigations and church bells. The Maleficium details the effects of these weapons on possessing demons.

## EXORCISTS

All exorcists are members of the Order of Saint Paul, a special Papal mission involved more with the lives of saints and miraculous happenings than with everyday matters. Indeed, these clergy members make it their obligation to seek out demons manifest in the world and humanity. They can be recognized, by those who know of the order, by their black robes.

The order offers special tutors — exorcist teachers — to educate clergy and anyone else interested in the battle against Hell. Magi might even be able to join these classes, held in

churches in some of Mythic Europe's larger cities. In fact, it's rumored that a Magus from the Order of Hermes is a schoolmaster at Saint Paul's seminary for priests. Whether he is a Pious Magus is unknown.

All exorcists are priests familiar with the occult in all its forms, and they understand the difference between faeries and demons. (They usually have Occult Lore, Faerie Lore, and sometimes Hermes Lore, as should exorcist Companion characters). Since they are often exposed to the bare essence of the Infernal (which they are forced to confront during initiation), exorcists have Hierarchy scores.

If an exorcist's Hierarchy score ever exceeds his Piety score, the exorcist is in grave danger, for he is meant to grow in Piety as well as Hierarchy as he goes about his duties. Extensive knowledge of Hell without a balancing knowledge of Heaven can lead to seduction toward evil. A priest in such a situation finds himself visited by demons who seek to lead the exorcist farther from the Divine. As Hierarchy increases, the priest might not even realize he is falling from his true calling. Such is often the case when a formerly humble priest is transformed into a theurgist.

Sometimes radical separation from the Order of Saint Paul, ritual fasting, and self-flagellation allow a straying exorcist to preserve his soul and sanity. That is, dealings with the Infernal

are cut until the priest can build up his Piety score to counter his Infernal knowledge. Sometimes, however, such isolation simply limits the exorcist's allies, making him even more vulnerable to corruption.

Exorcists do not advertise their professions. The black habits they wear mark them as Dominicans to most clergy; even some bishops might overlook their special vocation. This anonymity enables exorcists to infiltrate a clerical order or group, find evidence of Satan's work there, and root out evil. Extensive Infernal possession within a single group might lead to a Wrathful Dominion called against the group, and could inspire the Pope to call a crusade, destroying the group rather than taking demons on directly.

In the hierarchy of the Church, exorcists are considered slightly above regular friars and priests, but below bishops and abbots. An exorcist's official title is adept.

Because of their exposure to the Infernal, many exorcists have strange personal habits. Some peculiarities included refusing to shake hands, continually washing, quietly chanting prayers, and refusing to go anywhere without a censer of holy incense. (These qualities might be represented by a Social Handicap Flaw.) Given that exorcists often put their souk on the line to save others, it's no wonder that many are eccentric.





## Excerpt of a letter from Maril, formerly of House Bonisagus

To Amicus Marius, Greetings!

I spent many days in contemplation of my desire to unite myself with the Holy. As you well know, the Church, for fear of us, often bars Magi from the path to bliss, and the Order often bars her members from union with the Church. Knowing this myself, I realized I must find some new path, some hidden way, to traverse the nearly insurmountable distance between myself and unending joy.

I read what I could of blessed Neriuss's words. However, because of his state, outcast from the realm of the Arts, such writings are hard to come by. Frustrated in my attempts to understand Neriuss's subtle directions to the path I sought, I despaired. I wandered often, at all hours, through the halls of the Covenant and meditated upon the words of Saint Neriuss. Many times I dreamt of the face of the blessed archangel, Michael, sorrow, love, and consternation mingled in his gaze.

Finally, one night, after much contemplation, I was gifted with a vision from God himself, who aids those who truly seek Him. In my dream, I again saw the countenance of Saint Michael. It seemed to me that I awoke from the dream to see the blessed angel standing over my rough pallet. Awed by his presence, I lay prostrate at his feet until I sensed that he was both amused and displeased at my action. I looked up and he motioned for me to rise.

I rose to stand in front of him, fearful of the Divine nimbus that radiated from him. Even as I stood in awe, though, he gazed deeply into my eyes and I immediately felt a comfort of a kind I had never felt before. It seemed that all unruly and unsettling thoughts within my spleen, all painful feelings within my breast, had been silenced, leaving me with a peace that ran to the marrow of my bones.

How shall I tell you what transpired without sullyng the moment? As I felt the holy peace, the Divine being moved forward to embrace me, enfolding me within his presence. He leaned down to me and kissed my forehead. I felt at that moment that fire was consuming my body. The pain of the kiss was all but unbearable. As well, it seemed that great wings of fire caressed me, burning me terribly. At the same time, I felt — I

cannot properly express this — purified in some way. It was as if the fire and pain's ordeal was cleansing me. I experienced again a measure of that bliss that had set me on my path.

Blessed Michael released me from his embrace. I fell at once to the ground at his feet, so overcome was I with sensation. As I looked up at his bright face it seemed to soften somewhat from its usual dispassion. My brother, I tell you now of a miracle: Saint Michael Archangel spoke to me, his voice the caress of dove's wings, the heat of forge's flame.

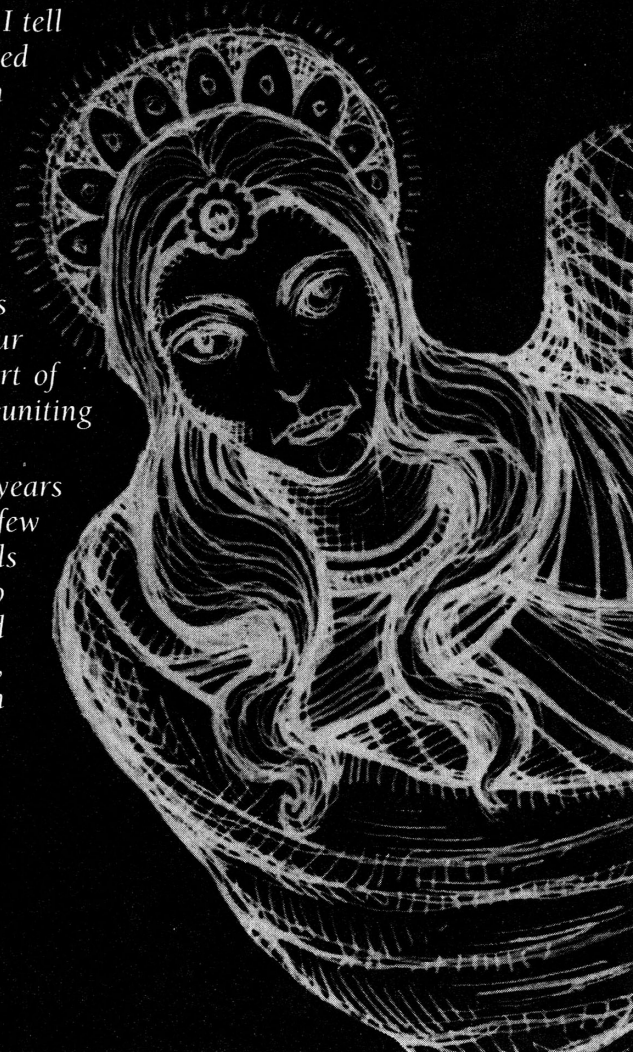
"Witness," he said to me. "So must it be to embrace fully my Master."

Then the bright messenger, the Divine warrior, was gone from me. I awoke with the sun's rising, the gift of new understanding fresh in my mind. I knew at last what the next step on my path was and sought to further my union with God. That, then, was the day you've heard rumors of throughout the Tribunal. On that day I assembled all my books — my research notes, my journals, every scrap of writing I had kept since I was an apprentice. Having collected these things in a pile in the courtyard, I doused them with a bottle of spirits I found among Covenant provisions, and set fire to the whole lot.

Do you understand, my brother, what I tell you? Blessed Michael and our own sainted Nerius showed me the way. Only through the cleansing that painful sacrifice brings can we put our feet firmly on the road to bliss. For surely, as we Magi are gifted among men, we must return that gift if we wish to return to His grace. Sacrifice, however unpleasant, is the way of the pious Magus. I say this in all humility: turning our backs on magic, we suffer some small part of Christ's sacrifice, and so aid ourselves in reuniting with God.

After I had watched the work of all my years burn completely to ash, I turned, and with few possessions to my name, forever left the walls of my Covenant. I went out into the world, to wander in the wilderness as both Christ and Saint Nerius had before me. Ever, my friend, do we walk in the footsteps of others, both within the Art and upon the holy path.

Your sister in the Arts,  
Lady Maril





V. 1000



# PAX DEI AND ARS MAGICA

## CHAPTER SIX



agic, since it originates from the Shadow Emphyrean, is inferior to the power of the Divine. The power of the True Emphyrean, in which the Divine resides, is the ultimate power.

The inferiority of magic includes that of Hermes. It has limits that cannot be exceeded, even by the most powerful wizards using vast quantities of raw vis. The power of the Divine, however, has no limits, and is actually the force that imposes limits on magic, such as that of the Lunar Sphere.

Because of the inherent weakness of the Hermetic Arts, Magi of the Order often take a dim view of the Church — jealousy? After all, the Dominion dominates and limits Hermetic magic, and the Church's miracles are accessible to unlearned, untrained people—power without mastery. Ironically, Magi tend to see themselves and their knowledge as the source of their power, and thus grow arrogant. They do not realize that the Divine allows them their power, and fail to realize that the Church will survive much longer than they, regardless of their longevity potions. Maybe Magi prefer to delude themselves rather than accept the truth.

Despite the attitude of many Magi, who do not believe in Heaven or Hell but instead look forward to transcendence in Twilight, there are some (especially among post-Christian Roman Magi) who venerate Church and God. There are three ways for Hermetic Magi to come to God. The first is the easiest to name but difficult to come by: True Faith. A Magus who achieves True Faith interacts closely with the Divine, even if she does not possess the Piety Ability. The second path is found through prayer and tithing to Saint Nerus, Patron Saint of the Order of Hermes. By this devotion a Magus may receive grace

and be allowed into the family of the Church, maybe even permitted salvation. The third way for Magi to come to God is by becoming what are known as Pious Magi.

The first path to God, True Faith, is discussed in Chapter Three of this book. The second path, devotion to Saint Nerus, is discussed in Chapter Five, under the veneration of saints in general, but more information on Nerus himself is provided below. The third and most dramatic means to God, dedication to pious magic, is discussed here.

### The pathway Light

Magi for the most part are, by their nature, outside the realm of simple faith and the Church. Working with magic and its elements, Magi generally devote themselves to their work rather than God and Church. If they are faithful they may heed God's teachings, but probably prefer to avoid Mass and its debilitating effects upon magic. In order to achieve anything more than simple, passing devotion to the Church, Magi literally have to destroy the Gift within themselves (see *Pruning the Spirit* o/Magic, Muto Vim Level 60, below). Some Magi do this and spend the rest of their days as penitents in contemplative communities, accepted as equals by members of those communities. However, this is not what the Pious Magus is about.

The Pious Magus has found God through a path all his own, and reveres God in much the same way as those with True Faith do. However, the Pious Magus has had a glimpse into the Mysteries of God and pursues the Divine Arts as well as the



Hermetic ones. There is such a relationship between God and the Pious Magus that the Magus may cast spells which break the limits of Hermetic magic, if such is the will of God.

The pathway leading to the exalted state of Pious Magus is long and grueling. It begins with a radical separation and ends with a soul-shattering trial. A Magus usually decides to become a Pious Magus after meeting one. If this is the case for your character, that Pious Magus probably tells you about the stages of initiation and acceptance, outlining what is expected of you. You may also become a Pious Magus after witnessing Divine power or a miracle. Ultimately, the means behind a Magus's devotion to God is personal (and must be justified by the player). Whether the Magus seeks God's favor by herself, or after receiving the teaching of another Pious Magus, the quest is ultimately personal. But, have faith. The Archangel Michael has standing orders that all cherubim be on the lookout for Magi interested in becoming Pious Magi. If one is found and her devotion to God is proven, a seraphim is usually dispatched to watch over that Magus, judging her worth.

## Renunciation

The first stage of turning to the Pathway Light is that of Renunciation. You must totally renounce your current life as a member of the Order of Hermes. This usually involves destroying all your lab equipment and dispersing your magical writings. Familiars are dispelled and released, but, as God's creatures, are treated as carefully as possible, and attempts can be made to restore them to normality. From this point on every minor task, like cleaning the lab, that was previously performed through magic must now be performed through toil and sweat.

You might even adopt a completely different name, change your mode of dress, take a tonsure, or shave your head — anything to leave the old correspondences behind. You may entrust your nonmagical belongings to a friend but usually leave everything, wandering into the world with only a small amount of food and what you carry on your back. Depending on how great your worldly sacrifices are during this period of transition, you might immediately attract angelic attention as a potential Pious Magus, or you might have to perform further devout declarations.

## Meditation

After abandoning your previous Hermetic life, you immediately enter the contemplative life, in some cases keeping the liturgical offices and canonical hours, just as a monk does. You cannot utilize a Form or Technique now, for doing so indicates continued reliance on your old ways, which is exactly what you are forsaking. This period of meditation is when you are most tempted to return to your old ways, for this is probably the first time in ages that you have been exposed to the absolute harshness of the world. Indeed, demons may visit tortures upon you in an effort to lure you back into magic, breaking your devout will.



Your meditation upon God and the new direction of your life lasts several years, until your convictions are sound and you have found truth, beauty and peace in an otherwise grim world. (Sorry, there are no rules for the duration of this period; it's something player and Storyguide must work out together, until both are convinced of the character's conviction.) Having achieved this restive state, you must locate a clergyperson who is prepared to perform the Ministration.

## Ministration

Determined to join with God, you must find a clergyperson and convince him or her to perform the Eucharist for your sole benefit. The service is a two-part one, usually performed on the Feast of Saint Nerius. The first part of the service is a modified baptism, celebrating your union with the Church. The second part is the Eucharist which celebrates your new path of wisdom.

## Reeducation

Even after being recognized by the Church, you must still suffer years of toil and hardship, just as all ordinary people of Mythic Europe must. Indeed, part of this hardship may involve prejudice from clergy and commoners, who doubt the validity of your so-called religious devotion.

Once you have experienced the world firsthand, and genuinely recognize your own mortality, you are prepared to devote yourself to God's service. At that point you realize your

old magical ways can actually be put to use in the name of the Divine, and may relearn all your old magical ways. (Again, there's no hard-and-fast time frame for this progression.) The Divinities often have a task in mind that requires your attention, and that is when magical powers are returned. God may foresee a future danger to Christianity and restore you in anticipation of that threat. Thus, true recognition of your dedication to the Divine may come when an angelic servant delivers a message of restoration to you. (Note, though, that while the Divine may condone your use of magic on its behalf, the Church may still condemn you for returning to magic, believing you to have fallen to your old temptations.)

When you do regain your old Hermetic ways, you relearn the Arts with new Divine perception firmly in place. It is at this point that you gain a Piety Point — probably your first — and can gain points thereafter as any person with the Ability (i.e., through the acquisition of Piety Experience Points).

A full year of secluded study is required to relearn old ways of magic, and no books or Hermetic devices can be utilized in this reeducation. The magic returns through devotion to God, during which He deigns to restore your old might. After this year's contemplation, your Art scores return, but each three points lower than your previous score, a reflection of your distancing from magic in favor of religious dedication. Any result of less than zero is treated as zero; you remember the bare basics of the Art. Henceforth your Arts are of Divine nature, and as long as you tread the Pathway Light, you may retain and increase them.

If at any time you use your new Divine magic for purposes other than Christian, your powers are stripped and God's blessing abandons you. You are left no better than the lowest peasant, probably maddened as well. Whether you can rebuild some semblance of a life is a matter left to your will. However, you probably cannot return to the Order of Hermes, not simply because you abandoned that group, but because your life with God denies further magic.

## Powers of Pious Magi

With the Divine at your heart, you have considerable power as a Pious Magus. However, your purpose is to use that power for the good of humanity, and to abuse it would mean Divine wrath.

### Spell Casting

As a Pious Magus, with former Hermetic ways restored (or with Arts reduced by three, anyway), you also have old spells restored (except that those now beyond reduced Technique + Form + Intelligence + 10 are lost). You can still make use of Spontaneous magic.

You can even utilize your old lab skills and design magical items for the greater good of God, as long as He wills your invention. Indeed, old Abilities like *Parma Magica* and Magic Theory, lost with your turn to God, are now restored. The same is true for any Hermetic Virtues and Flaws you had, except for



any former Susceptibility to Divine Power, which is now lost given your rededication. If any of your former Virtues and Flaws do not coincide with your life's new dedication, those Traits maybe redefined or dropped completely. Those dropped should be replaced with Virtues and Flaws of equal value that better suit your religious devotion.

One benefit of becoming a Pious Magus is the loss of the disquieting side of your former power. You get the +1 Hermetic Virtue, The Gentle Gift, for free. The Virtue does not have to be countered with a -1 Flaw.

Upon becoming a Pious Magus the only things of your past life that you lack are a Covenant with labs and libraries in which to work, and any Familiar which you formerly possessed. As a Pious Magus you probably cannot return to Covenant life because other Magi won't have you. Likewise, you cannot reclaim your old or find a new Familiar: God, not His beasts, is now the focus of all your thoughts.

With Hermetic powers restored, you are powerful again. Indeed, as a Pious Magus in the service of God, you now have even more power than before. Through God's grace you can now cast Spontaneous spells that break old Hermetic limits. What happens is this: you give yourself up to the glory of God, and open a channel of power from the Divine to your own soul. This channel enables you to shape the energies of the True Empyrean rather than those of the Shadow, shattering the limits of Hermetic magic.

This new power means that magical barriers described on p. 170 of the *Ars Magica* rules no longer apply to you. Keep in mind, though, that Divine will is still in effect, and nothing ever happens that is not in accordance with it (see *The Will of God*). Thus, God may deny your attempt to affect the result of a miracle, for example, and need not explain the reason behind your denied effort. You need simply have faith that God has a greater purpose in mind when He stifles your power. Ultimately, the Storyguide determines what God's will is for a story or situation and determines whether your actions as a Pious Magus fit that will. The Storyguide may deny use of a spell based on coming events, or on understanding that you lack. And, as God behaves in mysterious ways, the Storyguide need not explain why your spell fails (in fact, to question the Storyguide's will is the Saga equivalent of questioning God's intent — a possible lapse in faith).

Spell use that defies God's will usually refers to magic being used to harm and destroy. Magic that is used to create and heal is usually within God's will, and thus receives the power of the Divine. So, Spontaneous magic can be used to bring about permanent healing without need for raw vis. Glimpses of the true future can also be divined. A thing's Essential Nature can be altered.

Indeed, even the casting of Spontaneous spells is altered by the radiance of the True Empyrean. Any Spontaneous spell that would ordinarily break the Hermetic limits of magic receives your Piety score as a bonus, added before the roll is divided. (And, of course, Piety can also be added to any other spell casting roll that involves a Godly deed; the spell cast need not break Hermetic limits to receive a Piety bonus. This bonus is

## The Will of God

As a Pious Magus you cannot cast spells that directly contradict the will of God. Furthermore, you are not allowed to cast destructive magic against any but the basest, vilest agents of the Infernal. In short, you are a Magus devoted to the study of creation, healing, and the heightening of Divine understanding. The following is a breakdown of some of the tenets expected of Pious Magi, according to the will of God:

### Pious Magi cannot:

- Destroy people, places or things (unless they are clearly evil)
- Force loyalty, love, or any other positive or negative emotion. This essentially includes all Rego Corporem and Mentem spells

- Attempt to summon demons, faeries or angels
- Attempt to bring the rightfully dead back to life
- Enchant magical weapons

### Pious Magi can (and may freely break Hermetic limits doing so):

- Heal
- Inform, educate, elucidate
- Create a safe environment
- Rescue those in danger
- Enhance or reveal His glory (say, cast a spell that brings the light of the sunrise into a room as a display of Divine presence)

Breaking one of these codes puts the Magus outside God's favor. She is stripped of her powers and left to fend for herself. Only through some tremendous effort and display of genuine virtue may God forgive her, but in these cases the Lord is as stern as his agent, Michael Archangel.

explained under *Piety's Functions* in Chapter Three.) If you have the True Faith Virtue, its score can also be added to spell casting rolls to break Hermetic limits with Divine magic. However, if the Spontaneous spell cast does break Hermetic limits, you must exert yourself in the casting (your spell casting roll is divided by two and a Short-Term Fatigue Level is spent). Casting such otherworldly spells is always stressful to body and mind.

The Level of a Spontaneous spell that breaks Hermetic limits is determined by the Storyguide. As the Formulaic spells listed in the rules fall within the bounds of Hermetic limits, making comparisons to them to determine Spontaneous spell Level might be difficult. There might not be a Formulaic spell of comparable function. The Storyguide therefore has to improvise and rationalize spell Level. For instance, attempting the permanent healing of a wound with Spontaneous magic is comparable to the *Creo Corporem* spell, *The Surgeon's Healing Touch* (Level 20). Making the spell permanent without use of vis defies Hermetic limits, so the Storyguide might raise

its effective Level to 25. On the other hand, since casting the spell is an act of charity, and conforms to God's ideal, the Storyguide might let the spell be cast at Level 20.

If a limit-breaking spell is attempted but the Lord denies its effects, a spell casting roll is still made and Fatigue Levels are spent. Indeed, your effort could still Botch! You still go through the effort of bringing about the otherworldly effect but are denied the results. The pain you suffer for your effort may be intended as a lesson for the spell's failure. Maybe the Lord seeks to tell you something about the abuse of your power, or of a limited perspective in your thinking.

Botches resulting from attempts to break Hermetic spell limits often result in the caster being Overwhelmed (see *Ars Magica*, p. 183). The ability to attempt spells that defy Hermetic limits may also be denied for a time. The Magic Botch Suggestions Table can still be used for Divine spells that go awry, but the effects listed there should be intensified to suit the magnitude of the spell attempted.

## Special Spells

As well as regaining use of Hermetic spells, and gaining use of Spontaneous spells that can exceed Hermetic limits, you, as a Pious Magus, also have access to unique Formulaic spells.

Those Magi of Nerius who preceded you created some spells that are unique to your Divine and Magical power combination. These spells are exceedingly rare. They may be

learned from other Pious Magi, or from the records and tomes of other Pious Magi. You can also invent spells usable only by you and other followers of Nerius.

Time required to learn, invent or copy Pious spells is determined as discussed in the Magic and Laboratory Chapters of the *Ars Magica* rules. (Note that traditional Hermetic Magi cannot even transcribe a Pious spell; the Divine power of the spell makes it seem gibberish to the Magic-attuned reader.) The only difference involved in the creating, learning and copying of Pious spells is that your Piety score is added to Lab Total, and the work can be performed in either a Divine or Magic Aura, with the appropriate Aura value applying to Lab Total. However, if the Piety score of a spell's original creator is higher than yours, you cannot learn the spell studied as its truth is currently beyond your understanding. If your Piety score should ever equal that of the original spell creator, you can learn the spell.

Pious Magi are free to create standard Hermetic spells as well; they aren't restricted to creating only Pious spells. Pious Formulaic spells invented must usually abide by Hermetic limits, but can delve into realms of Divine influence that normal Hermetic Formulaic spells normally cannot (which means Hermetic limits may be stretched in terms of the Divine). The boxed sample spells show how Pious spells can influence the Divine. Note that *Pruning the Spirit* of Magic alters a subject's Essential Nature, but only if the subject is willing, and only if the pruning is in accordance with Divine will. So, the spell does bend Hermetic limits, but only if all parties are willing.

## Raw Vis and Pious Magic

When casting spells as a Pious Magus, whether those spells break Hermetic limits or not, you can still use raw vis. (In the case of Spontaneous spells that break Hermetic limits, you probably use raw vis to increase your spell casting rolls; extra Range and Duration can be achieved without use of raw vis.) Although your powers come from Heaven, you are still a part of the material world and still recall your old Hermetic ways. You can therefore use vis in your spell casting. However, as your spells must be used for the good of humanity, or in accordance with God's will, your use of vis is also limited to that spell use.

Use of raw vis is also limited by your Piety score. The number of pawns used in any one feat cannot exceed your Piety score, just as it cannot exceed your score in the Art to which the vis is attuned. Thus, if you're using Corporem vis and have a Corporem score of six and a Piety score of four, you cannot use more than four pawns of raw vis, the equivalent of your Piety score. If you had a score of four in Corporem and six in Piety, you would still be limited to four pawns, the equivalent of your Art score.

Piety-based limits on raw vis use also apply to laboratory activity. You can use no more pawns of raw vis in the lab in a single Season than your total of Piety + Vim or Magic Theory + Vim, whichever is lower. Thus, if you have a Vim score of eight,



## Sample Pious Magus Spells

Here are some examples of Divine Formulaic spells available to Pious Magi.

### **The Tearful Reunion: Rego Imagonem 30**

R: Self, D: Cone., Ritual

This spell enables you to contact a specific soul now residing in Heaven, Hell or Purgatory, whether buried by the Church or not. You must have an Arcane Connection to the person sought, something the person owned in life, his or her body, or a direct descendent of the subject in your presence.

The soul is presented to you as it was when it was bodied, physically unchanged by experiences in the afterlife. Though it appears "normal," the soul does not behave so, responding to you based on its afterworld experiences (e.g., if the soul comes from Heaven it sings hosannahs to the Highest, if from Hell it begs and pleads with you to help it escape its torment). What's more, a soul (particularly a soul from Hell, or one from Purgatory that has yet to understand how to transcend to Heaven) may be unwilling to answer your questions.

The soul summoned is visible and audible to all in your vicinity.

Creator's Piety Score: 8

### **Relinquishing the Hold of the Host: Muto Mentem 30**

Spell Focus: A Broken Communion Wafer +5

R: Touch, D: Spec.

With this spell the Pious Magus can undo the effects of a blessing or Communion performed upon a person. Since this action undoes the work of the Church, the spell's casting must be in conjunction with God's will. It might be

that a person who has been blessed now plots evil, and you seek to undo her blessing and therefore her plan. Unless the target of the spell deserves to be separated from the Divine, God denies casting of this spell and your motives may be subject to Divine scrutiny.

When this spell is cast, the effects of any blessing or Communion (e.g., a Divine Aura) on a person are eliminated. That person cannot again be blessed or receive the benefits of Communion until she repents for whatever action justified the casting of this spell.

Creator's Piety Score: 10

### **Pruning the Spirit of Magic: Muto Vim 60**

R: Touch, D: Permanent, Ritual

This spell is incredibly powerful and cast very rarely. It's only used when one Pious Magus discovers an initiate (a Hermetic Magus) who seeks to follow in his footsteps.

If the initiate is willing, you can use this spell to strip her of her magical Gift, denying further use of magic. From that point the subject can undergo the religious tempering required of a Pious Magus, and can regain magical power if Pious status is achieved. Otherwise, the subject is forever stripped of magical ability. Some Magi may request use of this spell to find freedom from the Gift, to live a quiet, contemplative life under God, or to escape the temptation to use magic for evil.

This spell might also be effective at undoing the magical power of non-Hermetic spell casters, but they too must be willing to undergo the change. The spell cannot be used to eliminate others' magical power indiscriminately.

Creator's Piety Score: 12

a Magic Theory score of four, and a Piety score of two, you cannot use more than 10 (8 Vim + 2 Piety) pawns of vis in the lab in a single Season.

See *The Will of God* for limits on laboratory functions for Pious Magi.

## Powers of Dominion

Since your magical powers are also Divine in nature, you suffer no ill effects in either a Magical or Divine Aura. When you travel to regions of other supernatural powers (i.e., Infernal, Faerie, or Reason), you suffer penalties to magic rolls as a member of a Divine power. That is, in an Infernal Aura rated three, your spell casting rolls suffer a -6 penalty, not -3 as they would if your power was considered strictly Magical (according to the *Realm Interaction Chart*, *Ars Magica*, p. 308).

You are also keenly aware of the Dominion, its Tempers, size, shape and strength. It is perhaps the Pious Magus who best understands Dominion measures, having dealt with them as a Magus (and having undoubtedly sought to undo the Dominion

at one time). Perception rolls to recognize the extent of the Dominion are modified by twice your Piety score (see *Piety and Perception* in Chapter Three for the results of such a roll).

Since you are not the Celebrant of any Dominion (Pious Magi can never behave as priests, so specialized is their role under God), you cannot normally alter the Temper of a Dominion. The only way you can do so is with the True Faith Virtue, as discussed in Chapter Three.

## ARCHANGELS AND PIOUS MAGIC

The archangels are angelic beings, but also symbols of power by other means. Within the Logos, or word of God, the archangels are assigned certain worldly correspondences. Through these correspondences they are given great power to accomplish duties. The archangels are given rule over the

fundamental powers, the potentialities of the True Forms, and it is their great and total knowledge of these things that gives the archangels their power.

As a Pious Magus, you can learn to understand the archangels, become closer to them, study them, meditate on them, and sometimes even visit them or be visited by them. By doing these things, you receive some measure of the archangels' power. Depending upon what kind of magic and what form of devotion you have, you usually choose one or two archangels and focus on their attention, knowledge and understanding of the potentialities. Generally speaking, Pious Magi explore the archangels which hold sway over the powers with which they

were most associated as Hermetic Magi. For example, Michael has power over fire. If you used to be of House Flambeau you might be interested in Michael because of his correspondence.

## Archangel Lore

Your study and understanding of an archangel manifests in the form of an Ability score, specifically in an Archangel Lore Casual Knowledge. During your career as a Pious Magus you may devote normal Experience Points to the purchase of an Archangel Lore score. The Ability can be taught (maybe by another Pious Magus or a clergyperson), studied from the Scriptures and other Church writings, or learned from direct encounters with the archangel. If you are ambitious enough, you can even learn about many archangels and acquire a Lore score for each (there are more archangels than those discussed in Chapter Four and below, and the Storyguide may create more for the Saga). Even simple use of Archangel Lore, whether its bonus makes for a successful effort or not, can justify spending earned Experience Points on the Ability.

Regardless of how points in the Lore Ability are accumulated, your score is applied to rolls that involve the powers governed by the archangel in question. Thus, if you have a score of three in Lore about Michael, that score is added to your rolls involving fire. This includes spell casting rolls, rolls to resist damage from fire, even Magic Resistance rolls against fire spell attacks.

Such bonuses to rolls based on the archangels are cumulative with any other normal bonuses acquired in a situation. Thus, if you apply Archangel Lore as a bonus to a Godly act, your Piety score can also be applied to the action, as usual.

Specifically, the assistance of archangels is beseeched through the Lore Ability by calling upon the archangels' correspondences as aid. In essence, you pray to God for help and, being learned in the powers of the archangels, ask for the direct aid of a specific archangel. Unless the action you intend defies God's will, the archangel's power is usually dispatched to your cause. Thus, Pious Magi have some recourse to Divine influence in their actions.

Finally, Specialties can apply to Archangel Lore. A Specialty usually applies to a specific realm of an archangel's power. For instance, *fire* could be taken as a Specialty of Lore about Michael. In instances where Archangel Lore is applied to a situation involving fire, the Ability score is considered one point higher.

Note: Archangel Lore is an Ability available only to Pious Magi, by virtue of their Magical and Divine power combination. You know how to manipulate the world through magic and have the faith in the Divine required to manifest God's power on earth through you.

## The Correspondences of the Archangels

Below is a list of the various correspondences of the archangels. The Storyguide may decide to add other correspondences to these archangels, or may create other archangels to control certain powers. There may also be a power or force

## Storyguiding Pious Magi

It is very important for you, as Storyguide, to understand that it is incredibly difficult for a character to reach the exalted state of Pious Magus. Characters should probably encounter no more than one such Magus in an entire Saga, assuming one of the characters isn't a Pious Magus.

For a Magus to begin his career with the Order of Hermes and then, through some miraculous chain of events, become a Pious Magus requires a great deal of time. In fact, the character's growth into a Pious Magus should measure much of the length of your Saga.

As the Pious Magus character had to abandon the Order of Hermes to achieve his status, his presence in your Saga must be justified in terms of the other characters and their Covenant. Does the Pious Magus live in the Covenant or is he a neighbor who tends to mundanes and lends a hand to Hermetic Magi from time to time? Also, what influence does the local Church have over the Pious Magus? Much of his time may be taken attending to Church needs, and clergy may frown upon his dealings with Hermetic characters. Clergy may even suspect the Pious Magus of slipping back into his old ways.

Even when a Pious Magus achieves full status, that status requires most of his time to maintain. The character must devote much time to meditation, prayer and study in order to observe the pious life. This is aside from duties the Order of Saint Neriis requires of the character (see below). These duties leave little time for the character to go on journeys with traditional Hermetic characters. Indeed, if a player simply desires to see her character achieve Pious Magus status, she may retire the character upon attaining that goal. The character can then become yours, appearing in the Saga whenever sought out by characters or introduced by you.

Finally, how does the rest of the Order of Hermes react to a Magus who abandoned his old ways, joined the Church, and now interacts with other Magi (i.e., the players' characters)? Order leaders may outlaw the Pious Magus, or actively hunt him down. Flambeau Magi are certainly intrigued by the challenge. How is a Pious Magus, who is banned from doing harm, supposed to defend himself from hostile peers?



in the world to which no archangel has correspondence. It's also possible that you may have to appeal to more than one archangel to receive a bonus for a very complex action. In the case of multiple appeals, the lowest of your applicable Archangel Lore scores is the one that acts as a bonus to the complex spell or action.

## Raphael

In the east, Raphael is the beginning and end of things, the source of all knowledge and learning. He is the Great Healer, bringing with him the powers of solace and the Creation. It was Raphael who was formed into the spirit of God breathed across the waters in *Genesis*. Raphael, in his association with the east, is also associated with the sun as the provider of all life, and thus has sway over all living and growing things. Weather and birds are his realm, for his is the element of air. His time of power is spring.

Arts controlled: Intellego, Auram, Mentem

## Michael

In the south, stern Michael is the protector and guardian. He establishes boundaries, sets limits, and guards and preserves people and places. His is also the power of holy fire, which cleanses and purges the unholy. Michael is the Lord of Wards and thus can offer magical protection. One of his special concerns is the Order of Hermes. He is also a warrior, and may be sought for protection against the Infernal. Michael holds



sway over Hell through the Watchers of Hell, and thus Pious Magi may use his power to banish and command demons. Michael's realm is the realm of all important life decisions, and Michael often aids people in the soul's twilight.

Arts controlled: Rego, Ignem, Vim

## Gabriel

In the west, gentle Gabriel is the lord of water, healing, memory, mystery, the moon, the stars, faeries and sea travel. Women usually find great power to the west.

Arts controlled: Muto, Aquam, Herbam, Corporem

## Uriel

In the north, dark Uriel rules the earth, darkness, the night, gems, the dead, and things unseen and hidden. Uriel is also the archangel of True Imagonem as he is the bringer of Divine visions.

Arts controlled: Perdo, Terrain, Animal, Imagonem

Note: All the archangels participate in and correspond to the Creo Art.

# EXEMPLI GRATIA: A PIOUS MAGUS

The following character offers an example of how a Hermetic Magus might change upon becoming a Pious Magus. The character presented here is the Magus Salistra, first introduced in the *Ars Magica* rules (p. 61-63). She has gained some experience as a Hermetic Magus, and has undergone a transformation toward piety.

## Step One:

The first thing to do is account for Salistra's turn toward the Light. As a Hermetic Magus, Salistra was in tune with the earth and possessed a special bond to it, not only aligning her magic with its nature, but understanding and even fearing it. She had a definite sense of doom about the earth, that it was the source of her power but would also be the means of her undoing.

Yearning to understand her fate, Salistra was fortunate enough to witness a miracle brought about by Uriel, archangel of the earth. It was then that Salistra realized her fate was not with the earth itself, but with the Divine. She concluded that if she did not repent her Hermetic ways, she would be punished by Uriel and claimed by the earth, and Hell in particular. Thus Salistra set out on the road toward piety, first to save her soul from the destiny she always feared, but later to embrace the truth of God.

## Step Two:

As a Pious Magus, Salistra retains the Characteristics she's always had: Intelligence (level-headed) +2, Perception (visionary) +2, Strength (rounded shoulders) -1, Stamina

(enduring) +1, Presence (unassuming) -2, Communication (bland expression) -1, Dexterity (steady hand) +2, Quickness (slow reflexes) -1

### Step Three:

Most of Salistra's old Virtues and Flaws are retained, but some change. Those changed illustrate how Salistra's existing identity is justified according to her new calling.

**No Sigil -1:** As a former member of House Tremere, Salistra had no Sigil with which to identify her full Magus status. As a Pious Magus she still lacks that official recognition, so the Storyguide elects to let her retain the Flaw. The Storyguide might have negated the Flaw and replaced it with a more religious-oriented one, as Pious Magi are automatically beyond normal Hermetic status. It's really a judgment call.

**Sensitive to Disrespect -1:** Salistra, being a Tremere Magus, was previously offended at being treated disrespectfully. She is now concerned when her piety is doubted by others. She is not angered *per se*, but concerned that others would ignore her insights into the Divine just because she was once in the Order of Hermes.

**Sense of Doom -3:** Salistra realizes that her salvation from torture within the earth, to avoid Hell, lies in dedication to God. Nonetheless, knowing is not necessarily doing. Salistra is still capable of sin and fears that her efforts to cleanse her soul and help others might be compromised.

**Deleterious Circumstances (Uncommon and Severe) -2:** Magic rolls are halved when not standing on the ground or on stone. When standing elsewhere, Salistra is somewhat distanced from the influence of Uriel and loses something of her power.

**Major Magic Deficiency (Rare) -3:** Magical totals involving Auram are halved. This Flaw is retained from her Hermetic days.

**The Gentle Gift +1:** This Virtue is received for growing closer to God and understanding the human condition. All Pious Magi acquire this Virtue.

**Knack with Certdmen +2:** +4 to *Certdmen* rolls. Salistra gains something of the Divine Gift offered to Saint Nerius (see below).

**Self-Confident +2:** Two extra Confidence Points are gained. This confidence does not derive from arrogance, as it did in Salistra's days as a Tremere, but from a dedication to the Divine. This benefit is not like True Faith because Salistra perceives God's strength in herself, as she sees it in the endurance of stone. True Faith implies complete trust outside oneself, in God.

**Latent Mystical Ability +2:** Salistra can subconsciously talk to and receive messages from the earth. In reality, her messages are sent by Uriel and delivered by seraphim.

**Exceptional Talent +2:** Visions, derived from *Latent Mystical Ability* and Uriel.

### Step Four:

Salistra's Abilities as a Hermetic Magus are retained by her as a Pious Magus. However, by virtue of becoming a Pious Magus she receives the Piety Ability at a score of one. She takes a Specialty in *recognizing sins*.

Salistra may also acquire scores in Archangel Lore as she acquires Experience as a Pious Magus. Thus far her Archangel Abilities are: Gabriel (memory) 2, and Uriel (Terram) 4.

### Step Five:

Salistra's Art scores, after some years practicing as a Magus, were: Creo 6, Intellego 10, Muto 6, Perdo 5, Rego 11, Animal 4, Aquam 0, Auram 0, Corpore 7, Herbam 6, Ignem 6, Imaginem 0, Mentem 3, Terram 17, Vim 9

When she became a Pious Magus, however, each of those scores is decreased by three points. Art scores as a Pious Magus are: Creo 3, Intellego 7, Muto 3, Perdo 2, Rego 8, Animal 1, Aquam 0, Auram 0, Corpore 4, Herbam 3, Ignem 3, Imaginem 0, Mentem 0, Terram 14, Vim 6.

Although these scores are lower than before, Salistra now has the power to defy Hermetic limits with her Spontaneous spells. In addition, she can now add her Piety score to these spell casting rolls (before dividing). She can also invent and use Formulaic Pious Magic spells, ones that Hermetic Magi cannot use. Furthermore, Salistra's scores in Archangel Lore are added to all spell casting rolls (before division in the case of Sponta-



J. Cobb

neous spells) when the spell applies to the realm of the archangel in question. In this case the archangels are Gabriel and Uriel, who respectively add two and four to casting rolls. As for Formulaic spells, those Salistra had as a Hermetic Magus are retained. However, her spells' Levels must fall within the new limits set by her lower Art scores as a Pious Magus. That is, her spells' Levels must be equal to or lower than her new Form + Technique + Intelligence +10 score. Any spell that has a higher Level and was known in Salistra's Hermetic days is no longer available to her.

Aside from the above changes, Salistra's profile remains the same. Her player might assign her new Personality Traits and quirks based on her new direction, and might give her a new write-up to account for her new devotion, as was done at the beginning of this *Exempli Gratia*. The real changes in her character lie in how she's roleplayed, and in how she lives. There's a vast rift between Order and Church. Moving from one to the other involves a drastic change in outlook and behavior.

## Nerius, Patron Saint of Pious Magi

Nerius is the heart and soul of what Pious Magi are about. It is technically possible to follow a different path than that of Nerius to become a Pious Magus, but the path he first trod enabled other Magi to come to God's grace later in life, and Nerius's sacrifice keeps the fire of Pious Magic lit. Saint Nerius was born in A.D. 921 or 922 and was abandoned on the steps of the monastery of Saint Denis, in the province of Lorre-Atlantique, in the northwest region of France, near Nantes, along l'Erdre river. The monks there, a devout and spiritual group of Benedictines, took him in and gave him the name Peter.



Peter was preternaturally intelligent. He learned to scribe Latin by the time he was 11 years old. It was then that he began training to become a monk, a vocation for which he felt a true calling.

When Peter was still young a famine took the land, and the brothers of the poor monastery could not afford the rent due their lord. A scholar by the name of Rodkin, traveling in the vicinity, visited Saint Denis and offered the monks 200 silver pennies in exchange for stewardship of the young Peter, ostensibly to serve Rodkin as a scribe. Peter was fascinated with Rodkin, his strange looks and ways, and agreed to go with the scholar.

Rodkin took the boy not to Paris or Salamanca to join a University, but to a high, remote mountain hideaway, where he put Peter to work copying vast arcane tomes that the boy could barely decipher, let alone read and understand. When Peter turned 15, Rodkin revealed himself as a Magus of the Order of Hermes, a follower of Criamon, and showed the boy his copy of the famed *Travels of Fedoso*. Peter was intrigued, for he had long sought after the meaning of riddles and enigmas, and had often impressed and disquieted the Abbot of Saint Denis by asking philosophical questions quite beyond his years. Peter saw magic as a means to help him solve the eternal questions that assailed him, and instantly agreed to become Rodkin's apprentice. Rodkin's training was rigorous and demanding, but the boy flourished under it, developing a deep understanding of how the universe worked as he aided his *Pater* in arcane studies.

A remarkably brief five years later, Rodkin deemed Peter ready for his Apprentice's Gauntlet, and took the boy to the nearby Domus Magnus of House Criamon, the Cave of Twisting Shadows. Down the long Endless Stair they walked, side by side. As they descended into the grotto of the Cave, the voices of assembled Criamon Magi rose up from below in a skirling, curling, twisting song, one that played on the nerve endings and caused Peter to blanch and shake with fear. Then, all at once, the unnatural music stopped, and a wave of chanting began. The chanting was a word, a single word that fell like a cascading waterfall upon Peter's already pained ears. The word was "Nerius," repeated over and over again.

A giant quartz crystal the size of a horse's head was suspended by magic in the center of the room. Peter was given a magical circlet which let his mind penetrate the diamond-like crystal, tracing out a line of light behind it. Inside the crystal latticework was a large three-dimensional maze, full of switchbacks and dead ends. Peter threaded the maze carefully, not moving so slowly that the testers were displeased, but not moving so quickly that he could not properly concentrate on the riddles and questions proposed by the Criamon Magi. As the Gauntlet progressed, Peter found his spirit being drawn into the crystal, which was an embodiment of the Enigma, a physical manifestation of the Great Riddle, the Unasked Question. Peter's heart pumped hot blood as he realized, in fear, that the thing was drawing his life energies into it. He panicked.

None know what would have happened if events had continued. Perhaps Peter would have been drawn into a premature Twilight. However, in his fear and pain he cried out and suddenly, without warning, a great light descended upon him. His connection with the crystal was broken. The crystal, which had been growing for nearly a century, shattered.

Rodkin held his breath while he watched the Criamon Riddlemasters decide his young charge's fate. They only smiled, as if they knew this would happen all along. They asked Rodkin what name he would give to the new Magus that stood before them.

Rodkin gave Peter the name Nerusius, that which the cave had echoed up at them. In the famed *Travels of Fedoso*, Nerusius was the half-man, a man with half his body in this world and half in the next.

Nerusius became a competent, if not brilliant, Magus, impressing his fellows in House Criamon by discovering new riddles to solve in *The Travels of Fedoso*, the *Cycle of Singing Shattered Midnight*, the *Everchanging Book*, and other important Criamon texts. Still, as a researcher of spells and magic Nerusius was only moderately talented. Most of his time was spent in quiet, secluded contemplation, much the same life he had witnessed as a youth at Saint Denis's.

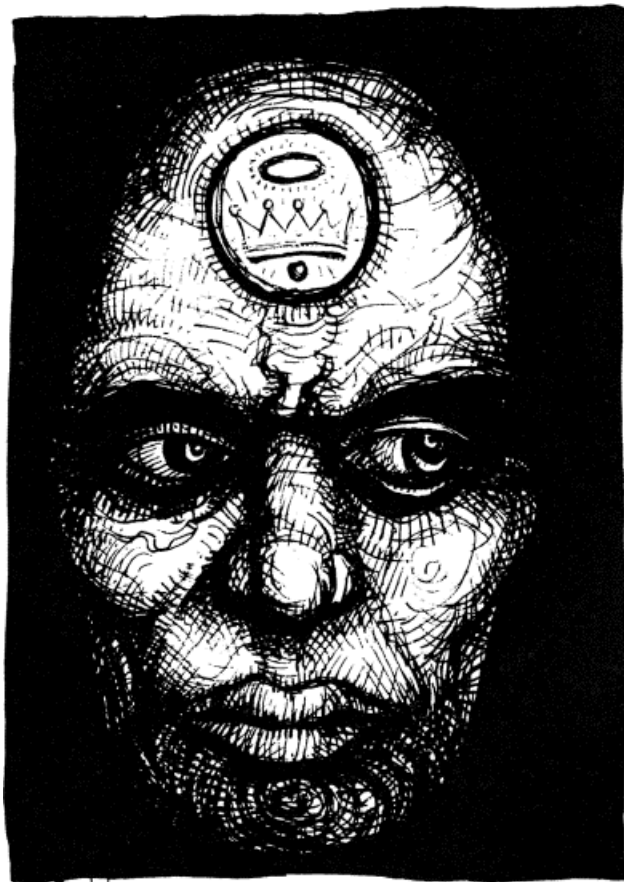
One day a riddle in *The Travels of Fedoso* led Nerusius to the foothills of the Alps, where he had spent much of his youth. There he found a little-used footpath and spent the next few days ascending the great mountains. Cradled in a secret canyon, Nerusius found a simple stone wellhouse. Built as it was in the middle of nowhere, it seemed clear to Nerusius that the structure was built by faerie folk or by some other magic. Indeed, the well tapped into the living rock itself.

Preparing himself by ritual after his long journey, Nerusius uncovered the lid to the well and peered into its depths. He saw sparkling patterns that grew brighter the longer he looked. The lights formed into paths and curves, evershifting, everchanging, great structures and lattices that formed and reformed and became ever more complex and ever more simple. Nerusius had found a reflection of the Enigma, captured in the waters of the well, and the Enigma rose up to capture his heart, his mind and his soul. He felt himself becoming part of it.

Although there was a moment when Nerusius wished to plunge his consciousness into the everchanging array, he could not allow himself to do so. Instead he turned from the vision, rolled onto his back, and looked up at the roof of the wellhouse, where a bas-relief crucifix was carved. The crucifix swam in his vision, and became an open doorway of Light, one that streamed forward into his soul. Nerusius embraced the Light, drank deeply of its power, and found himself propelled into it. As the veil of Light passed his eyes, Nerusius cried out in terror and pain as a flaming blade interposed itself between him and the goal he sought. The flame crackled through the air and surrounded his body, and every counterspell he tried during those precious seconds failed. The fires purged his skin and burned his very soul. With his last breath, before the fire consumed him, Nerusius relented. He gave himself over to the Light, to the Fire, and curled into a ball as the flames danced around him. A prayer, unbidden, sprang from his lips, a prayer for mercy.

Whether stern Michael was moved by this prayer, or Nerusius's old faith still served him, is a story that remains to be told. Regardless of why, Nerusius was spared, and in the coming light of dawn, realized he had become a different person, reborn into the Light through the grace and mercy of God. There could be no mistake that the Divine had spared his life, and that he had given his life over to it.

Nerusius spent the next 40 days and nights in the wellhouse, drinking only of the water of the well. It is said that during this time he had many visions of his future, and was tempted by the Dark One three times: once with flesh (for Nerusius was still a



virgin), once with food (for Nerijs was fasting), and once with power (for Nerijs was still a Magus, and sought power as a means to better understand all). But Nerijs could smell the smoke of Hell on the Infernal agents who came to him. He had tasted the flame of God's Wrath and knew that Ignem Domini all too well.

When he came down from the mountains, Nerijs returned to his Covenant and destroyed his lab equipment and tomes of arcane lore. He gave away the magical things he had collected and created. He embraced his one *amid* in the Covenant, a crippled Verditius Magus named Ceylan. Ceylan gave Nerijs the mande he would wear for the rest of his life, a special mande that would let him walk for days and days without want for food. Then Nerijs left.

After Nerijs's departure from his old ways, the thread of his life branched into a full tapestry of deeds and activities. Nerijs traveled the length and breadth of Mythic Europe, from Kiev to Seville, from Dublin to Damietta. It is postulated that, later in his career, Nerijs learned secret ways to travel from place to place. Evidently his magic had not been burnt from him, only drastically changed into something new, something different.

Before long word of Nerijs spread. Indeed, stories and legends were told of him even while he lived. He gained a reputation in the Hermetic Order as a stormcrow, for where he went trouble soon followed. It was not that Nerijs was a lodestone of trouble. He simply knew, by instinct, where trouble would be and arrived before its outbreak. The stories of Nerijs's adventures, which have been retained even to this day, are principally found in secret Criamon archives:

Nerijs once visited Verdi Covenant and destroyed an Infernal talisman that even the greatest of Magi could not break. It is said that Verdi Light, the everburning torch that lights the main hall of the Covenant, was a result of Nerijs's blessing, testament to the eternal power of the Lord.

Nerijs returned to the Cave of Twisting Shadows and reported his experience to its Riddlemasters. They respected him for his vision, demanded to know where his wellhouse was, and, when he refused to reveal it, challenged him to *Certdmen* to discover its location. As one of the Magi was defeating Nerijs in *Certdmen* there was a brilliant flash of light. An angel appeared in full raiment before the assembled Council. It said, "*Know thou that this child shall have in this the sword of the word of God, which surpasseth all earthly contests. By His will, it is done.*" With that, the angel vanished, *Certdmen* was joined anew, and Nerijs, who had only studied the skill briefly under his master, defeated each and every one of the Riddlemasters. From that point on, Nerijs won any *Certdmen* in which he defended the Divine from the Order of Hermes.

House Flambeau learned of Nerijs's talk of Ignem Domini, and challenged Nerijs for it. In a contest of fire Nerijs burned the Magus Calixtus to ashes; it was discovered the Magus had made pacts with demons to gain power in the Art of Ignem.

Nerijs impressed Magi of House Bonisagus by healing permanently without raw vis, changing the essential nature of things, and manipulating time, all in the course of attempting to show them the true power of God. Nerijs never proselytized to any other group of Magi but House Bonisagus, and excerpts from his Durenmar homilies are considered great treasures by his cult, even to this day.

Nerijs traveled to the Holy Land and discovered a secret entrance to the ruins of King Solomon's fallen temple. It is said that there he found the Staff of Aaron, the same that Moses used to confront Pharaoh in the book of Exodus. This staff supposedly served as Nerijs's magical focus for the rest of his life.

When his visions foretold of a year of peace, Nerijs spent a year writing his memoirs. The resulting scrolls, 13 in total, detail much of what is contained in this narrative. In particular, Nerijs wrote a letter to his friend Ceylan. The letter outlined the four basic steps Nerijs had taken to reach the exalted state of Pious Magus. Nerijs's preconversion, early works on the Enigma are also held in high regard by House Criamon as they frequently refer to hidden puzzles.

Although Nerijs was considered something of a firebrand and rebel by the Church, there were quite a few philosophers, students and even bishops who spent time with him discussing the nature of the Divine and his perspective on it.

It is a well-documented fact that Nerijs was chaste and virginal even unto his death. A Merinita Magus named Yissela continually tested his virtue, for she fell in love with the





spiritual Nerius, and often used her faerie powers to show up in places where he needed her aid. Nerius usually accepted the aid but always remained pure. Some say Nerius felt a totally chaste, courtly love for the beautiful Yissela, and after Nerius's death, Yissela forswore the Order of Hermes and entered a mystic Cistercian order. The poem, "Ode to the Flower," was written by Nerius during his Year of Peace, and seems to refer to Lady Yissela.

Coincidentally, Nerius never showed disapproval of the Fay. Whether stories of Nerius preaching to faeries in Arcadia are true or not remains to be seen — die Fay do not speak of it and Nerius was notoriously quiet on the subj ect. He showed all faeries mercy and compassion, for he remembered all too well the state of his soul before his conversion, a state not unlike that of all Magi and faeries. Nothing that Nerius did ever caused pain to the Fay.

Wherever Nerius went, he planted seeds of change, for there were several Christian Magi within the Order who secretly wished for closer ties to the Divine. To these secret Christians, Nerius offered a beacon of hope, that they could be who they were and still achieve salvation. Even while Nerius lived these Christian Magi began to write each other, encouraged by Nerius, and made quiet pilgrimages to meet one another.

One of the reasons these Magi felt they had to be secretive was that Nerius himself, almost from the very first, sparked the fires of controversy in the Order of Hermes. He caused so much unrest that many Quaesitoris sought him for questioning. Indeed, they sought him for every perceived breach of the Peripheral Code and other small infractions. Regardless of their secrecy, Christian Magi were still exposed, mostly through the efforts of Houses Flambeau, Tylalus and Tremere. These three Houses were the most vigilant against Christianity's infection of the Order. A persecution of sorts was building within the Order, and Nerius shifted his attention to deal with the problem. He arrived in Normandy Tribunal during the beginning days of the Schism War, where the fires of hatred and ignorance were being fanned by die Flambeau, Tylalus and Tremere.

Nerius presented himself for judgment before the Tribunal, who could find nothing in the Code, Peripheral or otherwise, to convict him. Nerius urged restraint to the assembled multitude, and even though he realized House Diedne was doomed, he did all he could to prevent Bjornaer from being drawn down with it. His subtle urgings, his quiet words of passion, his intense faith and devotion to both God and the Order showed through his visage, and it was by Nerius's doing that Bjornaer was not included in the purge. But there was one last tribulation Nerius had to endure, for the Tribunal called him to appear before the assemblage to answer charges that he was systematically attempting to undermine the Order.

Nerius quietly refuted the charges, and gave as his reason for all actions: "Not by my Gift, but God's."

At the Tribunal meeting a young, hotheaded Magus by the name of Malvon challenged Nerius to *Certamen* to test Nerius's claim. It was understood that if Nerius lost the contest he would





give up his Christian beliefs. Nerius knew he could easily best the Tremere whelp, but refused to take part in the *Certdmen*. He felt no *Certdmen* should affect a man's basic beliefs, and to duel that way would reduce faith to a betting wager.

The Tremere faction saw its chance. With much of the paranoid Tribunal behind them, the Tremere ordered Nerius to partake of the *Certdmen* in order to resolve matters at the meeting. They had the backing of the Quaesitoris in the demand. When Nerius still refused to fight, the Tremere used that breach of Tribunal ruling to declare a Wizard's March against Nerius. This was an extreme measure, but the meeting was at Fudarus, Domus Magnus of House Tytalus, and Tytalus, aligned with Tremere and Flambeau, had the power to push the decision through.

Other attending Magi, including the Tribunal Praeco, tried to block the conspirators, but Nerius refused their help, saying they must not risk their lives for him, that God would watch over him. Nerius was cast out of the Order and a Wizard's March was declared against him.

As one, the Magi of the hostile Houses turned on Nerius. With blatant disregard for the sanctity of the Tribunal chamber, they cried out their hate in the language of magic. Thrice a dozen spells of fire, destruction and harm hurtled towards Nerius, and died without effect. Again the spells rained upon him, and again, nothing touched him. Then those present perceived that Nerius stood within a circle of light, that none of his enemies' spells might enter that circle. The gathered Magi fell silent, peering upon this miracle. Then Nerius spoke:

"Beholdye, and see that God's will is stronger than thine own. Recall that when thou leavest the world thou shall be judged and all thy arts and all thy rituals shall not avail thee against His will, even as they have not availed thee against His humble servant. Look to the hatred that festers in thy breasts, and think of what thou hast so casually attempted this day. If thou continue on thy present course, driven by the seas of anger, thou shall be driven unto the rocks, and there sink. Thou has the power to turn thy course, and to steer unto the greater good. Choose wisely, all ye here, before it is too late.

"And I say to those who would kill me, that I still hold to the oath I swore, for all that they do not. Only remember, it is by His will, not thine, that this happens."

Nerius then stepped out of the circle and died.

Word of Nerius's death spread like wildfire throughout the Order. His friends and early followers proclaimed him a martyr. Many vowed that his death, life and works would not be forgotten, and resolved to preserve their memory. Nerius had planted a great many trees of faith in the Order, and those trees blossomed and bore fruit in the days after his death.

With renewed vigor Christian Magi secretly met each other where they could. Some say they even discovered some of the Neriudian Portals that had allowed the Magus to get from place to place instantly and without raw vis. It was thus that a movement began, spurred into action as Christian Magi were by the slaying of their spiritual father.



It is not known when the call for the Church to recognize Nerius as a saint began. Perhaps it began with the visions and miracles that occurred at the tomb of Nerius, where his ashes (thoughtfully recovered by an *amicus* who attended that fatal Tribunal) were kept. At one point the Staff of Aaron, in snake form, crawled into Nerius's tomb and wrapped itself around the um, refusing to allow anyone to touch or molest it. It was not until Nerius's trusted friend and disciple, Valoran, came that the staff reverted to its olivewood state and folk were allowed in the tomb. Valoran, holding the staff, was visited by an angel who manifested to him and gave him the mantle of Nerius, which gave Valoran the unswerving stamina to travel to Nerius's now far-flung flock.

Followers of Nerius tended to be one of three kinds, and many of today's followers still belong to these groups. There were the *Renuncia*, who altogether forswore the Order and hid from it. There were the hermits, who took to high mountain aeries, where (hey could contemplate the nature of life, magic and Nerius's teachings, sometimes erecting magical protections to prevent being seen or found. Sometimes these hermits even chose to form monastic communities to preserve Nerius's teachings. Wanderers formed the third group of Nerius's followers, traveling the length and breadth of the land, one step ahead of the Quaesitoris, making the ideals and beliefs of Nerius known.

## THE ORDER OF SAINT NERIUS TODAY

Today the Order of Nerius is a sprawling secret society, a group of Pious Magi and simple followers of Nerius who have slowly begun to infiltrate the higher levels of both the Church and Order of Hermes. Because they are unlike other Magi, in that their Gift no longer causes discomfort among humans and animals, Pious Magi are able to pass among both Magi and clerical brethren largely undetected. Even most Perception + Piety rolls fail to detect them. Indeed, most clergy feel that "here is a scholar who is quite pious and sincere in his faidi." Of course, heresy is the chief problem that Pious Magi face. If they are found out, or speak of Saint Nerius in either Church or Covenant, they are likely branded heretics.

## Current Activities of the Order

Neriusian Portals allow the Order of Saint Nerius's agents to be nearly everywhere at once. Their network of emissaries and operatives has fanned out and now infiltrates most places of authority and political power in Mythic Europe, from the courts of kings to the offices of bishops to the Domus Magnus of Bonisagus itself. Members of the order usually find positions at small, unimportant jobs and keep their ears open. Many of them are former Magi who have renounced their Gift and no longer pursue magic, now posing as mundanes.





The Nerusians<sup>1</sup> main goal is to survive all persecution, in the meantime attempting to get Nerius recognized for the saint he surely must be. To this end some use subtle manipulations and even gently cast spells, hoping to make the beauty of Nerius clear without controlling the thoughts of others.

Meanwhile, some of the *Renuncia* run a quietly established monastery, called the Abbey of Saint Nerius, in the foothills of the Alps. Here men and women — not necessarily Pious Magi — worship God and honor Nerius, seeking to have him canonized. These people follow a slightly modified Rule of Saint Benedict. This Rule allows for study time and experimentation in libraries and laboratories. This is probably the closest thing to a Covenant that Pious Magi can have.

The monastery hopes to be formally recognized before its members are brought to the attention of Church Inquisitors and violent Magi of the Order of Hermes. The fact that the "monks" follow a heretical saint impedes their legal recognition, although they have been able to locate a sympathetic bishop and are subtly trying to coax him into visiting and supporting their mission.

And yet, even if the monks can gain a bishop's favor, the Pope might still order his crusaders against them, for Nerius has become a sticking point for the Papacy. In fact, a papal bull has been issued. It states that Nerius, while most likely a virtuous Magus in life and most definitely having departed this world for Heaven, was not a saint because he never lived by the orthodoxy of the liturgy. As far as the Pope is concerned that's the end of

## The Nerusian Portal: Rego Corporem 50

R: Special, D: Inst., Ritual

You must be a Pious Magus to use this spell. You call upon the aid of Uriel, archangel of the earth, and in a prolonged Ritual, ask permission to pass through his realm to reemerge elsewhere in Mythic Europe. Part of the Ritual involves explaining your need for traveling through Uriel's realm, and your explanation is dispatched to Uriel by a cherub or seraph. If your purpose in invoking the Portal defies God's will, for whatever reasons, Uriel denies entry into his realm, but you must still spend vis to cast the spell, and make a casting roll to determine whether you Botch. Only by altering your plans to suit God's will might you be allowed to open a Portal. Furthermore, if you deserve special merit or reprimand, Uriel or one of his agents might address you while in transit through the archangel's lands. In opening a Portal, you must draw a doorway upon a surface of stone and when the Ritual is complete (a successful spell casting roll is made) you may step through this "doorway" and emerge at another destination. The "doorway" seems to remain solid to those observing your passage, and no one but you and whatever you carry may go through.

Once a Portal has been created it need not be drawn again for future use. However, the Ritual must be performed, and vis spent, every time the Portal is activated.

it, and anyone following Nerius risks excommunication. Nevertheless, Nerusians believe it worthwhile to follow their heretical saint.

There is also rumor of a group of Magi who dedicate themselves to both Church and Order, answering to authorities in each. These Magi, called the Apotropaics, are said to be dedicated to the destruction of demons, and supposedly began their movement in the 11th century. No one is certain whether this group actually exists, or at least no one is talking. If the Apotropaics do exist, they are surely a group of Pious Magi with a very specific goal in life, or a group of Pious Magi who have gone rogue from their own brethren. (For more information on the Apotropaics, see *The Maleficium*, p. 139-140).

## Tribute to Nerius

Players of characters who follow Nerius may determine their own relationship with the "saint." You may honor him privately and seek to educate others about his truth, or you may belong to an order of "monks" who venerate Nerius and his life. Regardless of how you respect Nerius, you, as a Pious Magus, must annually renew your vows to Church and God to preserve your Divine favor and powers. The rededication is performed on Saint Nerius's Day (October 31st). You need not necessarily

be in a Church or monastery of Nerius's followers at the time of your vows, but should seek such a place if at all possible. If you cannot reach a Church or "monastery," God hears your declaration of dedication. You must still perform the same service at a place of dedication when possible, though.

If you fail to declare your vows to God on Saint Nerius's Day, but are capable of doing so, you lose your magical powers for one year. (To be capable of making your vows, you have to be of free will and mind.) On the following Nerius Day you can renew your vows and restore your powers, assuming you still live under and uphold God's law.

## Nerius's Portal

Some of the contemplatives of the Order of Saint Nerius have discovered the ritual that Nerius himself developed in later life, that which enabled him to travel instantly from one end of Mythic Europe to the other. Using lore taken directly from Nerius's heavily enciphered magical writings, they have analyzed a dialogue he had with the spirit of King Solomon, and have discovered the secret of the Nerusian Portal.

The Portal, a gift to Solomon through Uriel, archangel of the earth, enables those using it to travel great distances in the twinkling of an eye. A Portal is created by means of a Pious Magic Ritual spell (see the boxed spell for its description). When the spell is complete, the caster may step through a "doorway" she has drawn and emerge through another Portal in another location. All the caster need do is concentrate on her destination and she is transported to the Portal nearest that destination. However, if there is no other Nerusian Portal near the Magus's destination, she may emerge quite far from her intended place, but still at the Portal closest to her destination. If the caster's own Portal is the nearest to her destination, she

reemerges from her own Portal. Only Pious Magi may create and pass through Nerius's Portals. Once a Portal is created it remains there until disturbed or destroyed. If a Portal is disturbed after passage, the Magus may not return through that Portal, but will instead emerge through the one closest to her home upon her return trip. Pious Magi who are cautious or wary of Mythic Europe's small-minded occupants often design Portals in safe places, thus always ensuring that they have an escape route in times of trouble.

As Nerius's Portal is such an old spell, used by Nerius himself, there are Portals located throughout Mythic Europe, many of them secreted away. Indeed, the highest concentration exists in the Holy Land, where Nerius spent much time. As

## Condemned to Hell

While those who follow Satan are damned, the Divine still offers salvation for those who would turn from the Dark Lord. Inevitably, all pacts made with and oaths sworn to the Lord of Darkness can be rendered null and void by a sincere conversion. Souls have been known to be rescued from Hell itself in some situations. Michael, Mary and many other saints are in the business of saving souls. Mary, in particular, listens to sincere pleas from those who have sunk into the darkness, and intercedes to rescue those souls.

Understand that as Magi must take a long, long road to arrive at piety, there are many who try and fail, perhaps turning to the Dark as an alternative. Even Pious Magi are not proof against temptation from the Infernal. They too may fall at any time.

Pious Magi all strive for a common goal and the common good, it is not unusual for them to welcome strangers through any personal Portals, rather than demand identification or attempt to bar passage. In fact, if you pass through the Portal in another Pious Magus's sanctum, she might seek to aid you in your quest, for your quest is obviously in accordance with Divine will.

Each Portal is guarded by a seraph. These angels seek to keep their Portals from harm, but are not always successful. The seraphim ensure the safe passage of travelers through the Portals, unless safe passage defies God's intent. Protecting seraphim might even warn travelers, before they pass through a Portal, of what dangers lie beyond. This is especially true if Infernal activity abounds in the vicinity of a Portal.

## A FINAL WORD ON PIOUS MAGI

Ultimately, Pious Magi are meant to be a quiet force for Light in a world of darkness and despair. They are mortal so they can act directly against the foes of God. They understand the power of God and can use it directly to help those in trouble. They are truly moral and ethical, which may be why there are so few of them. The relationship between God and Pious Magus is akin to the relationship between father and child, a child who once ran away but has now returned home and is loyal and loving.





# CESTUS DEI: THE MAILED FIST OF GOD

## APPENDIX



estus Dei is a Saga outline that you, as Storyguide, may use to pit characters and their Covenant in a prolonged conflict against Mythic Europe's Church. Note, however, that the Saga is merely a suggestion on how you may depict the Church in your Ars Magica stories. Indeed, be warned that this storyline might bring about a radical change in your Mythic Europe setting, changing the social, political, religious and perhaps even geographic landscape.

Because of the serious, doom-laden tone of this Saga, you should undertake it only after careful consideration of your Troupe. The Saga places characters in direct opposition to one of the most powerful organizations in Mythic Europe. Cestus Dei not only threatens the destruction and execution of characters and Covenant, but also of the Order of Hermes itself. If you have been playing Ars Magica for some time you may not want to undertake this Saga with the Covenant you have been using. Perhaps you might create a Covenant specifically for play in this Saga, a Covenant which is dramatically suited to the tale.

On the other hand, although it is a drastic tale, Cestus Dei is a compelling one. It's a story you may wish to introduce into your continuing Saga just to put the fear of God into the characters. Of course, the Saga can be toned down to suit a more subdued game, and even if you don't tell this story, it might be inspiration for other Church activities.

## SUMMARY OF THE SAGA

Cestus Dei is about the Church and Order of Hermes coming at odds in widespread terms. Although one of the more subtle background stories of most Ars Magica Sagas involves Church interaction with Covenant, this Saga brings that subtle conflict out in the open. However, don't think the conflict is a clear, black-and-white issue.

Even though some in the Church perceive the Order of Hermes as a dark contrast to the Divine's light, there are a myriad of perspectives characters can have on the Church. Covenantfolk may especially be divided, as most of them (including custos) are probably baptized Christians with simple faith, believing they will go to Hell if the Church says so. And yet, these same people feel loyalty toward the Order and seek to further its ends. Which institution prevails in the mind of the individual? The threat of damnation is a powerful weapon wielded by the Church. Indeed, if the Church places Covenant lands under Interdict, most covenantfolk may leave rather than jeopardize their souls, despite loyalty to masters. The fear of excommunication and Interdict is not just a mundane one, it is a spiritual one.

Cestus Dei consists of three parts: culminating events, revelation and resolution. During the culminating events, characters notice increased hostility and tension from the Church. Then, during the revelation, they learn exactly what the Church has been planning all along. They learn of the



Order of Saint Mary, of the Knights of Saint Mary, and of the peril faced by their Covenant and the entire Order of Hermes. The Saga's resolution could mean the characters' grim defeat as the armies of Light ride in to destroy their Covenant. The resolution could simply lead to a relocation of the characters' Covenant, forcing the characters to move deeper into the unknown lands of Mythic Europe. There is even a chance that the Church finally accepts the Order, but this is a desperate hope.

## MOOD, THEME AND TONE

*Cestus Dei* is a very serious, grim Saga. It is a story about the final eruption of open hostilities between two monolithic organizations which have been at odds since the days of Constantinople. Because events of this Saga take some time to occur and are quite somber, you might introduce intermittent events, such as humorous incidents involving faeries or Groggs. These entertaining events break the gloom that pervades *Cestus Dei*. However, even these tension-breakers should be bleak, generating humor from violence or the misfortune of others. The contrast these humorous moments create, when compared to the rest of the Saga, only intensifies the horror of the characters' battle with the Church.

The mood of the Saga is also that of electricity, a tension before the storm.. That electricity and tension should mount throughout preliminary events until a thunderous tumult erupts. When the battle begins, characters may fully realize the awesome power of Church and God. Prior to the climax, characters may only get glimpses of Divine power, like flashes offered by lightning in a storm. If the characters and their Order have not gathered enough might to withstand the Church's onslaught, all may be destroyed.

Ultimately, the theme of *Cestus Dei* is the pursuit of power, and the realization that power is not an evil unto itself. The abuse of power is an evil. A secondary theme is understanding. If Order of Hermes and Church better understood each other, their conflict might never have begun. Maybe as a result of *Cestus Dei* Order and Church can learn to understand each other and seek peace in the future.

## A BRIEF INTERLUDE AND HISTORY LESSON

The linchpin of *Cestus Dei* is one of the most famous of all magical things in Mythic Europe: the cup of Christ, the Holy Grail. This cup is not just that which Christ used at the Last Supper and the one that caught His blood on the Cross. It is also the Chalice of the Mother, used by the Celtic peoples. It's the *Pair Dadeni* of the Druids. It's the Cup of Life and Rebirth, from which (it is said) prophecies are scryed, healing is given, and

magic power flows. Thus, as an artifact of both Christian and pagan faith, the Grail's power stems equally from the True Emphyrean and the Shadow Emphyrean.

As an embodiment of both Divinity and Magic, the Grail is perhaps one of the only things that both Church and the Order of Hermes would risk all for. For the Church the Grail is perhaps the most precious of all Holy relics, effectively being the first Communion cup. For Magi of Hermes, the Grail is said to give forth vis in large quantities, to allow access to the True Forms, and to possess great healing properties.

Historically, the Grail was the subject of many a quest for knights in Arthur's time. The knights sought after the Grail for much the same reason: the land of England was divided between Christian and pagan. The cup was a powerful symbol of sanctity, recognized by both religions, which could unite both under one king. That power of unification may be able to unite the pagan and Christian factions of the Order of Hermes and Church.

## Introducing the Grail

Although legends of the Grail are widespread, and characters may know many of them (as characters with the Legend Lore Ability may), not all may know of the chalice. You may therefore want to introduce the idea of the Grail to your characters. You may be as subtle as having characters see a stained glass window that depicts the Grail story, or you may be as overt as having characters dream of the Grail. Maybe an old, forgotten tome containing Grail lore is discovered at the back of the Covenant library.

Ultimately, how you introduce the Grail into the Saga is up to you. Regardless of the manner, the purpose of introducing the Grail is to set the tone for what's to come. With a knowledge of Grail lore, characters know what the Grail is, why it's valuable, and why it's worth pursuing when it does appear. If you don't want to make it too obvious that a Grail-related story is in the brewing, keep your early references to Grail lore discreet. When characters do want to know more about it, they can recall minor, past encounters with information on the Grail and return to those sources.

Alternatively, you can make it obvious that a Grail story is in the brewing. Indeed, your intent might be to instill Grail fever in the characters. If the characters have prophetic dreams of the chalice, they might believe it is their duty to pursue the relic, just as legendary knights did.

On the other hand, the characters' motives might be more self-motivated than virtuous. Maybe the characters lose all but their own personal sources of raw vis, and go in search of the Grail to renew supplies. Some devastating tragedy could easily rob the Covenant of its magical resources. The Infernal curse of the Fruit in *A Winter's Tale* is such a devastating force. However, the pitfalls of seeking the Grail for personal reasons are great, and its discovery may cause more harm than good.

## Legend Lore

The Legend Lore Ability may be instrumental to characters in this Saga, as its use makes them privy to information about the past, specifically the Grail and its legacy. Indeed, knowledge of the Grail can be an Ability Specialty. This Specialty offers characters a +1 bonus to Legend Lore rolls involving the Grail. However, that doesn't mean to say characters without the Specialty are ignorant of the relic.

Legend Lore and Grail Specialty can be applied to tell stories about the Grail, to look for signs of its passing, and perhaps to further research it. Knowledge of the Grail also helps a person tell when the Grail has affected another's life. The Ability might also modify a Perception or Detect Holiness and Unholiness roll to recognize another who has come in contact with the Grail.

The amount of information a character knows about the Grail is usually a measure of an Intelligence + Legend Lore roll (simple or stress depending on the situation). A high roll means all "lesser" information is known.

### Roll Result Information Known

Botch	Wrong information.
1+	No information.
3+	The Grail is the cup of Christ
5+	The Grail is important to many religions, not just Christianity. These faiths include the Old Religion and Druidism.
7+	The Grail contains great power, power of life and death. It is also a source of ever-replenishing vis.
9+	The Grail is often sought but very rarely found. It's thought that the seeking in and of itself, not the acquisition, brings one closer to the Divine. The Grail often appears and disappears, passing from one hand to another
10+	A woman guards the Grail wherever it is, and it has only been through the auspices of a holy woman that anyone has ever gained it. The Grail often transcends worldly reality, existing in realms of Magic and Divinity

## Culminating Events

You can develop the *Cestus Dei* Saga along the following timeline. The following events introduce the Grail, establish current relations between Church and Order, and illustrate affairs in the world that culminate into later Saga events.

**Year 1:** Begin to introduce Grail imagery into your own stories. At some point the Covenant might play host to a traveling friar, who tells stories of the Reconquista (the crusade to reclaim Christian Spanish lands from invading Moors), and of Magi who fight on both sides. This information updates

characters on the affairs of the world, and sets the tone of early Church-Order conflict. To bring Church-Order conflict home, and to establish a personal grudge between characters and clergy, a Magus and some grogs might get into trouble in a local town and have a run-in with the Church.

Year 2: A knight seeks to join the characters' Covenant under the pretense of having offended the Church. He's very elusive about his crime but is very open-minded about Magi and their activities. His liberal attitudes and fighting prowess make him a valuable asset. He may become a player's character or may be played by you.

Sooner or later the local nobility and Church learn the Covenant is harboring the knight. They demand that he be turned over for punishment. As it turns out, the knight had fought in the Iberian crusades but lost faith in the cause after witnessing the brutality of his fellows and the relative enlightenment of his "enemies." Refusing to fight any longer, he was excommunicated and some "true" Christians seek to kill him.

The characters can do with the knight as they please, and may even turn him over; a confrontation with angry crusaders and priests might prove detrimental to the Covenant. The characters may also defend the man or somehow trick or dissuade his pursuers.

The knight serves the purpose of intensifying the characters' clash with the Church, and he provides further information on the Iberian crusade against the Moors. In fact, he embodies both sides of the crusade, seeking to fight for God but recognizing the injustice of the war. The knight may also know much of the Grail and tell stories of it in the Covenant.

Year 3: After previous encounters with the characters, the Church decides to put diem under observation. A Dominican monk, Brother Ambrose, is sent to administer lands in the vicinity of the Covenant. The Dominican might even offer to minister to Covenant inhabitants, or to perform scribe work (he knows Latin), in return for residence at the Covenant. Covenfolk certainly support this opportunity, though Magi probably do not, unless in desperate need of a better library. At the least, covenfolk are likely to attend Mass, even if they have to visit local villages to do so. (In the end Magi learn of the Church-Order conflict that exists within their own Covenant.)

The Dominican seeks to win the trust of the characters, Magi included. Indeed, he may become a genuine friend. However, his Church duty is clear. Ambrose is committed to search for evidence to undo the Covenant. He might secure several witnesses to acts of "diabolism." If allowed into the Covenant he may find banned and heretical books in the library. Although he does not demand the books' immediate destruction, as a friend, he warns characters that they endanger their souls and lives by possessing the books.

Brother Ambrose doesn't threaten his position at the Covenant by harping on the dangers of characters' actions, but does, begrudgingly, report to his superiors. Sooner or later Ambrose's superiors will use the Dominican's discoveries against

## Sir Eoin

**Characteristics:** Intelligence (open-minded) +1, Perception (watchful) +1, Strength (doughty) +2, Stamina (hearty) +3, Presence (maimed) -3, Communication (foreign) -1, Dexterity (one-handed) -3, Quickness (great stride) +2

**Age:** 35

**Size:** 0

**Virtues and Flaws:** Charmed Life (reroll Botches) +4 Knight +3, Oath of Fealty (feudal lord) -1, Dependant (family) -3, Missing Hand (-4 to manual actions) -2

**Abilities:** Speak Irish Gaelic (war terms) 5, Speak French (travel terms) 1, Speak Spanish (religious terms) 2, Dodge (scimitars) 3, Alertness (Moors) 2, Brawl (tackles) 3, Intimidation (lowly knights) 3, Leadership (lost morale) 3, Broadsword Attack (when outnumbered) 3, Broadsword Parry (slash attacks) 3, Drinking (when depressed) 3, Legend Lore (Grail) 1

**Confidence:** 2

**Reputation:** None known to Covenant

**Personality Traits:** Formal +3, Personable +3

**Weapons and Armor:** Chain Mail Hauberk, Broadsword

**Broadsword Totals:** First Strike +5, Attack +4, Damage +11, Parry Defense +6 (12 Action)

**Encumbrance:** 3

**Other Combat Totals:** Dodge Defense +2 (8 Action), Soak +15 (21 Action), Fatigue +0

### Description

Sir Eoin has shocking, flame-red hair, and is brawny and imposing. He has a habit of rubbing the stump of his arm and often keeps it hidden upon meeting new people.

### Roleplaying Tips

Eoin is honest and straightforward. He prefers simple words to long ones and has very little social grace.

the characters. Inquisitors might even put Magi on trial. Whether Ambrose seeks to defend the characters at that time depends on how good his relations at the Covenant are.

At the least, Ambrose's regular duties create some tension at the Covenant. On Sunday, when Mass is held in a storage room on the ground floor, a slight Dominion Aura rises. The Aura may hamper spell efforts, weaken the *Aegis of the Hearth*, or generally annoy Magi. Mass probably keeps Covenant morale high, however, so Magi have to decide which is more important to them: their studies or a working Covenant.

Ambrose's activities allow the characters direct insight into the Church and its attitudes, allowing them to understand their enemy-to-be. Ambrose might offer characters some warning of Church activity against the Covenant, even if



Ambrose is the one turning evidence against the characters. Characters therefore learn that friendship can blur any animosity felt for the Church.

Ambrose may also know much lore about the Grail, and knows the Church's position on the chalice. He might warn characters against pursuing the Grail, no matter what events may encourage a search for it, forewarning of events and conflicts yet to come.

**Year 4:** Sir Eoin (pronounced Owen) visits the Covenant. Eoin is a western warrior of obvious Irish-Celtic origins. He's a landed knight who participated in the Iberian crusades. During the war he was appointed the protector of a Magus named Hericetus, so he has some understanding of how the Order works. When he was caught in a nearby blizzard on the way back to his homeland, Eoin had no qualms about seeking shelter at the Covenant. Eoin returns from the crusade an invalid, having lost a forearm to a grievous wound. Eoin is a quiet, proud knight, now humbled.

If shown generosity and hospitality, the knight loses his rigid demeanor and demonstrates a truly gregarious nature, telling stories of the Reconquista and of other crusades. He also tells stories of Ireland, his family, and some of the Fay. Yet, when asked about his wound, Eoin always changes the subject, at least until he is sufficiently drunk or feels he can take someone into his confidence.

Eoin is a soldier but also a chivalrous knight. He refuses to speak of his wound as long as ladies are present for he means to speak plainly if he dares speak at all, and the story is a violent one. He tells characters that he almost lost his entire arm or would have had it not been for a woman who appeared out of nowhere to save him on the battlefield. He relates that he took many arrows and cuts, and was left lying in a burned-out parish, contemplating the coming feasts of Heaven. It was then that a woman clad in a blue tunic appeared as if out of nowhere and brought him a drink of water. He watched her wince as she pulled each of his arrows, and watched his wounds close when she poured more water from the cup she carried.

"What manner of magic is this?" he asked her in his native tongue. She responded in perfect kind, "Eoin MacCartaighe, you are this day blessed by God. Praise Him and go home, for your wife and children need you much."

She then looked at his severed, bleeding arm and told him to close his eyes. Upon doing so he felt a sharp pain as the smell of burning flesh assaulted his nostrils. When he opened his eyes, his wound had been cauterized so clean and pure that no blood collected in the wound. Indeed, a patch of new skin already grew over the stump. So, Eoin picked himself up, said a prayer of thanks to the Blessed Virgin, whom he reckons visited him that day, and went to his commander. Made useless for battle, Eoin was allowed to return home to his family, and was on his way there when temporarily stranded at the characters' Covenant.



Eoin goes so far as to describe the woman he saw, and indicates the location of the miracle. He's even willing to relate such information to a scribe or cartographer. If asked, he sheepishly admits that he believes the woman to have healed him with the Holy Grail, and his accounts of it conform to legends characters have heard.

Eoin's first goal is to continue his journey home. Although he would like to return to Iberia in search of the Grail, he has other obligations, and believes it God's will that he return to his family. Of course, this doesn't mean unscrupulous Magi can't take control of Eoin's mind and make him accompany them to the site of his miracle. However, characters might face God's wrath for doing so, and should Eoin break free of control, he attacks those he once thought courteous.

Eoin's temporary visit at the characters' Covenant introduces the characters' first serious lead to the Grail. Though the characters may not have considered hunting it until now, it now seems virtually predestined that they take this opportunity to seek the Grail. Maybe it's no coincidence that a snowstorm drives Eoin to the Covenant. It's no coincidence that Eoin is an Irish knight, representing the combination of pagan and Christian, as the Grail does.

**Note:** If the characters' Covenant is distant from Iberia and Ireland, Eoin may have lost his arm in the Reconquista some time ago. Maybe he made a pilgrimage to the Holy Land in thanks for his miracle and only now seeks to return home.

**Year 5:** Word spreads throughout many Tribunals of the Order, particularly among Houses Flambeau and Tytalus, that Magi of the Order are again fighting among themselves in Iberia (while most Magi in Iberia fight the Moors, some Covenants actually support the Moors against the Christians, and the two Hermetic factions have clashed in the past). Power-hungry Magi amongst the characters may be intrigued by the opportunity to strip foreign Covenants. Other, more peaceful Magi may seek to calm relations in Iberia. Either way, characters may journey there (assuming none have already left in search of Sir Eoin's miraculous savior).

Whether rumors of renewed war between Spanish Magi are true remains to be seen. Ultimately that's for you to decide. If Hermetic civil war is genuine, many foreign Magi may respond and thus provoke a greater conflict. Maybe the Church, having gained some information on the Order, spreads the rumor to draw Magi out of hiding. The Church might accuse Magi in Iberia of helping the Moors, justifying any attempt to wipe them out. Certainly the Knights of Saint Mary (see the boxed insert) are prepared to do so.

Magi may also use the increased turmoil in Iberia as an opportunity to travel there and search for the Grail.

Whatever their reasons for going to Iberia, the characters experience the crusades firsthand. Indeed, you might plan a series of stories that illustrates the madness, glory, hatred, waste, pain, camaraderie and suffering of war, especially a war in which magic is used freely.

At some point you may also have one of the characters, particularly a "Boy Who Cries Wolf" character — one who is rarely believed by fellows — explain that his wounds were healed by a beautiful woman named Marissa, and that he himself has seen the Holy Grail. Other characters may disbelieve their comrade, and in so doing overlook a holy event that could lead to the Grail.

Characters in Iberia also have an opportunity to fight for or against the Church and get a better understanding of how the Church operates. During such all-out war Magi will assuredly witness the full power of Church and God at some point. This experience should at least make characters more careful in any search for the Grail.

**Year 6:** Characters in Iberia, following up on Sir Eoin's story of the Grail, find the abandoned chapel where he was supposedly healed by the mysterious woman. The chapel bears no sign of the woman, but its remaining stained-glass windows depict a scene of a woman offering a drink to a wounded knight. The next panel depicts a person dressed in robes, looking conspicuously like a Magus. The Magus appears to hold a glowing object in his hand. Unfortunately, characters cannot determine what that item is for the glass has been smashed at that point. Nonetheless, the implication is that the characters, or some Magus figure, might acquire the Grail. (Actually, the glass refers to the Pious Magus, Herbert [see below], who also seeks the Grail and embodies its virtues. By following the way of Herbert, the characters might acquire the Grail.)



## Herbert, Pious Magus

**Characteristics:** Intelligence (enigmas) +4, Perception (souls) +3, Strength (inspired) +2, Stamina (hearty) +3, Presence (calming) +3, Communication (soft and clear) +2, Dexterity (clumsy) -2, Quickness (plodding) -3

**Age:** 56 (no Longevity potions necessary)

**Size:** 0

**Virtues and Flaws:** Before Herbert became a Pious Magus he had the Gentle Gift (+1 Hermetic Virtue) and this remains now. His conversion to a Pious state has erased the other Virtues and Flaws concerning his Hermetic magic, although this does not always occur with other Pious Magi.

**Abilities:** Alertness (being hunted) 3, Scan (hunters) 3, Search (Grail lore) 4, Athletics (running) 2, Climb (cliff faces) 1, Dodge (missiles) 2, Folk Ken (religious doubts) 5, Animal Handling (calming animals) 2, Survival (winter) 2, Meditation (God's will) 5, Storytelling (Biblical tales) 1, Brawl (ambushed) 2, Ride (at a gallop) 3, Boating (rivers) 2, Wagoneering (rough roads) 1, Magic Theory (effects of Grail on magic) 3, Church Lore (crusader legends) 3, Legend Lore (Grail stories) 4, Faerie Lore (knights in Arcadia) 2, Church Knowledge (heresies) 4, Saint Lore (Nerius) 4, Archangel Lore – Uriel (passing through Uriel's lands) 3, Archangel Lore – Michael (God's wrath) 2, Archangel Lore – Gabriel (healing) 1, Archangel Lore – Raphael (Intellego) 3, Piety (perceiving Dominion qualities) 5. Traditional Hermetic Abilities like *Parma Magica* were forgotten by Herbert during his transition into a Pious Magus. This loss does not occur to most Pious Magi

**Confidence:** 3

**Reputation:** Calm (Normandy Tribunal Magi) +2

**Personality Traits:** Calm +2, Reflective +3, Nonconfrontational +4, Distracted +5

**Techniques and Forms:** Creo 10, Intellego 5, Muto 5, Perdo 2, Rego 1 1, Animal 4, Aquam 8, Auram 7, Corporem 10, Herbam 5, Ignem 8, Imagonem 0, Mentem 12, Terrain 12, Vim 8

**Spell Casting Speed:** -3

**Twilight Points:** 0

**Effects of Twilight:** None

**Spells Known:** Herbert knows most healing and protective Formulaic spells, but prefers Spontaneous magic if he uses any magic at all.

**Wizard's Sigil:** Herbert is outlined in a holy light when casting

**Weapons and Armor:** None

**Encumbrance:** 0

**Other Combat Totals:** Dodge Defense -1 (5 Action), Soak +3 (9 Action), Fatigue +3

**Description**

Herbert is dressed in homespun wool, as monks dress, except he eschews the hood and tonsure. He wears a green belt with a silver mandala on it, which is a favorite symbol of his.

**Roleplaying Tips**

Herbert speaks with quiet confidence. He is a dreamy-eyed visionary with an over-optimistic outlook, but has the determination to pursue his dreams.

At the chapel, the characters also clash with the Church. Some Reconquista clergy have heard tales of knights being saved by a woman on the battlefield, and suspect that the Grail has risen again. The clergymen, hoping to secure the Grail (and thus their places in the Church hierarchy), go in search of the chalice. Contacts inform the clergy about a local parish that tells the tale of the Grail, and investigators arrive while the characters are there. The clergymen and their attending knights stumble onto the characters. The clergymen automatically assume the characters are enemies, given recent fighting among Hermetic spell casters and magical attacks against Christians.

Characters have to prove their Christianity, or at least feign devotion to God, to avoid attack. If the characters cannot demonstrate Christian knowledge or values, the knights charge. Whatever the outcome of the confrontation, the characters might try to hide their Grail findings by smashing the stained-glass windows. Otherwise, the clergy suspect the characters of having acquired the Grail, as the window panels suggest. In either case, it becomes widely known within the Church that the Grail has risen again and that Hermetic Magi are interfering in its acquisition.

Year 7: Abroad in their search for the Grail or in their own Covenant, the characters encounter the Pious Magus Herbert. Herbert is also on a quest to find the Grail. It's his desire to see the Grail before he dies, and to ensure that it is made available for everyone to witness and enjoy.

However, Herbert does not proclaim his intent, for that would mark him as a Pious Magus and run the risk of the characters' ostracism. Herbert approaches the characters on an angel's advice. According to the angel, the characters are fated to be instrumental in an impending conflict over the Grail, and Herbert hopes to help them find it.

Characters may presume that Herbert is a Pious Magus based on his behavior. He seems to know a lot about the Church for a Magus, and seems to have only passing interest in Hermetic magic. He is also inclined to befriend Christian people, like Brother Ambrose. Indeed, if Brother Ambrose is still around he and Herbert become fast friends. Herbert may even reveal his hope of finding the Grail to Ambrose.

There are a number of ways to hint at Herbert's status. A covenperson might fall and break an arm. Herbert, without thinking, permanently heals the person without use of raw vis. He also seems to have an endless supply of vis but never appear

to use any. Furthermore, Herbert willingly attends Church, but does not seem to suffer debilitating effects in his magic. Of course, none of these factors may incriminate Herbert as a Pious Magus if the characters have never previously met one. Nonetheless, they may recognize similarities to Neriusians of Hermetic legend on a Hermes Lore simple roll of 10+.

In his ongoing search for the Grail, Herbert eventually leaves the characters if and when they relate their encounter with Sir Eoin. Herbert is overwhelmed by the opportunity to meet someone who has had a direct encounter with the Grail, and sets out to visit Eoin. Herbert leaves overnight, drawing a Neriusian Portal to travel to Ireland. As far as the characters know, Herbert disappears, the only mysterious sign of his passing being a "doorway" drawn on a Covenant or nearby wall (recognized as Neriusian on a Hermes Lore, Magic Theory, or Church Lore simple roll of 15+).

Herbert returns to the characters (probably at their Covenant) in a year or so, after tracing further Grail leads in England, and after visiting Eoin.

The characters' encounter with Herbert offers them an opportunity to realize the compromise that may be reached between Church and Hermes. The two need not fight, and can join their powers, as Herbert has. Whether the characters have the fortitude to pursue this common ground is another question. It's unlikely that they can encourage odier Magi to balance magic and Church.

**Year 8:** The characters learn, from their research and contacts, that Holy Grail sightings have followed one Marissa, who seems to appear out of nowhere to heal wounded Christians, and then vanishes into the mists. It is said the woman lives somewhere near Badajoz, Spain. Characters already in Spain may seek her out, and characters back at the Covenant may send another party in search of the woman.

Investigating the woman, characters quickly learn that Marissa of Badajoz died long ago and was canonized as a saint. In life she devoted herself to the healing of others and was said to be blessed by God; she had many dreams of the Grail. The locals of Badajoz firmly believe that Marissa still walks the earth, doing God's bidding by preserving the lives of Christians who further His will. Accounts of the woman correspond with Sir Eoin's description of her. Try though they might, characters cannot summon Marissa except through performing selfless acts of Christian piety and becoming gravely injured as a result. A pious Grog might therefore meet Marissa whereas a Magus who seeks her out never meets her.

During this same year the Covenant is struck by a terrible wasting disease. Many of the covenfolk (and perhaps some Magi) die from the horrible disease. One of the Covenant's women, preferably a spiritual or religious character, has a dream. Her vision is of a cave beneath the Covenant. She is led down a long flight of stairs into the earth by a glistening, glowing cup, which compels her downward. In her dream she then feels warm, humid air and looks down to find a hot spring bubbling up from the living rock. A voice then whispers in her ear, *"Take, drink, and heal."*

The next morning the character awakens and instantly knows where the entrance to the stairs is: the stairs are in a place few people frequent, maybe in a tower basement, in some kind of storage shed, or in a forgotten guest room. The character might choose to go down alone, or with friends. There is a warm spring under the Covenant and water from it heals the sickness that plagues the Covenant. Given the woman's dream, it seems the Holy Grail is manifest!

Throughout the rest of the year covenfolk and those who live nearby have powerful dreams. In these the Holy Grail appears and leads dreamers out of their everyday problems and toils. (No Magi have dreams of this nature, unless they are followers of Nerius.)

Word of the dreams spreads to the Church, and one day a group of Dominican friars appears at the gate of the Covenant, demanding to speak to Ambrose. (If Ambrose is gone, they may approach another priesdy character, or a local priest.) Ambrose turns as white as a sheet and informs his friends that he has been instructed to meet with Inquisitors to answer for the local "heresy" (and the Church wants to know what information the characters have on the Grail so the Church may beat them to it). Ambrose leaves the next day with tearful goodbyes. Make it apparent to characters that Ambrose will not survive the Inquisition's testing. This may inspire characters to take a stand against the Church.

Toward the end of the year covenfolk and friendly locals begin asking when the Magi are going to recover the Holy Grail and bring it back for safekeeping. They continue to have powerful dreams about the Grail, and even the most jaded characters have impressively realistic dreams of the Holy Cup. By comparing dreams and talking about them, characters may spend any Experience Points they gain on the Legend Lore Ability.

**Year 9:** Ambrose returns after interrogation and imprisonment by the Inquisitors. His eyes are hollow, his handshake weak. He appears as a living apparition. He refused to tell the Inquisitors what he knows of the Grail for he wants to taste of the cup and knows the Church will not allow it. Blind and excommunicate, Ambrose offers characters his help in finding the Holy Grail. He is now a full ally of the characters and regretfully admits to having reported on them in the past. Ambrose also shares what he knows of the Church's pursuit of the Grail.

Because Ambrose would not reveal what he knew of the Grail, the Church begins organizing a crusade against the characters, their Covenant, and their vicinity. After all, only in Iberia and the characters' vicinity have Grail sightings occurred, and since the Covenant has members in both places (as determined from past encounters and from what Ambrose did reveal), the Church decides the characters have direct ties to the Holy Grail. The clergy cannot accept this apparent heresy and seek to obliterate the characters. Forces therefore begin organizing to assault the character's Covenant, and characters may quickly learn that a force is rising against them (the local Dominion probably even acquires a Wrathful Temper, and attacking crusaders have a Righteous Dominion).

Later in the year, before the crusade against the characters begins, Herbert returns from Ireland. He reappears suddenly, as if out of the darkness itself. Herbert maintains a low profile and seems nervous, choosing not to partake of food outside Mass and choosing not to visit with locals. The characters soon discover why Herbert is lying low. Three Flambeau Magi have been tracking him and finally corner him at the Covenant. The Flambeau demand entry, even after dark, and refuse to turn back.

The arrival of the Flambeau sets the stage for a dramatic scene in which the Covenant's non-Magi may desperately work to spirit Herbert out the "back door." In the meantime, Magus characters may deal with the Flambeau. If the characters don't already know it, the Flambeau inform them that Herbert is a Pious Magus. Given this information, or simply in response to political pressure, Magus characters may turn Herbert over to his hunters. However, religious covenfolk are opposed to the decision and might stage a revolt in response. Indeed, if the local Church learns that Herbert was turned over to Hermetic murderers, the Church may deliver its forces upon the Covenant even sooner.

The Flambeau Magi are quite difficult to deal with. They are typical members of their House: bloodthirsty, close-minded, and relentless. They may threaten to burn the entire Covenant down. If Herbert is helped to escape before being incarcerated, the Flambeau split up. One remains at the Covenant to "get to



## The Order of Saint Mary

This Christian order was recently instituted by Papal decree, through consultation with the bishops of Iberia. The knights of the order are dedicated to finding the Holy Grail. However, their unspoken mission is to bring the Order of Hermes under control. To this end, the Pope has placed a special blessing upon the order's knights, aside from that received by being on crusade (see *The Righteous Dominion* in Chapter Two). Wherever they go, as long as they are right in their hearts with God, the knights are under His protection. This blessing effectively gives those of the order a Magic Resistance of +15.

The Order of Saint Mary is led by Abbot Crinell, a pinched and angry man, whose daughter was taken from him to become a Magus's apprentice. She died in a bizarre laboratory accident and was buried in unhallowed ground at some nameless Covenant. The only notice Crinell was given of his daughter's passing was the return of her belongings by one of the Covenant's sympathetic inhabitants. The Abbot rightfully hates Magi, faeries and anything magical.

Unknown to the rest of the Church, Crinell has become a theurgist (a priest who investigates and claims to fight the Infernal, but actually becomes a pawn of its power; see *The Maleficium*, p. 69). He rationalizes that he needs some power against Magi and investigates the Infernal with the intent to understand Magi. However, in an effort to preserve the sanctity of the Church, at least to his mind, the Abbot jeopardizes his soul.

the bottom of this." One goes back to England, journeying to House Quaesitor to request the intervention of Quaesitoris. The other Magus goes after the hapless Herbert. Over the next few weeks the Covenant has to endure the presence of Quaesitoris "cleaning up" matters. They question everyone in the Covenant, from the highest Magus to the lowest Grog, asking all about Herbert. The first question they always ask is, "Have you seen the Holy Grail in a dream or vision?"

The higher powers of the Order seek the Grail for their own purposes, and use the hunt for Herbert as an excuse to put the Covenant under martial law, hoping to secure the Grail before religious forces arrive. Indeed, if the Quaesitoris fail to acquire the Grail, they have been authorized by the Order's leaders to allow the characters' Covenant to be lost to the Church, to preserve the remainder of the Order. However, whether the Church ends its assault on the Order with the characters' Covenant is another matter. If the Church learns of Herbert's murder, it may declare war on the entire Order.

If the characters turn Herbert over to the Flambeau, they attack him outright, before the eyes of the covenfolk. Herbert almost certainly dies. God allows the death, but in the sky above the murdered Herbert appears an image of the Grail. Knowing that Herbert was in search of the Grail, the characters may realize that they must recover it in his stead, in order to appease God's wrath. The recovered Grail cannot restore



Herbert, but as long as it's shared with all and not held for the Covenant's purely selfish purposes, it can scatter crusading forces that seek it for selfish reasons (see *The Grail Quest*, below). Herbert's death is therefore a martyrdom for the good of the characters and humanity as a whole. Surviving characters might try to get him canonized.

If Herbert manages to escape the characters' Covenant, he may be murdered soon afterward by other Magi. In this event the Grail image may again appear and the characters may take it upon themselves to take up Herbert's torch.

## Revelation

By the time of Herbert's return to the characters, they certainly recognize the imminent conflict between Church and Order. The characters' position in the battle depends on their actions and attitudes. The characters may aid the Order or try to aid the Church. However, both act against the characters. The Order has its own motives for acquiring the Grail—to gain power for its leaders—and certainly does not want some lowly Covenant getting hold of it (thus the Flambeau Magi's hunt for Herbert and attack on the characters). The Church doesn't want the characters or the Order to get the Grail, for such a sacred relic should not be in the hands of heathens. In the end, then, the characters really have no allies in the battle and must decide their own fate. The best way for them to do so is to obtain the Grail themselves (hopefully in keeping with the Grail's purpose; otherwise even the characters lose their prize).

During the search for the Grail, Church and Order certainly come to blows. Forces may meet in Iberia, where the Grail is rumored to have been spotted, but probably converge at the site of the characters' Covenant, and maybe in other parts of Mythic Europe as well. The Order of Saint Mary, a group of crusaders dedicated to the recovery of the Grail, is foremost among the legions of knights and priests confronting Magi and their allies.

## THE GRAIL QUEST

The search for the Holy Grail is the focus of *Cestus Dei*, and the conflict between Church and Order is a result of that search. Characters must realize, however, that their search is not so much a physical one as a spiritual one. Spirituality does not necessarily mean religious devotion, but self-realization and human compassion.

The first step on the road to the Grail is that of humility, the realization that there is a greater power beyond personal power, and that it must be respected. This power is believed to be God, but the collective human spirit may also be recognized as mis power. Humility may be difficult for Magi to discover, depending on their personal might as they do, but encounters with Eoin and Herbert hopefully make Magi realize that other forces are at work, and they operate for the good of humanity.

To seek the Grail is to seek life itself. The knights of old used to purify themselves, asperse themselves with holy water, wear scarlet surcoats, and forswear relations with women until

they discovered the Grail. What the characters do or do not do is largely irrelevant except for one thing: no one who seeks the Grail for vain or selfish purposes ever finds it or gains anything from it. Selfish folk may find the Grail, but in the end they are the worse for their experience, a Divine lesson for their selfishness. This is the nature of the Grail, and is why most knights of the Round Table wound up lost and divided, and is perhaps why King Arthur fell.

If someone pure of heart, either religiously or with sincere desire to help humanity, recovers the Grail, it is not the power of the Grail that gives the greatest pleasure, but the sense of utter communion with the Divine and human spirit. One might even say that those who quest for the Grail are best served to look for it in their own hearts and souls, not in the world.

There is really only one sure way Magi can quest for the Grail and not fall under its curse: they can seek to make the Grail available for the benefit of all people and not allow it to be locked away or kept for private use. The Grail is an ideal, a symbol that should be offered to all. This means its purposes are not served by either the Order of Hermes or the Church, who alike seek to secure and shut it up. Thus, for the characters' quest to succeed requires that it not be performed for themselves, but to help others, like injured knights and Magi, and to protect the Grail from abuse. Indeed, if she can be found, Marissa may be convinced to release the Grail if she believes characters sincerely desire to take it elsewhere and help more people than she alone can.

The ultimate irony arises if characters acquire the Grail for selfish purposes and go to war with the Church over it. If the Church's intent is not sincere and humanitarian, neither side will gain it and all is fought for naught.

## Resolution

There are many ways to resolve *Cestus Dei*. To explore the Saga's possibilities, let's break down some likely resolutions. Characters' actions have as much to do with Saga resolution as do your desires. If none of the following resolutions fit your Saga or storytelling style, feel free to pursue your own.

### Destruction and Crusade

The characters' Covenant may get involved in the Grail quest for selfish purposes and surely meet destructive and violent Church opposition. The Covenant, and the very Order of Hermes, may be destroyed in an ongoing Inquisition against Magi. Or, the Order may manage to overcome Church forces, although little of the Order may remain. And, in the end, the Grail may still be lost to all parties. This is the least desirable outcome, but a definite possibility in a Saga where Church-Order tensions run high.

### The Grail Quest Achieved

The characters' Covenant may actually find the Grail, through the auspices of Herbert or the characters' own efforts. A Pious Grog who is healed by Marissa may explain to her that

the world is going to war over the relic, and that it might be best put to use by making it available to everyone. If Marissa believes the character sincerely desires to spread the Grail's healing, she may award it to him.

The characters may come to understand the symbolic nature of the cup and appreciate the need for keeping it free. If the characters do rescue the Grail from some other faction which seeks to stash it away, the characters are blessed indeed. With the Lord's gratitude, the characters "miraculously" manage to avoid all controversy between Church and Order. Even if the Pope declares a crusade against the Order of Hermes, characters and Covenant will go unnoticed by crusaders. In fact, the characters may be able to convince both factions to give up their conflict. The glory of God may invest the characters' words with a compelling sensibility.

## Joining the Pious Magi

Characters who help Herbert may become allies of the Order of Saint Nerius and be made privy to its activities. The characters may even be invited to help the Pious Magi in their ongoing search for the Grail (Herbert's work is furthered by many of his brethren). Of course, joining with Nerius puts characters at odds both the Order and, to some extent, the Church, but the piety of Nerius is probably the characters' best means for finding and serving the Grail.

## Attacking the Pious Magi

Somehow, through all conflict between Church and Order, the Neriusians are discovered and the power they wield revealed. In a move designed to restore peace, the Church and Order blame all their strife on the Neriusians, and begin to hunt them down. Even the characters may make the Neriusians their scapegoats, or may use the witch hunt as a diversion to continue their search for the Grail. Of course, characters condemning the Neriusians to get the Grail do not serve the Grail's true purposes. And, what form does God's wrath take against those who attack his devoted followers? Both Order and Church may suffer Divine punishment.

## Overall

The idea of Church and Order coming to blows makes for an intriguing and dramatic Saga. Although Pax Dei is about the Church at peace, conflict is one of the most direct means that the Church's full nature — both light and dark, merciful and wrathful, righteous and just — can be revealed.

# The Reality of the Grail

The Grail is an immensely powerful relic. Blessed by Christ Himself at the last supper, it has also been the focus of blessings and sanctifications by Druids and Old Religion priestesses of England.

The power inherent in the Grail is such that it emanates outward. This emanation usually causes the Grail to generate a *regio* all its own, alternately Magical and Divine. This combination of powers explains why the Grail is effective toward both the Divine and Magical. The *regio* in which the Grail resides also explains its elusiveness in the material world. The Grail's combination of power and elusiveness also explains why it only appears to certain people, or to certain kinds of people, like Sir Eoin, who embodies both the Divine and pagan. Characters of Christian faith and Hermetic allegiance might also embody this duality.

Although it resides in *regio*, there have been times when the Grail has actually moved from location to location. It does so without warning. The Grail only stays in one place if it is being properly used by someone whose heart is pure (as is Marissa's). Even the most powerful magic cannot hold the Grail in one place if it wishes to move. When the Grail does move on, it is usually forgotten, perpetuating its mythic quality.

Possession of the Grail offers Magi a source of vis. Water passed through it creates 25 pawns of Vim vis a year. However, characters may not even possess the Grail for that long. Also, while the Grail is in a Covenant's possession, everyone within the Covenant's Aura receives a +5 bonus to the Creo, Aquam, Herbam, Animal, Corporem, Auram, Terrain, and Ignem Arts. This bonus derives from the Grail's command over True Forms, which in turn comes from its link to the True Empyrean. However, the Grail also changes the Covenant's Magic Aura to a Divine Aura of rating eight. Magic Aura bonuses are lost and Divine Aura penalties are incurred. The questions is, which is more beneficial to Magi, the Grail's Art bonuses or the Covenant's Magic Aura?

Finally, those drinking from the Grail receive healing equivalent to the effects of the spell *Incantation of the Body Made Whole* (Creo Corporem, Level 45). Healing from the spell is permanent, even without the use of vis. There is no limit to the number of times a person can seek the Grail's healing, as long as that person furthers good and tries to fulfill the Grail's purposes. As soon as the Grail is misused or taken advantage of, it moves on and cannot be remembered by those who possessed it.

# Pax Dei Index

- Absolution, 37, 43, 45-46  
 Adjudicating Dominion, 14-15  
 Akashak, Angel of War, 62  
 Angelic Appearances, 57  
 Angels, 7, 9, 12, 16, 31, 40, 43, 46, 53-61, 67, 70, 72, 74, 86, 99  
   Angels and Free Will, 58  
   Angels and War, 58  
   Angels and Wings, 58  
   Archangel Lore, 73, 89-91, 107  
   Archangels, The, 60-61, 65, 68, 88-90, 92  
   Archangels and Pious Magic, 88  
   Ascetics, The, 68  
   Aspects and Types of Tempers, 18  
   Aspects of the Dominion, 9, 14, 16  
   Attacking the Pious Magi, 111  
   Background, 14, 16, 30, 43-44, 54, 101  
   Banishment, 12, 20, 75, 77-78  
   Baptism, 45, 70, 85  
   Becoming a Saint, 67  
   Bishops, The, 16, 68, 109  
   Blessing, 25, 34-35, 44, 46-49, 57, 60, 62, 72, 85, 88, 94, 109  
   Blessing Chart, 35, 46-47  
   Blessing the Other Powers, 47  
   Brief Interlude and History Lesson, A, 102  
   Brief Metaphysical Interlude, A, 12  
   Brief Word About Simple Faith, A, 12  
   Calm Dominion, The, 18-19, 22, 36  
   Casting Out, 35, 75-78  
   Causal-Based Perception, 57  
   Celebrant of the Dominion, The, 13, 15, 17-18, 34, 39, 61, 88  
   Changing Temper, 16, 39  
   Changing the Temper of the Dominion, 32, 34, 36, 39  
   Charal, Protector of the Host, Cherub of Communion, 59  
   Cherubim, The, 58, 60-61  
   Clergy and Covenant, 30  
   Clergy and Hermes, 29  
   Clergy as Companions, 30  
   Clergy as Storyguide Characters, 30  
   Common Properties of Angels, The, 57  
   Communion, 38, 46, 59, 73, 88, 103, 110  
   Condemned to Hell, 99  
   Confirmation, 45  
   Correspondences of the Archangels, The, 89  
   Creating Saints, 69  
   Crusaders, The, 24-27, 62  
   Culminating Events, 101, 103  
   Current Activities of the Order, 97  
   Death of the Celebrant, 18  
   Destruction and Crusade, 110  
   Determining Dominion Strength, 13  
   Divine, 7-9, 11-22, 24-27, 31-34, 37-48, 53-57, 59-62, 64, 67-75, 77-78, 80-81, 83-91, 93-95, 98-99, 101-103, 110-111  
   Dominion and its Tempers, The, 14, 32  
   Dominion Power Chart, 13-14  
   Draining, 77  
   Eden, the Garden of Paradise, 55  
   Enfolding, The, 58-59, 61  
   Envisioning, The, 59  
   Equipment, 44, 84, 94  
   Exempli Gratia: A Pious Magus, 90  
   Exempli Gratia: Adjudicating Dominion, 15  
   Exorcism, 37, 43, 48, 74-77  
   Exorcism Rites, 75  
   Exorcists, 76, 78-79  
   Faerie, 11-12, 14-15, 17, 20-23, 26, 29-33, 44, 47-48, 54, 60, 73, 78, 88, 93, 95, 107  
   False (or Ash) Empyrean, The, 54  
   Final Word, A, 9  
   Final Word on Pious Magi, A, 99  
   Finding Demons Out, 75  
   Fleeting Soul, 77  
   Functions of Piety, 18, 32  
   Gabriel, 2, 61, 63-64, 90-92, 107  
   Gaining Faith Points, 39-40  
   Galarriel, Cherub of the Candle, 60  
   Gifts from the Saints, 71  
   Grail Quest, The, 110  
   Grail Quest Achieved, The, 110  
   Hand of God is Upon You, The, 38, 42, 48  
   Haniel, Angel of Peace, 61  
   Herbert, Pious Magus, 106-107  
   Hermetic, 8-9, 12, 26, 29-30, 32, 34-35, 41, 53, 83-92, 94, 106-109, 111  
   Hiding, 77, 106  
   Host of God, The, 60-61  
   Ideas and Rules for Saintly Life, 71  
   Increasing Piety Score, 36  
   Infernal, 8-9, 12, 14-15, 18, 20-23, 26, 32-33, 35, 41, 44, 48, 54, 57, 60-63, 68, 73-79, 86, 88, 90, 94, 99, 103, 109  
   Infinite Divisibility of Archangels, The, 65  
   Introducing the Grail, 103  
   Joining the Pious Magi, 111  
   Just Effects on Other Powers, 23  
   Justice of God, The, 17, 22  
   Land-Oriented Tempering, 16-17  
   Legend Lore, 31, 103-104, 107-108  
   Limitless Power of the Divine, The, 12, 31  
   Lord Works in Mysterious Ways, The, 31  
   Magi and True Faith, 41  
   Magical, 4-5, 11, 15, 20-26, 30, 32-34, 41, 48, 54, 61, 73, 77, 84-91, 93-94, 97, 99, 102-103, 107, 109, 111  
   Man, God, and Evil, 74  
   Mantle of the Angels, The, 57  
   Marriage, 33, 45-46  
   Meditation, 21, 32, 36-37, 43, 73, 84-85, 89, 107  
   Mental, 29-30, 42  
   Merciful Effects on Other Powers, 21  
   Mercy of God, The, 21, 46, 93  
   Michael, 2, 43, 51, 55, 58, 61-65, 68, 80-81, 84, 86, 89, 90, 93, 99, 107  
   Ministration, 85  
   Miracles, 8-9, 38, 67, 70-74, 83, 97  
   Miracles Chart, 71, 73-74  
   Mood, Theme and Tone, 102  
   Moracula, The, 58  
   Nerius, 30, 51, 61, 64, 70, 80-81, 83, 85, 87, 89, 91-99, 107-108, 111  
   Nerius's Portal, 99  
   Neriusian Portal, The, 98-99  
   New Jerusalem, the City of Heaven, 55, 58  
   Omnipotence of the Divine, The, 9, 54  
   Order of Saint Mary, The, 101-102, 109-110  
   Order of Saint Nerius Today, The, 97  
   Ordination, 32, 44, 46  
   Other Tools, 78  
   Outward Sign, An, 37, 45  
   Overall, 14, 111  
   Paradise: Travels in the True Empyrean, 54  
   Passions, 41-42, 76  
   Path to Faith, The, 39, 83  
   Pathway Light, The, 12, 83-85  
   Pax Dei, 2, 7-9, 12, 38, 53, 74, 83, 111  
   Perfect Mount, 62  
   Physical, 9, 19, 22, 30-31, 42, 47, 51, 55-60, 64, 73, 93, 110  
   Physical Act of Blessing, The, 47  
   Piety, 12, 14-16, 18, 21-26, 31-41, 43-47, 61, 68-73, 75-79, 83, 85-91, 97, 99, 107-108, 111  
   Piety and Magic Resistance, 34  
   Piety and Other Traits, 33  
   Piety and Perception, 21-22, 24, 32-33, 35, 88  
   Piety and Perception Chart, 35-35  
   Piety and Stamina, 33  
   Piety Experience Point Chart, 37  
   Piety in Services, 33, 45  
   Piety Penalties, 32, 37-38  
   Power of God on Earth, The, 13  
   Power of Saints, The, 42, 70  
   Powers and Benefits of True Faith, 36, 39  
   Powers of Dominion, 8, 88  
   Powers of Pious Magi, 85, 88  
   Purgatory, 12, 41, 46, 53, 55-56, 62-63, 65, 88  
   Purification, 75-76, 78  
   Raphael, 61, 64-65, 90, 107  
   Raw Vis and Pious Magic, 87  
   Reality of the Grail, The, 111  
   Reason, 4, 9, 18, 20, 25-27, 34, 36, 43, 46-49, 60, 68, 70, 74, 78, 86, 88, 95, 103  
   Reeducation, 85  
   Renunciation, 12, 84  
   Resolution, 13, 101-102, 110  
   Revelation, 57, 71, 101, 110  
   Righteous Dominion, The, 24-27, 109  
   Righteous Dominion Strength Chart, 25  
   Righteous Effects on Other Powers, 25  
   Righteous Power, 25  
   Rounding out the Dominion Character, 41  
   Rules for Temper Changes, 18  
   Sacraments, The, 30, 32, 45-46  
   Saint Gabriel of the Horn, 63  
   Saint Lore, 72-73, 107  
   Saint Michael of the Sword, 61  
   Saint Raphael the Merciful, 64  
   Saint Uriel the Wise, 65  
   Saints, The, 8, 53, 67-71, 73  
   Saints of the Gospel and Theological Reflection, 68  
   Sample Pious Magic Spells, 88  
   Sanctification (Long-Term Blessing), 47  
   Scope of this Book, The, 7, 69  
   Seraphim, The, 56, 60-61, 99  
   Shadow Empyrean, The, 12, 14, 23, 53-58, 83, 103  
   Sir Horn, 104-106, 108, 111  
   Social, 19-21, 31, 43, 55, 73, 79, 101, 104  
   Some Important Saints, 69  
   Soul's Fate, The, 12  
   Soul-Oriented Tempering, 16, 18  
   Special Spells, 87  
   Spell Casting, 20, 22, 35, 85-89, 91, 98, 107  
   Storyguiding Blessings, 46  
   Storyguiding Pious Magi, 89  
   Straight Piety Rolls, 34-35  
   Strength of the Dominion, 13, 25, 33  
   Structure of Pax Dei, The, 9  
   Summary of Piety's Functions, 35  
   Summary of the Saga, 101  
   Supernatural, 7, 11, 16, 20-21, 23, 25, 27, 30, 32-33, 35, 39, 42, 47, 54, 73, 88  
   Sword Arm of the Church, The, 14, 18, 24  
   Temper Change Chart, 35-36  
   Temper Change Faith Point Chart, 39-40  
   Tempers, The, 14, 16-17, 61  
   Testing the Possessed, 77  
   This Mortal Coil, 55  
   Traits, 8, 25, 27, 30-31, 33, 41-45, 57, 59-62, 75-76, 86, 92, 104, 107  
   Traits of the Clergy, 30  
   Tribute to Nerius, 98  
   True Empyrean, The, 9, 11-12, 38, 43, 47, 53-56, 62, 67, 71, 83, 86, 103, 111  
   True Faith, 9, 12, 16, 18, 31-32, 35-36, 38-44, 47, 53, 55, 61, 70-71, 73, 76, 83, 86, 88, 91  
   Unction, 21, 46, 59, 64  
   Uriel, 46, 55-56, 61, 65, 90-92, 98-99, 107  
   Using Pax Dei, 7  
   Veneration of Saints, The, 68, 83  
   Verbal Assault, 76  
   Virginity, 68  
   Voice of God, The, 60  
   What is the Dominion?, 11, 14, 25  
   What Makes a Saint, 70  
   Who Has Piety?, 32, 40, 71  
   Will of God, The, 9, 14, 20, 25-26, 42, 47, 56-57, 70, 72, 74, 84, 86, 88  
   Wrath of God, The, 17, 19, 21, 48, 61, 94  
   Wrathful Effects on Other Powers, 20



# Pax Dei

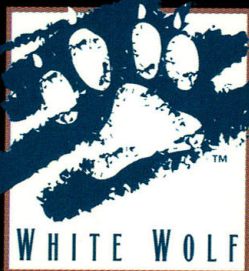
## Peace of Man

As a Magus you wield magical might beyond humanity's comprehension. You command the wind to blow, the sea to part, the forest to wither. You are powerful indeed. But what is the value of worldly power if you must pay for it with your eternal soul? In the eyes of the Divine only your virtue is worthy, only your soul is sacred. The Reward cares not for your life's arcane conquests. At final judgment, before Heaven's gate, only your pure soul will save you. What salvation will your base power offer then?

## Peace of God

Pax Dei is an Ars Magica™ Third Edition sourcebook that invokes the glory and majesty of the Divine Realm in Mythic Europe™. Player and Storyguide alike are made privy to the Church's worldly designs, and are offered brilliant insight into the Reward itself. Not only may you pursue Divine will, but you may now reconcile your magic and piety to rise above even the Order of Hermes.

Ars Magica  
3rd Edition



ME STUDIO

ISBN 1-56504-043-0  
WW 1021 \$18.00



0 99379 01021 5

4598-B STONEGATE IND. BLVD. • STONE MTN., GA 30083

