

Advantages: Alertness, High Pain Threshold, Strong Will.

Disadvantages: Discipline of Faith (Asceticism), Wealth (Poor), Skinny, Stubbornness.

Skills: Animal Handling, Area Knowledge, Breath Control, Detect Lies, Judo or Karate (or other unarmed combat), Meditation, Naturalist, Scrounging, Survival, any craft skill.

Cloistered Nun/Monk

Those who have chosen a way of strict dedication and devotion to the deity remove themselves from the strictures of normal society.

Advantages: Strong Will.

Disadvantages: Discipline of Faith (Ritualism), Pacifism, Poverty, Shyness, Vows.

Skills: Administration, Artist, Botany, Cooking, First Aid, Herbary, Meditation, Singing, Theology, any craft skill.



Parish Priest

The typical priest has been given the duty of serving the welfare of a particular group of followers. His job is to succor and counsel the faithful, answering questions and providing interpretations of the church's doctrine to the particular situations of life. In times of strife he may be called upon to sacrifice much in protection of his flock, but generally he lives a quiet, retiring life.

Advantages: Charisma, Common Sense, Empathy, Intuition, Literacy.

Disadvantages: Combat Paralysis, Dependents, Gluttony, Honesty, Laziness, Pacifism, Truthfulness.

Skills:

Administration, Area Knowledge, Bard, Detect Lies, Diplomacy, Law (Religious), Leadership, Meditation, Politics, Savoir-Faire, Teaching, Theology.

Shaman

Those born within shamanistic societies with the "World Sight" (see *Shamanism*, p. 116).

Advantages: Eidetic Memory, High Pain Threshold, World Sight.

Disadvantages: Addiction, Discipline of Faith (Ecstaticism), Epilepsy.

Skills: Animal Handling, Area Knowledge, Bard, Botany, Breath Control, Climbing, Dancing, Diagnosis, Diplomacy, Fast-Talk, First Aid, Gesture, Heraldry, Herbary, History, Leadership, Leatherworking, Meditation, Musical Instrument, Naturalist, Performance/Ritual, Physiology, Poetry, Savoir-Faire, Singing, Survival, Teaching, Veterinary, Woodworking, any shamanistic spell (see p. 112).

Wandering Clerics

These are clerics whose religious calling sends them to no particular locale, but rather to all people and places, serving those in need. These are generally more pragmatic than those who are able to devote themselves to single-minded contemplation, as they must continually deal with the vagaries of day-to-day existence. Wandering clerics generally make better adventurers than their stay-at-home brethren.

Itinerant Priest

Those who succor and serve the faithful that they meet upon their travels. Some have a set circuit of villages or towns they serve; others will wander wherever their desire (or the will of the gods) takes them.

Advantages: Alertness, Charisma, Common Sense, Empathy, Intuition, Literacy, Voice.

Disadvantages: Code of Honor, Honesty, Impulsive, Overconfident, Stubbornness, Truthfulness.

Skills: Animal Handling, Area Knowledge, Bard, Climbing, Diplomacy, Fast-Talk, Heraldry, History, Jumping, Law, Leadership, Riding, Savoir-Faire, Swimming, Teaching, Teamster, Theology, any combat/weapon skill, any craft skill, any outdoor skill, any language.

Mendicant

These people support themselves by begging, whether because of vows of poverty, or to give opportunities to the faithful to practice charity, or to relieve themselves of any necessity of thinking of anything but the divine.

Advantages: High Pain Threshold, Immunity to Disease.

Disadvantages: Discipline of Faith (Asceticism), Fanaticism, Toughness, Wealth (Poor).

Skills: Meditation, Scrounging, Streetwise, Survival, Theology.

Missionary

These dedicate their lives to spreading their faith in new and often hostile places. They usually attempt to convert by peaceful means, choosing to give aid to those less fortunate than themselves in the hope that their sterling example will win over the populace more surely than violence.

Advantages: Charisma, Danger Sense, Empathy, Immunity to Disease, Literacy, Luck, Pacifism, Strong Will, Voice.

Disadvantages: Fanaticism, Sense of Duty, Stubbornness.

Skills: Administration, Bard, Dancing, Diplomacy, Fast-Talk, Gesture, Law, Leadership, Merchant, Savoir-Faire, Singing, Teaching, any animal skill, any craft skill, any medical skill, any outdoor skill, any science skill, any language.

Missionary Warrior

These missionaries believe in converting by force instead of example.

Advantages: Charisma, Danger Sense, Literacy, Luck, Pacifism, Strong Will, Voice.

Disadvantages: Bloodlust, Fanaticism, Sense of Duty, Stubbornness.

Skills: Area Knowledge, Fast-Talk, Gesture, Leadership, Survival, any animal skill, any combat/weapon skill, any medical skill, any outdoor skill, any language.

Teaching Priest

Those who seek out the secrets of the universe and new people to teach them to may be associated with places of learning, or work as tutors between their travels.

Advantages: Alertness, Blessed, Eidetic Memory, Intuition, Literacy, Strong Will.

Disadvantages: Honesty, Pacifism, Truthfulness.

Skills: Area Knowledge, Bard, Detect Lies, Diplomacy, Heraldry, History, Holdout, Law, Leadership, Literature, Meditation, Research, Scrounging, Stealth, Survival, Teaching, Theology, any science skill, any language.

Wandering Friar

The stereotypical happy friar with a taste for larceny.

Advantages: Alertness, Charisma, Common Sense, Empathy, Intuition, Literacy, Voice.

Disadvantages: Fat, Gluttony, Greed, Lecherousness, Wealth (Poor), Vow of Celibacy.

Skills: Animal Handling, Area Knowledge, Bard, Carousing, Cooking, Diplomacy, Disguise, Fast-Talk, First



Aid, Forgery, Gambling, Heraldry, History, Law, Lockpicking, Merchant, Pickpocket, Riding, Savoir-Faire, Staff, Stealth, Teaching, Theology, any craft skill, any outdoor skill, any language.

Other Faithful

Not all religious-minded individuals are clerics. Those of the flock may choose to devote themselves to the tenets of their church even without the investment of clerical status. Indeed, some take great pride in their own sacrifice and dedication, believing it to be a truer indication of their interest in the divinity

And then there are those who are not particularly religious-minded, but who want others to think they are . . .

Fake

These may simply be hypocrites, who make a display of their piety to impress others. Or they may be con artists, who hope to win material gain by pretending spiritual leanings or

attainment. In either case, they will quite possibly be agnostic or atheist in their actual beliefs.

Advantages: Charisma, Voice.

Disadvantages: Gluttony, Greed.

Skills: Acting, Fast-Talk, Performance, Psychology, Public Speaking, Streetwise.

Pilgrim

Pilgrims travel to holy lands or places in an attempt to get closer or better understand the divine. In some cultures pilgrimages are required of all followers. In others it is a rare occurrence, and pilgrims have special stature.

Advantages: Luck, Strong Will.

Disadvantages: Overconfidence, Vows, Wealth (Poor).

Skills: any or none.

Renunciate

Wealthy sybarites who have suddenly reformed and discovered religion. After a life of empty pleasures, they devote most or all of their wealth to the church and dedicate them-

selves to doing its works in whatever form they can best consider.

Advantages: Empathy, Literacy, Status, Wealth.

Disadvantages: Code of Honor, Dependents.

Skills: History, Law, Merchant, any artistic skill, any craft skill, any social skill, any language.

Retired Nun/Monk

Secular persons who have chosen to live under religious discipline for a specified length of time. They are devoted to the deity and follow the rules of the monastery or convent, but have not taken full religious vows. Some may even still retain their titles and wealth; particularly high-ranking or wealthy individuals may actually be Patrons of the establishment they are living in.

Advantages: Literacy, Status, Strong Will, Wealth.

Disadvantages: Discipline of Faith (Ritualism), Pacifism. Shyness, Vows.

Skills: Administration, Artist, Cooking, First Aid, Herbarium, Meditation, Singing, Theology, any craft skill.

ADVANTAGES

Advantages may have special effects in campaigns with strong religious influences.

Clerical Investment

**5 points/level of rank;
see p. B19**

A *must-have* for all clerical characters, Clerical Investment is the social/political advantage of being invested as a cleric of your religion. It represents your status and influence within the church. This advantage does not confer any magical powers. See *Power Investment*, p. 93.

Religions can have one or many ranks of clerics representing levels of investment, forming a hierarchy which determines the levels of rank possible for that church (see *Religious Rank and Hierarchy*, p. 49).

Ranks may have associated prerequisites, such as skills that must be learned, oaths that must be sworn and so forth. Theology and/or Leadership skills are appropriate prerequisites, as are other skills associated with the church. Minimum Attribute scores, certain Advantages or Disadvantages (or lack thereof), race, sex, social status and so on, may also apply. Each rank in the hierarchy will probably bear a title, as determined by the GM, in addition to particular duties and responsibilities within the church (see *Clerical Duty*, p. 98).

Each level of rank confers a +1 reaction bonus from followers of your religion and those who respect your faith. If the person in question is a fanatic believer, or your religion is the primary faith in the area or culture, then all bonuses are doubled.

Patron: Church

Variable; see p. B24

If your church has any material presence or standing in the community, you can claim it as a Patron unless the tenets of the religion expressly forbid giving any assistance or aid to its members.

If the church is your patron, that means that it is willing to claim you and give you personal aid of whatever kind it can. This may be in room and board, living expenses, necessary travel supplies (be it a horse or a plane ticket), medical treatment, or support in times of crisis. A medieval priest could call upon his church for knights to face an enemy of the church, while a 20th-century Methodist minister may receive legal fees or monetary grants. Each has a commitment from his church to support him in times of need.

Frequency of appearance is based on the standing of the church in the community, the likelihood of its being able to respond to any particular request, and the extent of the church's power. (For example, a church which holds considerable power and influence in a small backwater village is not going to be nearly as useful as a less intrusive one with temples in even, town.)

Special qualities: Certain aspects of the church can affect its cost as a patron:

Church's clerics have magical abilities: 10 points. Each

Holy Day (see p. 103): 1 point per day. Each High Holy

Day (see p. 103): 2 points per day. Each Day of Weakness

(see p. 103): -1 point per day.

NEW ADVANTAGES

Autotrance

5 points

You find it very easy to enter a trance. You may enter a trance state on a successful IQ roll, within the space of a minute. However, your natural affinity for trancing makes it harder for you to awaken. You must make a successful IQ roll whenever you wish to leave a trance. You may only attempt this roll once every 5 minutes. Each additional attempt per hour is at -1 from the previous attempt.

This advantage is useful to shamans and those in meditative disciplines. People with this ability may find that they tend to slip out of awareness of their immediate surroundings quite easily. Netrunners with this advantage receive a +2 bonus on their Cyberdeck Operation skill (see p. 144).

Blessed

Variable

The simplest version of this advantage costs 10 points and grants the cleric a limited attunement to his deity. The cleric receives the ability to use any one Divination spell at IQ level (see p. M55). The type of Divination should match the "flavor" of the deity. The cleric also gains a +1 Reaction from any of the deity's followers who know him to be Blessed. For 20 points, the cleric is Very Blessed, which confers a +5 bonus to his Divination skill. Blessed clerics must act in accordance with the rules or values associated with the deity, or the advantage will be lost.

If the GM prefers, he can have the deity grant Blessed characters powers beyond Divination. These powers must match the power or capability of the deity (a goddess of mercy and healing could grant healing gifts, for instance). These abilities come in many different forms, the exact cost of each depending on the ability granted. In addition, many of the standard Advantages can be explained as divine gifts at the GM's discretion. Following are some examples.

Immunity: Your blessing involves an immunity to (or protection from) certain substances, usually those associated with the deity granting the blessing. A fire god might, for example, bless his clerics with an immunity to fire damage. When determining the cost, the GM should keep in mind that these are powerful blessings, and "charge" accordingly. Costs for immunities in *GURPS Supers* are a good guide.

Aptitude: Your blessing gives you an added bonus to a particular skill. For Physical skills, the cost for a +1 aptitude is equivalent to the cost (see p. B44) to learn the skill at DX level. The cost for a 2-point aptitude is equal to the cost for DX+1, and so on. For Mental skills, the cost for a +1 aptitude is equal to the cost of learning the skill at IQ level. A 2-point aptitude costs the same as learning it at IQ+1 and so on. The bonus applies to default skill levels as well as to those you have training in.

Magical Knack: Your blessing gives you the innate ability to do a particular magical spell. The cost is 2% of the price of a magic item that would be able to cast the same spell.

Heroic Feats: 10 points. Your blessing gives you the innate ability to perform a particular heroic feat. Once per playing session you may add 1 d to either ST, DX, or HT (attribute is speci-

fied at the time of the blessing) for up to 3d seconds. At the end of this time, you revert to your normal attribute and must suffer all negatives or penalties amassed during the "heroic" period. (If you raise HT and during this time take more than 5 times your normal HT in damage, then without some sort of healing you will immediately die when the effects wear off.)

Other blessings can be defined at the GM's discretion.

Divine Favor

Variable

e

You are a Holy Person, capable of petitioning your god for miracles (see *Miraculous Magic*, pp. 113-115). This advantage has nothing to do with Clerical Investment, and must be bought separately if an ordained priest wishes to have miraculous powers.

The cost of Divine Favor depends on the power of the deity and the level of favor you have in the god's eyes. The base cost is found by treating the deity as a Patron. Most gods will be 25-point Patrons, while lesser deities will cost 20 points. Modify this by the Frequency of Appearance costs on p. B23 to reflect how capable the deity is of coming to the Holy Person's aid.

The cost is modified again for higher or lower favor in the god's eyes. For every +1 to affect the Reaction roll, add 5 points to the cost of the advantage, up to a maximum of +25 points. For every -1 to the Reaction roll, subtract 5 points from the cost of the advantage.

Legal Immunity

5,10,15 or 20 points

You are outside the traditional legal structures of your society. You cannot be arrested or charged with a crime by the "temporal authorities" — that is, by the government. Only your own church can try or punish you.

Cost of this advantage depends on how sweeping the immunity is. For 5 points, the cleric is not subject to temporal authority, but his own church regulates his behavior in a strict way, determined by the GM. On the other hand, if the church regulations are less strict than the temporal ones, this is a 10-point advantage. And if a cleric can do pretty much what he pleases as long as he doesn't injure the church itself, that is a 15-point advantage.

For an extra 5 points, the cleric also has "diplomatic pouch" privileges. He can send or receive mail or objects that may not be stopped or examined by the temporal authorities.

Clerics will normally have this advantage only if their churches are so powerful that they have their own religious law outside the bounds of the state. The GM determines this when a religion is created, and may simply add the cost of this advantage to the value of the religion.

Power Investiture

10points/level

You have been invested with the power of your deity, and may cast clerical spells (see *Clerical Magic*, pp. 100-113).

Each level of Investiture confers a +1 bonus to IQ when learning new divine spells. Different levels may represent different states of holiness in regard to a single deity, or may be

used to differentiate the clerics of one deity from another. Those deities which have limited ability to transfer power to their followers, or have a small range of possible spell effects, will probably only grant one level of Investiture, while those encompassing a wide range of powers may be more generous. The number of possible levels of Investiture granted should be determined by the GM when creating the religion, and affects the church's value as a Patron.

Note that Power Investiture does not necessarily go hand-in-hand with Clerical Investment. The first is a measure of the cleric's bond with the deity, the second a social/political ranking within the church. Clerics might not be allowed any Power Investiture until reaching the higher ranks of their religion, or the very use of divine magic might be a separate branch of the church, available only to those of one particular order. Or the

deity might choose to grant its power when and where it wishes, completely outside the hierarchy of the church.

The exact nature of the Investiture will probably differ with each culture and religion. In some it may be an elaborate ceremony. In others it could be a path of spiritual search and enlightenment, with the cleric himself discovering the secrets necessary to progress through the possible levels. However it is gained, Investiture represents a level of knowledge and attainment that can be made or increased throughout play.

World Sight

10 points

You are able to perform shamanistic magics (see pp. 116-125). You have the ability to transcend ordinary human limitations and gain the power to enter the domain of gods and spirits. You may be subject to intermittent visions even if you never receive proper training as a shaman.

DISADVANTAGES

Duty ***B39***

Variable; see p.

Most clerics have a duty to preserve and uphold their faith, to support and aid other members of their religion, and, when necessary, to protect it from those who seek to desecrate it. These duties are a very real part of a cleric's "job." The duty and responsibility assigned to each member of the church will, however, vary with his rank and level of commitment. Someone who has devoted the entirety of his life to the church may hold more duties than someone who advises other members of the church on a part-time basis, or is given to purely scholarly pursuits as opposed to dealing directly with the public.

Clerics must determine their desired rank within the church, and the level of commitment they are willing to give. They will be assigned duties and responsibilities accordingly.

Fanaticism

-15 points; see p. B33

Fanaticism is a common disadvantage among religious folk. One might say that anyone who devotes his entire life to serving a belief or a faith must be somewhat fanatical, but this is not necessarily true. There are many reasons to join the clergy in most cultures besides depth and truth of faith. However, if your character fully embraces the beliefs and tenets of his church to the exclusion of all else, then you should consider this Disadvantage.

Fanatics react very positively to those who are members of their religion or hold rank in their church. They also tend to react negatively to those who do not follow their faith or, worse yet, actively oppose it. Therefore, a religious fanatic doubles all reaction *bonuses* toward righteous members of his own faith, and doubles all *reaction penalties* toward unbelievers or backsliders.

Fanatics are immune to any doubt or disbelief regarding the church they serve.

Intolerance (Religious)

-5/-10 points;
see p. B34

Intolerance is another common disadvantage among the religious. Some faiths practically demand it of their followers,

teaching that all who do not follow their creed are damned or worse. Others will specifically forbid it, teaching a path of understanding and acceptance to all.

Intolerance of a particular religion (usually one diametrically opposed to your own) is worth -5 points, and causes a -3 reaction to any follower of that religion. Intolerance of *anyone* not of your religion is worth -10 points, and causes a -3 reaction to anyone not of your own faith. (Note that if Fanaticism is also taken, these penalties double to -6.)

Sense of Duty

Variable; see p. B39

As true believers of their faith, most clerics are going to have a strong Sense of Duty toward their religion and people of their faith. However, any Sense of Duty which duplicates the responsibilities placed upon them by the church is not worth any additional character points - only a Sense of Duty above and beyond that required of any dutiful cleric at their level of involvement may be used. Keep in mind that a Sense of Duty beyond the church is likely to create conflicts within the character, and may not be allowed by some religions.

Social Status: Excommunicated ***-5/-10 points***

You have been excommunicated from a religion. If the religion is strictly a societal or political power, this is a 5-point disadvantage, and only those directly involved with your excommunication, or who have heard about it via normal means, will know of it. If the religion has true supernatural power, this is a 10-point disadvantage, and all clerics of the religion (and most members) will immediately recognize your shame.

Excommunications usually occur in powerful, widespread, state-backed religions. Small, localized faiths tend to simply exile the offenders.

Once recognized, an excommunicated person has a reaction penalty of -3 from all followers of the religion.

Vow

Variable; see p. B37

At times of Investment or other religious significance, it is common for clerics to show their dedication to their faith by swearing vows. Some vows are required by the church: vows of poverty, chastity, truth, etc. are common examples. Other vows may be accepted by the cleric as penance, or as a sign of special devotion.

Trivial Vow: -1 point (a quirk). Tithe some percentage (less than 20%) of income to church; restricted diet; change of name.

Minor Vow: -5 points. Total obedience to the Church; tithe some percentage (21%-90%) of income to the church; chastity; silence of limited duration (during the day, during the night, on holy days, etc.); tell the truth at all times; undertake annual pilgrimage.

Major Vow: -10 points. Total silence; celibacy; complete poverty (tithe all money or property to the church); renounce social rank.

Great Vow: -15 points. Never refuse any request for aid; hunt down and destroy all church enemies; gain all sustenance through begging.

While many religious vows are "for life," some will have definite time periods associated with them (at least a year), or a definite task to be completed to release you from the vow's restrictions. You must buy off a vow's point value whenever it ends. For vows accepted as penance, the points gained by taking the vow may *not* be used to improve the character in other ways. These points remain in holding until you have worked off the penance. At this point you may use them to buy off the vow, or choose to extend the vow and spend the points on other things.

Breaking a religious vow is a serious matter. If the church's power is purely social, any cleric caught in violation of a vow may be stripped of rank and standing, or assigned grave punishments (always worse than the vow that was betrayed). If the church represents a true force or power in the world, then *any* time a vow to that power is broken, there will be severe repercussions (see *Penance*, p. 60).

NEW DISADVANTAGES

Cursed

Variable

You have been cursed by a god. The curse may take whatever form the GM finds appropriate. It may be a continuing commandment such as "you may never sleep at night," or "you must always speak the truth." Or it may be a particularly nasty Disadvantage like Blindness, Epilepsy, or Berserk behavior. The curse may be placed on you in particular, or may have fallen upon you as a member of a cursed family or race. What makes curses distinct from regular Disadvantages is the potential for their removal. Each curse was given for a reason, and the character, through play, has the opportunity to uncover this reason and atone, thereby lifting the curse. The type of curse given should fit the deity in question and the reason for the cursing, as should the eventual terms of atonement.

The cost of the curse is left completely to the GM. The more encompassing or debilitating the curse, the higher the cost. The reason for the cursing, and the ease of atonement should also be considered in the cost - the easier to discover and remove, the lower the cost. The curse should never be for something simple or trivial, and the terms of atonement should always be nearly as bad as the curse itself.

For example, a curse of Berserk rage might be placed upon a certain family whose forefather killed a high-ranking cleric in a fit of rage. To atone, some member of the family must approach the church and seek penance, which may mean becoming a cleric of the church himself, or performing some major service

dictated by a cleric of the church. The individual should be given the standard 15 points for the Berserk disadvantage, since the effect on him is the same, though he has the option of role-playing the atonement and buying it off. A standard disadvantage given as a curse should never exceed the cost of the uncursed Disadvantage. Treat commandments as involuntary oaths.

Disciplines of Faith

Variable

Similar to Vows, these are fundamental rules that you choose to live your life by, in order to achieve a greater understanding of your faith. Some religions will require one or more of these from their clerics. Others make them optional, adopt lesser or piecemeal methodologies, or forbid such excesses of worship at any time.

These disciplines only apply to religions who share their characteristic worldview, and may be a prerequisite to a greater understanding of the true nature and powers of the divine.

Asceticism: -15 points. The renunciation of all the comforts of society to lead a life of self-denial and self-discipline. May involve sporadic bouts of severe self-punishment to excise the mortal taint of earthly desire. Most often involves some sort of isolation in bleak, austere settings. An ascetic transcends all need for worldly possessions, living in complete and utter poverty. An ascetic may gain no other Status or Wealth modifiers beyond his rank of Clerical Investment.

Iconism: -10 points. Iconists believe that piety accumulates through expenditure of wealth on religious goods: statues, paintings, totems, religious ornamentation of any sort, new and grander temples, etc. They devote their lives to decorating the world with bigger and more beautiful icons of their deity, sure that this will gain them the favor of further truths and understanding.



Many iconists are quite poor beyond the beautiful icons of their deities. A true iconist will spend his last gold piece on a new statue rather than a good, hot meal.

Monasticism: -10 points. A milder form of asceticism, those devoted to monasticism also lead a life separated from worldly concerns, devoting themselves completely to religious pursuits often involving the denial of ego and self. This discipline is more contemplative than restrictive, and is most often used by those trying to obtain a purity of mind and body that they expect to bring them closer to their deity or ruling force. One practicing monasticism may gain no other Status or Wealth modifiers except Clerical Investment, and must spend at least 75% of his time sequestered from the world.

Mysticism: -10 points. A discipline of deep meditation and trance-like contemplation aimed at obtaining a closer union with the divine. The cleric spends a majority of his time engaged in rituals of meditation, complete with chanting and whatever other trappings are necessary. Mystics are often considered a bit mad, and receive a -2 reaction penalty from anyone except devout followers of the religion.

Ritualism: -5 points. The strict adherence to elaborate rituals regarding every aspect of life - from waking to eating to bathing to sex. Each ritual has its proper place, time, words, trappings and ceremony. The fundamental belief of a ritualist is that through the perfect performance of each ritual, they bring each aspect of their life closer to the divine.

SKILLS

Craft Skills

Many churches support themselves by selling goods or services to the community. Thus, clerics who spend any length of time at retreats, monasteries, or smaller shrines or temples may end up learning craft skills such as brewing, glassblowing, carpentry, leatherworking, illumination, calligraphy, pottery, woodworking, and so on. In extremely remote places, such skills may be required for the sustenance of the community. Or the church may choose to separate itself completely, forming independent communities which require such skills to survive.

Medical Skills

Physician/TL (Mental/Hard) *see p. B56*

At tech levels under TL3, this skill is the equivalent of Botany plus Herbary.

Professional Skills

Law (Mental/Hard) *see p. B58*

In places and times where the church is considered either beyond, or one and the same as, the law of the state, clerics may be required to specialize in the particular laws and legal structure of the church.



Clerics who act as judges will require a Law skill of 17 or above.

Theology (Mental/Hard) *see p. B62*

The study of religions, their history, development, basic tenets and interrelations. Specializations give in-depth knowledge of a particular religion, including knowledge of religious doctrine, dogma and rituals, as well as mysterious or hidden knowledge unavailable to the general populace. GMs may limit skill levels in such a specialization based on the cleric's rank. Promotions within the church may have this skill as a prerequisite.

Science Skills

Botany *see p. B60*

This skill includes a working knowledge of herbs and their properties. If the skilled character also has Herbary, it is possible to prepare herbal remedies.

Social Skills

Bard (Mental/Average) *see p. B47*

The ability to speak well in public can serve a cleric well, to convert new followers or maintain the faith of those who question. Few, however, will have any formal training in this skill, though certain religions may find bardic priests quite useful.

Diplomacy (Mental/Hard) *see p. B63*

The skill of negotiating compromises and getting along with others. As any major church defines a community and social hierarchy in and of itself, and may often be called upon to render judgments and answer complaints in the society as a whole, this skill is quite important to ranking clerics.

Fast-Talk (Mental/Average) *see p. B63*

The ability to talk others into doing things against their better judgment. Constructed, "flash" religions may depend on clerics with high levels of this skill to sell their message to a skeptical public. Members of proselytizing religions may find it useful as well.

Leadership (Mental/Average) **B63**

see p.

A very important skill for high-ranking clerics. Absolutely essential for church leaders. A successful Leadership roll is required to make NPC clerics follow your orders in any stressful situation.

Politics (Mental/Average)

see p. B64

In churches based on secular power and social status, skill in Politics might be necessary to progress beyond the lowest clerical levels. This skill can only be learned by experience, or by closely watching others "at work." In a church of this type, advancement in the church is likely to be tied to levels of this skill.

Herbary (Mental/Average) **BB38**

see p.

Herbary is a venerable English word meaning, among other things, the science of herbs. This skill is the knowledge of herbal concoctions from harvesting, to storage, to effects, to delivery, to potency. Once a herbalist has correctly identified a plant with Botany skill, he then must roll against Herbary skill to successfully transmute the raw material to an active herbal concoction.

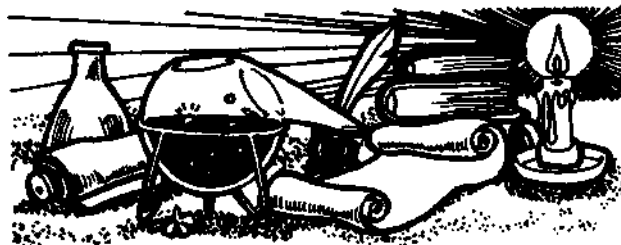
Herbary skill level determines the *number* of prepared herbs a beginning herbalist starts with. These concoctions *must* be chosen from plants he is familiar with - see Botany, above.

Note: At TL2 or below, Herbary is the equivalent of the Physician skill; players in such campaigns should not take both.

Teaching (Mental/Average)

see p. B64

Teaching is an important skill for those clerics who are called upon to explain the word of god to their followers, or who must train the younger clergy in their duties and responsibilities with the church. Sages and wisemen are often noted for their teaching ability.



NEWSKILLS

Meditation (Mental/Hard)

Defaults to IQ-5

This is the ability to enter a trance-like state which may then be maintained for several hours. A meditative trance may be required for certain rituals, as well as being a common preparation for prayer. While in a such a trance, fatigue is regained at twice normal rate.

Performance/Ritual (Mental/Average)

Defaults to IQ-5, Acting-2, Bard-2

The ability to perform a religious ritual (holiday celebration, wedding, funeral, etc.) before a congregation. It includes precise knowledge of the appropriate trappings, motions and prayers, etc., as well as the performance skill necessary to capture and hold the attention of those participating. A particular ritual may have a Theology specialization as a prerequisite.

MONEY AND EQUIPMENT



When designing clerical characters, it is important to consider their position and relationship with the church. Will the church provide most of their equipment from general stock, or none? Are clerics allowed to own personal or private items? What religious equipment and regalia will they have? How much money are they likely to keep with them? How much of the monies they acquire "belong" to their church?

The GM should prepare a list of common regalia and equipment available to clerical PCs, especially if the church denies its clerics the right of private property.

Clothing

Garb, both for daily wear and for special ceremony, should be clearly defined, as well as the common religious symbols worn. Cost is not generally an issue, but rank often is - certain trappings may be appropriate only to clerics of certain ranks; a church leader usually dresses very differently from a simple monk. Alternatively, the church may provide no special clothing at all, preferring its clerics to be seen as ordinary members

of their congregation. In other cases, the church may limit the cleric to sackcloth, the work of his own hands, or whatever others are willing to give him. Anything is possible. See p. 85 for description.

Religious Items

Clerics often carry certain mementos of their faith: holy symbols, books of scripture, small relics, various trappings necessary for common rituals, icons of their god, and so forth. Some may be necessary for their work, or the casting of spells. Others are but familiar reminders of their faith. Both players and GMs should give thought to what is appropriate to the culture and the religion and equip each cleric accordingly. See pp. 80-84 for a list of possibilities.

CLERICAL DUTY

The first responsibility of any cleric is to serve his deity. In most cases, the second is to serve, support, lead and succor the followers of his faith. Very few religions can exist without the faithful; those that do tend to represent some archetypal force or aspect of the world which cannot be denied (such as death). For the rest, power and status come from the conviction of their followers - conviction that often rises and falls with the material and spiritual benefits gained.

The exact nature of a cleric's service to his followers will depend upon the nature of the deity he serves. However, certain common duties cross almost all religions. They speak the religion's message to the faithful in daily prayers. They teach the young (and indoctrinate them into the religion). They perform the ceremonies and rituals important to holy times and places. They collect holy scripture and the truths contained within. They arbitrate in matters of religious law or tradition, and so on. It is the cleric's task to see that all customs of the religion are upheld by all followers, and that none who worship forget the true purpose and intent of the deity.

Protection of Church Members/Property

Protection of those under their care is an important duty for most clerics, especially those of knightly orders. The well-being of the worshipers and the protection of church property (especially Holy Objects, relics, scriptures, vestments and other components of the faith) are of utmost importance. If the church is considered sacred and untouchable, then this task will be easy. But if there is a strong and militant population of nonbelievers nearby, or a strong opposing deity exists, then the task may be a bit more challenging. If threatened often enough (and in ways that the deity's power cannot fully protect against), the church may seek pacifistic solutions, or develop military orders to deal with the problem.

In some cases the church, vestment, scriptures and other trappings are not only considered the property of the deity, but an extension of the deity itself. To steal from the church is to defame the deity, and will be treated harshly.

The Role of the Church

When equipping a cleric, the role the church plays in his life must be considered. In some cases the cleric is responsible to himself alone and may equip himself as he sees fit. Or the cleric might be considered an extension of the church, with no real property of his own, gaining whatever home, clothing and supplies he gets directly from the church. Some are forbidden to have anything but what they get from the charity of their worshipers. Other religions vary between these extremes, providing or forbidding only certain items, while leaving the rest to the cleric's discretion.

This is particularly important if the cleric finds himself at odds with the church for any reason, or if the church's resources become scarce. For, as the church gives, so it can take.

Recruitment

Every church requires fresh recruits to carry on. While some deities may do their own recruiting, most leave this task to their clerics. They will be required to keep an eye out for promising young talent to indoctrinate in the ways of the church. In some cases force might even be an acceptable option.



Depending on the hierarchy of the church, a cleric may be called upon to aid in teaching or testing of the younger clergy.

In some religions, recruitment may follow custom; a family might be encouraged, or even required, to dedicate a certain child (or number of children) to the church. This might be a permanent duty (every third son becomes a priest) or a temporary one (all daughters receive two years of religious training, after which time they may leave the church if they wish).

DIVINE MAGIC



6

Clerical Terms

Ceremony: A gathering of clerics and worshipers for religious purpose, often including the casting of a clerical spell.

Clerical Ranking: The cleric's rank in the hierarchy of the church. The cleric's level of Clerical Investment.

Clerical Investment: The social/political advantage of being a cleric within a religion. Represents status and influence within the church and is measured in levels, or ranks, depending on the religion.

Consecrate: To dedicate an object or area to the divine. To focus the power of the deity within an object or area. The clerical equivalent of enchantment.

Consecrated Objects: Sacred Objects (see below) which have been cleansed or blessed by the deity's power for use in various clerical magics.

Divine Intervention: Direct intervention of the deity or its associated powers within the world.

Holy Object: Sacred Object (see below) with the ability to cast one or more spells common to the deity. Clerical magic item.

Investiture: see Power Investiture, below.

Investiture Link: Spiritual link with the divine created during the Power Investiture.

Object of Power: Holy Object (see above) which creates an area of High or Very High Sanctity (see p. 102) around it.

Power Investiture or Investiture: Rite which imparts the power of the divine to the cleric, allowing magical spells and abilities. Clerical equivalent to Magical Aptitude.

Ritual: Formal symbolic act associated with the casting of a spell or the petitioning of the deity. Sometimes used interchangeably with the word "spell."

Sacred Object: Any object consecrated to a deity.

Sacred Vessel: Personal Sacred Object used to store the combined power of the deity and the cleric.

Sanctity: The measure of the deity's power in a given locale.

Do deities shake the world with their powers? Bestow miracles upon the worthy? Grant their faithful servants smaller aspects of their powers to call upon at will? Answer calls from their followers?

In certain game worlds, the power of the gods manifests in very concrete forms, easily perceived by all. In these worlds, clerics will be powerful figures, respected by all, able to draw upon the supernatural power or force personified by their particular deity or faith.

How true divine magic works is closely tied to the design of the cosmos, and the interaction of the divine forces within it. Prior to play, the GM must fully design this magic for each religion in the game world which manifests it.

To this end, a series of different approaches to divine magic is presented in this chapter. GMs should use whichever one best suits their campaign, modifying or expanding upon the basic guidelines as needed.

Clerical Magic

Clerics draw upon the supernatural power or force personified by their particular deity in order to create predictable, reoccurring effects known as spells. Unlike "pure" magic, clerical magic is not at all affected by the mana rating of an area. It may, however, be affected by the strength of the deity in a given location, the time of the year, the number of faithful present, the strength of the cleric's devotion to the deity, and so forth.

Power Investiture

Before a cleric can cast a spell, he must undergo a special rite known as a Power Investiture in which he is imbued with the deity's power (see *Advantages*, pp. 93-94). This ceremony is designed to attune the cleric to the power of the deity, allowing him to draw upon that power in specialized rituals, and focus it into spells. Thus while the cleric initiates the spell, it is, in truth, the deity which powers it. Therefore it is *always* the prerogative of the deity to deny this power, or to manipulate it in unexpected ways. Clerical magic is highly prone (much more so than "pure" magic) to variant effects due to circumstances. Clerics who break faith with their deity (as opposed to the church - it is possible to do one without the other) may find that all their spells fail until they make atonement in one way or another.

The investiture is a two-way link: as the cleric may draw upon the deity, the deity may also draw upon the life-energies of the cleric (in terms of Fatigue, or in dire cases, directly upon HT), or may use the cleric as a channel through which to draw in the willingly-given energies of the faithful. This is the mechanism through which some deities gain power from their followers. Some deities might never do this, while others may consider this sort of "sacrifice" commonplace.

Spells

Clerics use the same spell list as mages. However, clerical spells draw their power from a different source, and vary from their magical equivalents in a number of other ways.

The Nature of the Spell

Clerical magics are an appeal to the divine, an expression of faith and belief. In this, though the end effect may be the same, they differ greatly from their pure magical counterparts.

Many spells will take the form of prayer: a gently-worded plea to draw the deity's attention, as the cleric calls upon whatever power might be necessary. The prayer is a focus, a mantra for the casting of the spell. In some cases it might be absolutely necessary to the spell to work; in others it may simply be an expected component (see *Magical Rituals*, below). The GM (or player) should feel free to invent small rituals or prayers to go with the spells to add flavor (see sidebar, p. 106).

Faith: Faith is an absolutely essential component to any divine spell. If the cleric doubts himself, his deity, or the truth and reality of the deity's power, then the spell can be hopeless even before it has begun. Thus any occurrence which temporarily shakes the foundation of a cleric's faith may have disastrous effects on his ability to cast spells. Mind-control spells such as Suggestion may be used to cause the cleric to doubt, and thereby weaken his Spellcasting.

Casting the Spell

To cast a clerical spell the cleric must first know the spell, having been invested with the power of the deity. He must also learn the necessary steps to focus the power into this particular effect (by spending character points to learn the spell). He must then spend one or more turns in *concentration*, performing whatever prayer and ritual motions are appropriate. At the beginning of the turn *after* the last turn of concentration, the cleric makes a skill roll for the spell. He may then do some other action on that turn (use a weapon, start concentrating again, etc.).

Casting a spell works just like the use of any other skill. The cleric rolls three dice and compares the result with his skill level in that spell combined with any circumstantial modifiers. If the roll is less than or equal to the modified skill, then the spell works. If the roll is greater than the skill, then the spell fails.

Like pure magical spells, clerical spells are subject to critical successes and failures, corresponding to instances of divine favor, disfavor, or whim. The GM determines the exact effect of a critical success or failure. He should base his decision on the nature of the deity in question.

Magical Rituals

All clerical spells require concentration and focus. Clerics gain no bonuses in casting time for increased skill, and all clerical magics take a minimum of one round of concentration to cast (defensive or blocking spells, if used, are an exception to this rule).

Since all clerical spells involve a plea to the deity, the more elaborate or grand the request, the better chance there is that the spell will succeed. Each spell will have a standard ritual associated with it. This may include a verbal chant or prayer, gestures and motions of the hands or feet, a position or posture to assume (kneeling or bowing is common), or possibly even an ingredient prepared previously (for example, incense or holy water). For each part of the ritual that is omitted, there is a penalty to the spell's chance of success. For each part of the ritual that is prolonged or extended, there is a bonus to the spell's chance of success. These bonuses or penalties are cumulative:

- 2 for soft speech, or -4 for no speech.
- 2 if gestures are made with only one hand, or -4 if no gestures are used.
- 2 if the proper foot movements and/or position is not used.
- 4 if the proper ingredient is not used.

Pure Magic vs. Clerical Magic

Though the sources that power divine magic and "pure" magic differ greatly, the worldly effects of the powers are essentially equivalent. A magic spell can attack and resist a clerical spell as easily as any other, just as clerical magic can protect against magical effects. Wards, Counterspell, and all other defensive or protective magics work interchangeably between clerics and mages.

As to whether or not a single individual may combine magery and clerical magic, the GM has two choices.

In the first case, magery and clerical magic may not be mixed within a particular individual. The divine link will override any natural magery the character might have, hopelessly interfering with his ability to cast pure magic spells. If the individual knew pure magic prior to his Power Investiture, he will not lose this skill, but neither may he use it in any way as long as the connection exists. If, however, the link is broken for some reason, then the person's natural magery will reassert itself and he may once again practice his rusty magic skills.

In the second case, the two may occur without interference within a single character, but they remain completely separate abilities and powers. Consider this the default case, unless otherwise decided by the GM. Clerical spells learned do *not* count as prerequisites for magic spells - the manner of casting and the source of power is simply too different. Indeed, it is quite possible for someone to know the *same* spell - one as a channel of the deity's power, the other as a skill which draws upon mana - at separate skill levels. Although these spells will have the same effect when cast, the manner of their casting and the sources of their power are so different that the knowledge of one could not possibly affect the other. The existence of mage talent within an individual does not in any way affect the Power Investiture or the investiture link created with the deity.

Mana

Magical mana need not affect the workings of clerical magics or Holy Objects. Sanctity and mana are two completely different things, and may coexist peacefully - or not, as the GM decides.



+ 1 for each additional round spent concentrating on a spell, to a total of +4.

+ 1 for each additional hour spent in ceremonial magics (see p. 104), to a total of +6.

Energy Cost

Clerical spells, like magical ones, have an associated energy cost. The higher the ability with the spell, the less energy is required to cast it. Higher levels of Power Investiture (conferring larger learning bonuses) allow the cleric to draw more of the spell's cost from the deity, rather than himself. At a skill of 15, the spell's cost to the cleric is reduced by 1; at 20 it is reduced by 2; and at 25 it is reduced by 3.

The Sanctity level of an area also affects the cost, as does the time of year. These costs are additive. For example, a cleric casting a spell in a place of High Sanctity on a holy day (see below) will only pay one-fourth the normal cost, and will regain fatigue four times as fast as usual. However, a spell cast in a place of Low Sanctity on a day of weakness will cost *four* times as much, and the cleric will have to wait four times longer than usual to recover lost fatigue.

Power Investiture as a Gift

As described on p. 100, the Power Investiture is a ritual anointing or initiation that a cleric undergoes to gain access to the power of the deity. It could just as easily be played as an inborn trait or quality, much like Magical Aptitude. In this case, it would indicate a particular affinity for the power of a specific deity, or a natural "holiness." Levels of investiture will be completely independent of Clerical Investment, and may in fact occur in those who have little interest in becoming clerics.

Note that having an Investiture link does not confer the knowledge of spells. The person must still find some training in order to focus his gift. This training must teach him the clerical version of the spell-magery training will avail him little unless he also has Magical Aptitude.

Religions may seek out those with particular insight (sometimes called a *vocation*) to be clerics. It may be a prerequisite for certain clerical rankings (thereby re-establishing the link between rank and investiture), or for certain religious orders. Whatever the case, the church will probably not provide training for talented folk without indoctrinating them into the structure of the religion in some way.

Sanctity

Sanctity is a measure of the deity's power in a given locale. The Sanctity of an area affects the cost and overall effect of a clerical spell.

Very High Sanctity: The area directly surrounding the presence of the deity, a shrine, a temple, a church, or any holy place consecrated to the deity, particular to the religion. These places are the seat of the deity's power. Spells cast here have *no* energy cost (unless they can *only* be cast in a place of Very High Sanctity, in which case normal costs apply). Fatigue spent through the casting of clerical magics is immediately renewed at the end of each turn. This is a No-Sanctity area for all non-allied deities.

High Sanctity: The area directly surrounding a shrine, a temple, or a church; any non-consecrated place where worshipers regularly gather for prayer (it takes at least five years of constant activity for a given locale to be so imprinted); any place special to the deity, but not considered to be specifically sacred. The deity is strong in such areas, though not as strong as in its immediate shrines. Spells cast here have half the normal energy cost, and clerics regain fatigue at twice ordinary rate.

Normal Sanctity: Any area (town, city, country) in which the deity would normally hold sway. The deity's power is available in these areas, but at no special benefit or cost.

Low Sanctity: Any area (town, city, country) where the deity's power would not normally extend. The deity is weak in these places. Spells cast here have twice the normal energy cost, and clerics regain fatigue at only half the normal rate.

No Sanctity: Any area in which the deity holds absolutely no power, and whose very nature is contrary to that of the deity. The deity's power is essential

ly nonexistent here. Spells will generally not work (except Divine Intervention, p. 113), and a cleric will regain no fatigue spent on clerical magics.

Areas of High or Very High Sanctity for one deity will usually lower the Sanctity level of any other deity in that area by 1, unless their powers are allied. Allied powers may coexist at higher than normal sanctity levels. For example, though all the Lands of Bethany (see pp. 156-166) are usually of Normal Sanctity, clerics of Volt will find temples of Dorn to be areas of Low Sanctity. Clerics of Keldan have no such penalty, and may find the temple to be an area of High Sanctity for them as well.

Anyone with an Investiture link may roll IQ + Investiture level to determine the Sanctity level of his current location.

Holy Days

A deity's power may also vary according to the time of year. Certain days may be considered holy times when the deity's power is at its strongest, while others may mark times of weakness.

Days of Strength: On holy days particular to a given deity, the energy cost of all clerical spells powered by that deity will be halved, and clerics will regain fatigue lost due to Spellcasting at twice the ordinary rate. A special high holy day may be defined, when the deity is particularly strong. On this day all areas of High Sanctity will act as areas of Very High Sanctity, and areas of Normal Sanctity will act as areas of High Sanctity. These days should be quite rare.

Each Holy Day will add 1 point to the cost of the church as a patron. High Holy Days add 2 points each to the cost of church patronage.

Days of Weakness: A deity may also be particularly weak on certain days or times of the year. On these days, the energy cost of all clerical spells powered by that deity will be doubled, and clerics will regain lost fatigue at half the usual rate. A special day of weakness, when the deity is especially weak, may be designated on which areas of Very High Sanctity act like areas of High Sanctity, areas of High Sanctity act as areas of Normal Sanctity, and so on.

Each Day of Weakness will subtract 1 point from the cost of the church as a patron.

Divine Power

All deities who are actively worshipped will have the power to sustain the number of clerics who are Invested. This power may be drawn from the worship of its followers, or may be integral to the deity.

If there is a sudden decrease in the number of followers through war, calamity, or some other great disaster, then the balance of things must

Sanctifying an Area

There are three ways that an area can be Sanctified to a deity, depending on the relative power of the deity on the world. First, if the deity is able to manifest at will within the material world, it may simply select an area and claim it. Any area in which a deity manifests will become Sanctified to some extent, though only if the deity manifests repeatedly in the same area will the locale retain its Sanctity rating overtime.

Secondly, an existing deity may extend its areas of Sanctity into new areas by converting new worshipers to its faith. Over time, as their energies are continually given to the deity, the area will gain a higher level of Sanctity.

Finally, the quick and dirty method is for a cleric to go to the area he wishes to Sanctify, and perform a Divine Intervention to manifest the power of the deity in the locale. As long as the power is exhibited, the area is considered to have a Very High Sanctity rating. The cleric then Consecrates the area to focus the power displayed. If the ritual succeeds, then the area will become one of High Sanctity. Repeated worship to the deity held within the area may eventually elevate its Sanctity to the level of Very High.

Altering the Sanctity of an Area

Sanctity levels can be modified both up and down. Generally, the most common way of altering the Sanctity of an area is to change the deity most commonly worshiped in that area. A shrine which is left vacant for decades will begin to lose its affinity for the divine (unless the deity takes pains to see that this does not occur). A Low Sanctity area can be gradually transformed into a higher level by continual prayers and sacrifices of power (and other things) to the deity.

More expedient methods use the Desecrate and Consecrate spells to lessen or increase the rating of an area (see p. 110).



Ritualized Magic

As described on pp. 100-104, clerical magics can be cast with all the speed and alacrity of pure magics. This better balances the two different power bases, but may not be the way in which a GM wants divine magics to occur on his world. Another option is to force all clerical magics to be ritualized in nature - that is, they must all be accompanied by great fanfare, ceremony and ritual. This takes clerical magics out of the realm of combat or immediate action, and relegates it to those feats worthy of a long, protracted service.

Ritualizing magic can be accomplished by applying a modifier to the spell casting times, forcing them to take, say, three times longer than their magical equivalents. This accounts for the additional time of prayer and supplication to the deity, but still allows the clerics some flexibility.

The other option is to require all clerical magics to be cast in their ceremonial forms.

Spheres of Influence

The ease with which clerics can cast certain spells is based on their deity's sphere of influence. The elements or powers in which the deity is strong will be easier for their clerics to manipulate than those over which it has only incidental power. Those spells which the GM decides are within the deity's sway can be cast as written. However, other spells, which the cleric cannot cast as simply or quickly, may be learned from allied deities.

Spells gained from allied powers may only be cast in their full ceremonial form.



be re-evaluated. If the deity does, indeed, draw power from its followers, then the GM must determine if there is still enough to supply the deity and maintain what power the clerics require. There are no mechanics to this decision - it is at the discretion of the GM. If not, then the deity may refuse to provide the raw power for spells, or cut off certain clerics, until some sort of balance is restored. Should restoration be impossible, the deity may fade, leaving its clerics with little purpose except the restoration of the deity.

Sudden increases in followers are never a problem - a deity can never have too *much* power, except from the point of view of its enemies.

Other Modifying Circumstances

Other circumstances that may affect the casting of a clerical spell include:

Fanaticism: If the cleric is fanatical about his religion, he gains a +1 modifier to all clerical spell rolls.

Divine Favor: If the cleric is engaging in an activity that the deity particularly approves of, or for whatever reason enjoys extreme divine favor, the god may grant a bonus up to +5! This is rare, and should only be used in extreme cases.

Divine Disfavor: If the cleric is engaging in an activity that the deity disapproves of, then it is most likely that the spell's effect will be muted, or will not occur at all.

All normal magical modifiers for area of effect and range still apply.

Ceremonial Magic

Ceremonial Magic (see p. M14) is quite common among clerics. Very powerful effects can be created when several clerics gather together, supported by the energies of an entire congregation. All "spectators" must be actively engaged in worshipping the deity in some prescribed fashion - dancing, singing, praying, etc. There is no upper limit on the number of total points the congregation can add to the spell, though each may still only contribute a single point.

For those deities who receive their power from their followers, each act of worship is in fact the casting of a Ceremonial Magic designed to transfer power to the deity. The cleric leading the worship casts the equivalent of a Recover Strength spell, but instead of recovering the fatigue from the effects of the spell, he gathers it from the energies devoted by the "spectators" (or worshipers). Each point they donate to the spell is then transferred to the deity through the Investiture link. For this purpose (and this purpose *only*) members of the congregation may provide more than a single spell point to the ceremony. Such energies must be given willingly in the name of the deity.

Sacred Objects

Clerics do not make magical items as mages do. As ever, the exercise of their power is limited to that dictated by the deity. However, holy or sacred objects with magical powers will almost certainly be found in any world where magic exists.

Consecrated Objects

These are normal objects or materials which have been made holy or sacred through a ceremony of consecration (see p. 110). Examples are holy water, special oils used for certain rituals, and religious symbols worn by the cleric.

Ceremonies of consecration can only be performed in areas of Very High Sanctity, by clerics of the deity. Consecration is not particularly difficult, and thus consecrated objects are not terribly rare. Anything that is appropriate to the deity may be consecrated, for varying effects. For example, a warrior deity might consecrate the blades of swords used by his followers, giving them a +1 to skill when used against a follower of an enemy faith for a particular conflict. (The GM should be careful when assigning these bonuses, and always remember that any gain must be relative to the difficulty of the ritual in question.) In no case should a simple consecration endow an object with a power equivalent to a spell effect - those are Holy Objects, discussed below. Consecration purifies and "blesses" an object . . . it does not endow it with the power of the deity.

Consecrated objects are most commonly used to aid clerical spells.

Sacred Vessels

Sacred Vessels are objects used to store a combination of the cleric's and the deity's power. The cleric who creates the vessel may use its stored power in place of his own to cast any clerical spell. Such a vessel may *only* be used by the cleric who created it, and he must be within 6 feet of it. Any consecrated object of special meaning to the religion (most often some sort of holy symbol) may be used. There is no restriction on the total number of power points stored in the Sacred Vessel (its strength), but once set, it may not be increased later. Only one such Sacred Vessel may be used per round by a cleric.

To create a Sacred Vessel, a cleric must first find the object he wishes to use and consecrate it. Then he must prepare it with an elaborate ritual in a place of High or Very High Sanctity, spending a full 12 hours per day for each point of power he wishes it to eventually contain. These days must be consecutive, and must end on a day considered particularly holy to the religion. During this holy day, in a place of Very High Sanctity, the cleric casts the Consecrate spell (see p. 110) continuously, once for each point of strength that he wishes the vessel to have. The skill roll is made, once for each casting of the spell. A success adds that potential point of power to the vessel. A



Prayer

Almost all clerical spells will have a vocal element—a prayer or incantation of some sort that focuses the cleric's mind and attracts the attention of the deity (see *Prayer*, p. 74). Either the GM or the player can come up with short prayers for each spell that the player can read, shout, or mutter as the occasion requires. Players or GMs who object to verbalizing a prayer to an imaginary deity may omit this, of course!

Prayer tends to follow one of a general set of forms, depending on whether the prayer is meant to be spontaneous or ceremonial in nature.

Spontaneous, or simple, prayer tends to be just that—simple. Liturgical prayer commonly begins with invoking the name(s) of the god, continues on to the justification for fulfillment, and concludes by formulating the result desired. Other prayers are litanies, simply repeating the name of the god, or some other key element or formula, over and over and over again. There may be a bargaining aspect—“I’ll do this for you if you do that for me”—or it may be a simple cry or plea for aid—“Come . . . hear me . . . have pity.” Still others are completely free-form, finding more value in the inspiration of the moment than in memorized formula. Some do little more than offer praise and glory to the deity, obviously hoping it will bestow its favor in return.

Ceremonial prayers follow more ritualized patterns, often requiring gestures and symbolic motions such as washing the hands or drinking or eating particular substances. Some ceremonies use formalized dialogues of question and answer, demonstrating tests passed and knowledge learned.

Players and GMs should be imaginative and do their best to make the prayers reflect the nature of the religion followed.

failure may not be repeated, meaning the vessel will have less total strength the will of the god. A roll of 17 ends the casting; no more points may be added. A roll of 18 destroys the vessel, and the cleric's hopes. He must begin anew.

Few clerics keep more than one Sacred Vessel with them at a time, and for many the vessel represents an important personal link with the deity. Most create their vessel soon after their Power Investiture.

A Sacred Vessel “recharges” itself after use, by absorbing power from the deity through the cleric's Investiture link. It must be within 6 feet of the cleric in order to recharge. The speed varies according to the Sanctity of the area:

No Sanctity: No recharge.

Low Sanctity: 1 point per week.

Normal Sanctity: 1 point per day.

High Sanctity: 1 point per 12 hours.

Very High Sanctity: 1 point per 6 hours.

Holy or Blessed Objects

These objects are the clerical equivalents of magical items. They have the ability to cast one or more spells appropriate to the deity. They may *only* be used by clerics of that deity, and each use of a Holy Object requires a preparatory ritual done by one or more clerics. These clerics need not know the spell stored in the item, but they do need to know the precise ritual which activates it. Any element of the ritual which is left out or done improperly (the cleric must make a successful Performance/Ritual roll) will abort the spell. If the object can cast multiple spells, then the ritual for each different effect will vary slightly. The length of time for the ritual is specified at the creation of the object and can never be less than that normally required to cast the spell.

There is never an energy cost associated with the use of a Holy Object. The spell's success (assuming the ritual has first been successfully completed) is determined normally, using the item's Power as the caster's skill and applying all normal modifiers. As there is no cost associated with using the object, the Sanctity and time of year do not affect it. Holy Objects work *no matter where* they are, even in the temples of other deities!

To create a Holy Object, the cleric first needs the cooperation of the deity. The deity will not invest its power into material objects lightly—in general, such objects are made for a particular quest or purpose important to the deity and the church as a whole (although once the quest is finished, the object may continue to exist). The cleric must then consecrate the object to be used, in the usual fashion, and decide exactly what he wishes it to be able to do (like Sacred Vessels, Holy Objects are forged in a single, continuous casting—once created, no further effects may be added). Costs are determined exactly as for magic items (see pp. 110-112). Then the object must be “prepared.” This preparation is done by the cleric in an area of either High Sanctity or Very High Sanctity, and takes a day for each point of energy required in the final result. There is *no* shortcut to this process. If the desired result has an energy cost of 100, then it will take the cleric 100 days of continuous preparation. This is a full-time process, requiring 12 hours of arduous ritual. The cleric may do nothing but eat, sleep and prepare the object. If the preparation is disturbed in any way, the cleric must make a Performance/Ritual skill roll at -5 for each day of ritual lost in order to continue, and must make up lost time with sleepless nights (this may only be done once; a second break means the project is lost). If the roll fails, then the cleric must begin again. No other cleric may continue the preparation if something should happen to the original cleric, then the preparation must begin anew.

The final day of preparation must fall on a holy day. On this day, the cleric performs the final casting which will create the object. It *must* be done in a place of Very High Sanctity. The final casting requires one hour for each 100 points of energy required (round up). At the end of each hour, a Consecrate roll is made. If the roll succeeds, the ceremony progresses; if it fails, the cleric may choose to extend the ritual to try again (repeat the work of the last hour, including an additional 100 points of energy that must be spent), lessen the object's final ability by deducting the 100 points from the cost, or abort the ritual altogether. A critical failure (a roll of 18) leaves no choice but to abort. A critical success (a roll of 3) means that no further rolls need be made - the ceremony will be completely successful.

A lone cleric is limited to the energy provided by his own HT and ST and one Sacred Vessel. But in this final stage, the cleric may have assistants. Each of these may use his own Sacred Vessel, so assistants may dramatically multiply available energy. There is no limit to the number of assistants, or to the amount of extra energy they may supply. "Spectators" may also be present and through prayer and devotion lend their own assistance to the casting by providing 1 extra power point each.

Thus a grand ceremony bringing in all the clerics of the church, along with a large congregation, can generate a massive amount of power for this final casting, allowing the forging of very powerful objects. It is also possible to channel this energy into a higher Power for the object.

An object's Power is normally 15, no matter what the skill of the cleric making it. Extra energy in the final ceremony may add to this: +1 for energies exceeding those required by 20%, +2 for an additional 40%, +3 for an additional 60%, +4 for an additional 100%, and an extra +1 for each additional 100% of the required energy.

Special Enchantments such as Accuracy, Puissance, Quick-Draw, Loyal Sword, etc., are considered modifications of the Consecrate spell. While they add the costs listed in *GURPS Magic*, they do not need to be learned as separate spells.

Objects of Power

Objects of Power are Holy Objects with a special difference: they create an area of High or Very High Sanctity about themselves, with all attendant benefits for the cleric. They represent the presence of the deity itself. They are *exceedingly* rare.



Miracles

A miracle is an extraordinary event which is a manifest example of divine intervention. These events are often seen as proof of a god's interest in his followers, and a few well-placed miracles can do wonders for faith and recruitment. True miracles *always* greatly exceed what might be accomplished by a cleric or other divine representative.

Places where miracles occur often become shrines or other holy sites.

Miracles are also associated with new teachers and prophets. In this context, miracles act as proof of the prophet's authority and wisdom. New religions and sects might develop on the basis of such miracles.

Divine Will and The Dice

What happens when an all-important consecration fails? Whenever dice are used, there's a possibility of failure, even when it seems almost a given that the spell should succeed.

There are two different options. First, modify the roll into acceptance. If the priest only has Consecrate at 15-, and he rolls a 16, apply the "Divine Favor" modifier to make the roll succeed. Dice are useful for randomizing the events of a game session, but the final ceremony roll for an effect that's required months and months of hard work and preparation might deserve a little GM tweaking.

But the GM might just consider the roll to be a portent of the divine will. Perhaps there's a reason this particular ceremony should fail. Chaotic or temperamental deities are particularly prone to such vagaries, but even the forthright types might choose to withhold their power for some undiscovered cause.



Minor Objects of Power will create an area of High Sanctity within a given radius, no matter the true Sanctity of the area. Major Objects of Power will create an area of Very High Sanctity within a given radius, affecting the area so strongly that even after the object has moved on, the location will remain an area of High Sanctity for 1 week per day the object was in the location. This special area of effect is "always on." The default area is a 5-hex radius.

Objects of Power are made in two ways. The first is exactly the same as the making of a Holy Object, but during the final hour of the final ceremony the cleric requests Divine Intervention, thereby endowing the object with the true touch of the deity. The success of the request, and the deity's own whim, will decide the power of the resulting object. In these cases, the Object of Power will have both the "area of effect" bonus and whatever spells were consecrated into it. If the request fails, then the object will still be a Holy Object, but not an Object of Power. The radius of effect is set during the ritual, for the cost associated with enchanting an object.

The second method is through some direct intervention of the deity. In these cases the object will have whatever powers and area of effect the GM decides. Objects empowered by the deity in this way will always have some other important religious significance, be they the remains of a true martyr or some other item of symbolic importance. No cleric may request this sort of empowerment. It is, as they say, in the hands of the god.

Objects of Power have a base Power of 25.

Modified Magic

The effects of most spells translate directly from the rules given in *GURPS Magic*. A few requiring special attention are detailed below. Only a small selection of the possible magic spells will be available to the clerics of each religion, depending on the deity's spheres of influence.

Prerequisites can be considered as only guidelines for the purposes of clerical magics. Many religions will define their own path of "prerequisites" that the clerics of that faith will follow, so no general rule applies.

Aura

This spell will identify clerics along with the deity they follow (as long as the mage or cleric casting the spell is familiar with that deity) and the level of Power Investiture the cleric has undergone. This is true whether the spell is cast by a mage or a cleric.

Divination

Divination is a common clerical ability. Most religions should have access to this spell in one form or another at the higher levels. The form of the divination, however, will vary widely, and should reflect the nature of the deity or the driving force of the religion. Consider those methods listed in *GURPS Magic* or *GURPS Grimoire* as a starting point and feel free to extrapolate other methods that seem appropriate.

Lead Worship

Clerics may not use the Recover Strength spell as described in *GURPS Magic*. They have their own version which allows them to gather strength from the worship or prayer of devout followers of their deity. This gathered strength may restore their own fatigue, but at least half must be given to the deity

through the Investiture link. These energies must be willingly given by the worshipers, and can never exceed their own ST. Energy gathered through use of this spell may never increase the cleric's ST - all extra points automatically transfer directly to the deity. For example, a cleric leading a congregation of 20 may receive up to an average of 200 fatigue points from them. If his own ST is 12, then the additional 188 points go to the deity.

It is rare, however, for a congregation to drain itself completely. For a normal service, assume 1 point per worshiper. For an intense, involving ceremony, assume half of each worshiper's available ST is given. Only the extremely fanatical are likely to devote more than half of their available ST.

Remember that the cleric has no control over how much is given — it is strictly up to the worshiper. Thus it is more likely that the aforementioned cleric will only receive 20 fatigue points from his congregation through the use of the spell. 10 of which must go to the deity, leaving him only 10 fatigue points to bolster his own.

The spell is commonly used by deities who gather their power directly from their followers. Clerics of deities who do not depend upon their followers for power may not have access to this spell at all.

Cost: None.

Item: This spell may *not* be consecrated into a Holy Object.

Steal Strength/Health

In addition to restoring the cleric, these spells can be used to perform sacrifices to the deity. Strength or Health stolen can be transferred to the deity through the Investiture link.

In special cases where the victim is ceremonially drained, and then killed, power equivalent to the victims (ST+HT)x3 can be generated, half of which must be given directly to the deity. The other half can be used to power ceremonial spells or added to the total energy for the creation of Holy Objects (see p. 106).

Some deities will refuse to accept energy taken in this manner.

Clerical Magic Spells

The following are spells for use by clerics only. Not all religions will use all of these spells. The GM should feel free to add more spells, or modify these to



Divination

The ancient world used many different techniques in attempts to foresee events of the future. Predicting fate or destiny has long captured the human imagination. It is up to the GM whether any given technique has true validity, or is a convenient front for more common intuition and tricks of charlatanry. Any of these methods may also be combined into the clerical spell Divination, as a technique for focusing the mind of the cleric and the power of the god. (Both *GURPS Magic* and *GURPS Grimoire* contain ideas for other methods, as well.)

Astrology and Astronomy

The science of the stars, called *natural astrology* in more ancient times, was once used to predict natural celestial events such as eclipses and other meteorological phenomena. More recently, *astrology* has come to refer to the study of the movement of celestial bodies and their resultant effects upon the course of human life. This form of star-divination, also called *astromancy*, studies the configurations of the heavens at times of critical events and attempts to determine the outcome of future events. It became very popular in Rome at the beginning of the Christian Era, where astrologers were called "mathematicians" and Chaldeans.

Modern astrology commonly focuses upon the movements of the sun, moon and planets, as well as certain constellations. Based on the time of year and the hour of the day of birth, a precise "star chart" is compiled which locates each of the major celestial bodies and defines their relations to one another. The results form a unique pattern which, some believe, will influence the personality and life events of the individual. True believers will ensure that important events such as marriages and births occur at auspicious times.

Chaldean astrology believed in the concept of universal solidarity. The universe was, to them, a great organism governed by celestial deities. The events of their world were determined by relationships between these deities, echoed by the movements of the stars and planets. Still others saw the heavens as a whole other realm peopled with heroes and monsters whose actions echoed into our world. By studying their interrelations, insights could be gained into our future.

Continued on next page...

Divination (Continued)

To facilitate their studies, ancient astrologers built temples, monuments, and other strategically located edifices by which they measured the movements of the heavenly bodies. Stonehenge is believed by many to be the most famous example. These observations also helped them predict eclipses and other solar events, as well as a primitive ability to predict the weather.

Heptascopy

Heptascopy, or the art of divination through the study of animal livers, particular those of sheep, was common in Mesopotamia, and many other ancient cultures, including Rome. The liver was believed to be the seat of baser desires, separated from the intellect, and thus closer to the spiritual realm. Animals, in particular, were open to these influences, having simpler minds. Thus the patterns of future events could be found imprinted upon their livers. In humans, livers were thought to be the organ of consciousness and dreams.

Augury

Some philosophers believed that the world is an interconnected cosmos, and that indications of its current state could be found by studying patterns of nature. Simple things, such as ripples upon water, the flight path of bees, the songs of birds, the shape and movements of animals . . . each gave clues that a wise man could read. Much of what is now dismissed as superstition was once the keystone of the augurer's art - an owl's hoot, the path of a black cat, the meanings of sneezes are common examples.

People who became obsessed with such observations were often considered more than a little mad. But since madness was often associated with the divine, the ramblings of lunatics were given long consideration lest they conceal wisdom.

Tarot

Other forms of divination use well-known symbols chosen or laid out in seemingly random order to form patterns which the seer can study. One of the most common techniques is card reading, or tarot.

Continued on next page . . .



Consecrate

The Enchantment spell for clerics. In its simplest form it purifies a given object, cleansing it with the deity's power. In combination with complex ritual preparations it allows the creation of Sacred Vessels, Holy Objects, and Objects of Power. Most religions will teach this spell to all invested clerics.

The spell may only be cast in areas of Very High Sanctity, though all costs will be computed as if it were cast in a place of Normal Sanctity, and the cleric will regain fatigue spent on this spell at normal rates.

Duration: All sacred objects are permanent until destroyed. Use of the Desecrate spell may render them temporarily unusable.

Cost: The simplest form of this spell (and the one used in the creation of Sacred Vessels) costs 10 points. For the making of Holy Objects the cost will vary with the effect desired.

This may be cast as an area spell to raise the sanctity of a given area or restore lost Sanctity after a desecration. Each casting raises the area's Sanctity by one level, to a possible maximum of High Sanctity - unless the area was previously of Very High Sanctity, in which case it may be once again be raised to that level. To create an area of Very High Sanctity, a successful request for Divine Intervention must be performed in tandem with the Consecrate spell.

Duration: Permanent as long as the deity remains active.

Cost: 10 for a single item; 100 per hex for an area.

Time to cast: This spell is always done as a ceremony. Minimum casting time is 5 minutes for a single item, or 1 hour per hex for an area.

Item: This spell may not be consecrated into an item.

Desecrate

Desecrates a consecrated object, rendering it impure and unclean. *None* of its magical effects will work until it has been repurified with the Consecrate spell. There is a 10% chance that a desecration will destroy the object. Objects of Power may never be desecrated.

May be cast as an area spell, to lessen the Sanctity rating of a given locale. Each casting reduces the area's Sanctity by one level, to a possible minimum of No Sanctity.

Duration: Lasts until repurification is done. **Cost:**

10 for single item; 100 per hex for an area

Enchantment

Special

Time to cast: 1 minute for a single item, or 30 minutes per hex for an area.

Item: This spell may not be consecrated into an item.

Excommunicate

Regular

Excommunicates a single follower of a religion (see *Excommunication*, p. 117). This spell confers the Excommunicated disadvantage on the recipient and as such is never "rolled." If the deity deems the Excommunication just, then it occurs. Otherwise it does not. The cleric receives a clear sign of the outcome, and if successful, will brand the individual in some way that will be evident to all followers of the religion.

Revocation of an excommunication can be done only with a successful request for Divine Intervention.

Duration: Permanent, until revoked by another cleric of the same religion.

Cost: 15.

Time to cast: Minimum 10 minutes. This spell is always done as a ceremony.

Item: This spell may not be consecrated into an item.

Final Rest

Regular

Escorts the soul of a dead person into the presence of the deity. This assures that the soul will rest in peace, and may not be summoned, animated, or resurrected. It has no physical effect on the body. Commonly used for funeral rites.

This spell can be done at any time after the subject dies, though there is a cumulative -1 point penalty for each month that the person has been dead, up to a total of -10. Each caster may attempt the spell only once per subject.

This spell has absolutely no effect on a living person.

Duration: Permanent.

Cost: 20.

Time to cast: Minimum 10 minutes. This spell is always done as a ceremony.

Item: This spell may be consecrated into funerary regalia. Energy cost: 1,200.

Oath

Regular

Binds a willing subject to a promise. The caster speaks the spell, but the subject must speak the oath. This spell is used to bind vows in many religions, as well as being a respected means of bonding an agreement among followers of the deity. Actions taken to ensure that the terms of the oath remain unbroken are assured of the deity's favor (this may, at the GM's discretion, gain the subject +1 to all such skill rolls, as described for the *Blessed* advantage). Breaking the oath is a sure way of gaining the deity's *disfavor*.

In addition, if the oath is broken by conscious action of the swearer, he will immediately take 1d of damage for each 10 points of energy put into the casting of this spell.

Duration: The oath is permanent, unless specifically sworn for a limited duration.

Cost: Variable (see above).

Time to cast: Minimum 10 minutes. This spell is always done as a ceremony.

Item: The ability to cast this spell is commonly consecrated into Holy Objects of all sorts. Energy cost: 1,000.

Divination (Continued)

A tarot deck consists of 78 cards, divided into Minor and Major Arcana. The Minor Arcana is made of four suits - cups (water), wands (fire), pentacles (earth) and swords (air) - with cards for King, Queen, Knight, Page and the numbers 1 through 10 in each. Each numbered and face card has a particular association modified by the general meaning of each suit, to give it a divinatory meaning. The Major Arcana consists of 22 picture cards said to be derived from a book written by a councillor of Osiris, King of Egypt. These are the Fool, the Magician, the High Priestess, the Empress, the Emperor, the Hierophant, the Lovers, the Chariot, Strength, the Hermit, the Wheel of Fortune, Justice, the Hanged Man, Death, Temperance, the Devil, the Tower, the Star, the Moon, the Sun, Judgment, and the World. When laid out in patterns, the cards reflect states of the greater cosmos, giving the reader insight.

One of the more common spreads for divination is known as the Celtic Cross. The reader places a *significator*, a card representing the questioner (usually a face card or Major Arcana), in the center. Then while the questioner concentrates on his question, the reader shuffles the deck. The questioner then cuts the deck into three piles, from left to right, using his left hand. The reader gathers the cards and lays them out. He places a second card over the significator, representing that which surrounds the questioner. A third card crosses the other two, being that which provides impediment, obstacle or challenge. The next four are placed below, to the left, above, and to the right of the pile. They represent, in turn, the foundations of the question, the past, the present and the possible future. Finally, to the right, a line of four cards is made, one above the other. The first represents the questioner's fears, the second family or world opinion, the third his hopes, and the last the final outcome. Relationships between the cards are as important as which card falls in which position.

Magical Clerics

It is also possible that there is truly *no* difference between magicians and clerics. In a "rational" cosmology where deities do not exist, religions might be little more than clever facades propagated by magicians for their own edification. In this system, religion and beliefs are made up by the founding magicians out of whole cloth. "Clerics" would be taught "rituals" which were nothing more than the incantations any mage might make to engender the same effect. Thus, the rules for such magics would differ in no way from those presented in *GURPS Magic*.

It is also quite likely that those who promulgate such a system would fiercely hunt any who practice "foul" and "perverted" magics, as they would not want it known that their powers come from one and the same source. As the generations pass, it is even possible that the initial foundations of the church might be forgotten, until even the highest of "clerics" are unaware that the rituals they undertake call upon no gods at all, but rather draw upon the essential *manas* of the world.

Alternatively, the presiding religion might believe that magic ability is a true gift of the gods, and press those with such talents to join the church. In this case it might have no prejudice against "wild" mages, though it will probably always encourage them to recognize their true calling to serve the gods.

Summon Allied Entity

Special

Summons an available allied entity or demigod (see *Demigods*, p. 42) of the deity to perform a particular task. Availability and type of agent must be previously decided by the GM. If the spell is cast successfully, then the GM makes the availability roll. The more available a demigod is, the more power it takes to draw it into any particular service. Example entities could be animalistic, like wolves or birds with preternatural intelligence and power, elementals, or something as unearthly as an angel, ghost, or demon.

Once summoned, the allied entity will obey a single command. Usually these commands are given in the form of ceremonial rituals, often preordained by the deity. In some cases an allied entity may *only* perform those tasks previously arranged by the deity. In any case, the cleric must make a Performance/Ritual roll to bind the entity to the task - if the roll fails, then the entity appears, but is not enticed into staying.

Typical tasks for these entities might be to deliver retribution against an enemy of the church, to guard a place or object of religious import, or to guide the cleric toward an important bit of wisdom.

If allied entities appear without being summoned, they have been sent by the god. Their purpose may or may not be known by the cleric, who can in no way alter it.

Allied entities will generally not harm a cleric of the deity. If angered they will simply leave. There are exceptions, however, especially in religions with maltheistic or uncaring deities.

Duration: Until the task is complete.

Cost: Depends on the availability of the entity. If the entity will appear only on a roll of 6 or less, the cost of the spell is 15; if it will appear on a roll of 9 or less, it costs 20; on a roll of 12 or less, it costs 25; and if the entity will appear on a roll of 15 or less, the spell costs 30 points.

Time to cast: Minimum 5 minutes. This spell is always done as a ceremony.

Item: This spell may be consecrated into an item for 100 times the base cost.



Divine Intervention

Divine Intervention is a plea to the deity for direct intervention in the affairs of the world. The plea must come in the form of a specific request which the deity interprets. A cleric may ask for anything at all, but it must be in the best interest of the deity, and the faith as a whole, and in all cases the request will be interpreted conservatively. Clerics who request such intervention for trivial matters will earn their deity's instant disfavor, and risk more dramatic action.

Divine Intervention costs character points. The cleric declares how many points he will spend (at least 3 points must be spent to have any possibility of effect). These points are spent whether the Intervention is granted or not. If the cleric does not currently have the points available, then he must instantly accept a new Disadvantage (chosen by the cleric, but approved by the deity, or GM) to offset the cost of the call. He will continue to suffer from this Disadvantage (most often a new vow of some sort) until he buys it off in the usual manner. The GM then secretly rolls 3 dice. If the result is less than or equal to the number of points spent, and the cleric has remained true to the precepts of his faith, then the Intervention will be granted.

If the Intervention is a critical success (roll of 3 or 4), the request is granted in an immediate, "miraculous" way, obvious to all who see it. If it is a standard success, then the request will be granted in a way convenient to the deity. There may be no immediate effect, and when it does occur, it may not even be obvious that it was an act of the deity. If the Intervention roll is an 18, the Intervention will work, but the cleric is immediately drawn into service by the deity as payment for the call. In other words - he dies. This death should be related in some way to the request being answered; the cleric will not just drop dead.

When interpreting the effects of a successful Divine Intervention, the GM must take into account the circumstance, the exact wording of the cleric's request, and the nature and temperament of the deity. Given the potential cost, a Divine Intervention should never be futile or used for comic effect (though certainly it may have certain comical aspects). But neither should a single Divine Intervention be used to destroy entire nations. Remember, also, that a deity cannot act outside of its own particular spheres of influence. A goddess of healing and mercy would refuse to kill a hated enemy, and a god of fire cannot make it rain.

In addition to answering specific requests, Divine Interventions create Objects of Power (see p. 107) and Areas of High Sanctity (see p. 102).

Miraculous Magic

Clerics can request the favor of their patron deity to perform "miracles." The effects of their appeal depend entirely upon the interest and whim of the god. These effects are not at all predictable, and often impossible to recreate.

This sort of divine magic is particularly applicable to meddling deities who find it easy to manifest powers, and who like to interest themselves in the day-to-day lives of their followers.

False Prophets

In a world where magic can easily duplicate miracles, it is possible that a charlatan might attempt to impersonate a cleric, or even start a new religion.

As long as the false cleric keeps his facts straight and tosses out a "miracle" or two, he might make a very good living for himself - unless the deity is offended and decides to do something about it, that is! In a game world where the deities are both active and real, the imposter must be *very* certain of his scheme before starting.



Special Advantages

Runic Powers

Rather than manifesting directly, the power of a deity can be represented by symbols or *runes*. Clerics may use runes to focus and manipulate the abstract will of the god into particular invocations of power. This sort of magic is particularly appropriate for abstract forces, or deities who are normally indifferent or oblivious to the desires of their followers.

The rules on Rune Magic contained in *GURPS Magic* (see pp. M90-93) will work as well for divinely-inspired castings as magically-empowered ones.



Divine Favor

An individual with the Divine Favor advantage (see p. 93) is called a Holy Person. This person has the ability to petition his deity for a miracle with some chance of being heard!

To determine whether a particular miracle will occur, the GM rolls against the Frequency of Appearance number to see if the god hears the plea. If the Holy Person has the deity's attention, the GM then rolls on the NPC Reaction Table, Requests for Aid (pp. B204-205), to see if the miracle is performed. Reaction bonuses specified as a part of the Divine Favor advantage modify this roll.

Miracles

Miracles are small, personalized instances of Divine Intervention. In most cases, these interventions will center about a Holy Person. Miracles can take several forms, depending on the degree of favor, and the deity's preferred mode of intervention. They can be subtle or blatant. They can appear coincidental, or be marked by omens, prophecy, or visions.

A miraculous effect can be played as a straight spell, though no skill roll, fatigue cost, or casting time is necessary. The GM has a lot of leeway. Suppose, for example, that the god chooses to put a IQ-die Explosive Fireball in his suppliant's hand. Will the PC have to roll vs. IQ to realize what that glowing red ball is? Or will the deity supply the knowledge, and maybe even a temporary boost in Throwing skill?

Requests for aid

Holy Persons may call on the power of their god for help. The GM may adjudicate the effects of the request by pure fiat, or using the following guidelines.

To see if the god notices the petition, the GM rolls against the god's Frequency of Appearance (as given in the Divine Favor advantage), modified by:

Interest of the god in the goal furthered by the character's action: up to +5.

Appropriateness of the expected miracle to the god's sphere of influence: from -10 to 0. (Requesting a fireball from Agni, the Hindu god of fire, is at 0. Requesting a flood is at -10.)

Once the god is listening to the petition, the GM rolls against the NPC Reaction Table, checking under the Requests for Aid section (see pp. B204-205). He adjusts this roll by the reaction modifiers in the Holy Person's Divine Favor advantage, and by:

Number of times the god has been called upon since the beginning of the adventure: -1 for each time.

Esteem of the PC in his god's eyes, based on recent behavior and achievements: from -5 to +5.

Consult the Reaction Table to see whether or not the miracle occurs.

The PC may improve the chance of a successful miracle by sacrifice. He may sacrifice character points, either by taking on a Vow or Duty or some other "instant" Disadvantage, or by forfeiting unspent points. Material sacrifices

translate into character points at the rate of one point per month of character job earnings (see the sidebar on p. B16). The GM adds the number of character points sacrificed to the reaction roll. The points are spent whether the miracle is successful or not.

Other factors may intervene. In the Greek pantheon, for example, it was not uncommon for two gods to oppose each other's intervention; thus even if the PC's god is very inclined to grant aid, some other god may prevent it. In other words, the GM is free to ignore the dice.

Luck cannot be applied to the roll. The gods are powers too lofty to be subject to that! Also note that the supplicant's success roll does not depend on his ranking in the church or his IQ. Rank within the temple might be held solely because of one's Diplomacy, Administration or Politics skills. Neither do any of the petitioner's attributes modify the die roll. All are equal in a god's eyes; if the GM wants some characters to be "more blessed" than others, he may do so by increasing their points in the Divine Favor advantage.

Divine Whim

Alternatively, miracles can just occur. They might go completely unnoticed, or be accompanied by omens, visions, or other signs - this is completely up to the GM.

Sacred Objects

In a system of miraculous magic, sacred objects are created completely and solely by the god. A Holy Person may request that an object be made, but positive results are unlikely. Most often such objects are simply given to favored individuals at the wish of the deity.

Sacred objects may be treated like magical items that can cast one or more spells particular to the god. They aren't *really* magical items - out of the cleric's hands, they are perfectly ordinary items - but when wielded by one with true divine favor, they behave like magical items.

Relics

Bones and other relics of those with the Divine Favor advantage are often thought to interest the deity even after the individual's death. Remains of such Holy Persons are gathered into reliquaries and used in invocations of the deity's power. The GM can decide how real this power is, and whether the artifacts have a chance of gaining further miracles from the god.



Runic Divination

Runic inscriptions and castings are a way of invoking the power invested within the runes to a set purpose or task. Alternatively, the power inherent in the symbols can reflect the current state of the world, answering questions important to the cleric.

Runes used for this purpose must be specially prepared, and then destroyed afterward, for the reading to have any true meaning. The patterns that lead to the proper answers are instilled in the making as much as in the actual reading itself. Since an entire alphabet must be created, each divination is a major undertaking. The exact response or effect of the divination is, of course, completely up to the GM. In most cases, it should contain some real information veiled in ways that are not necessarily immediately evident to the characters.

Two different methods of runic divination are described below.

Rune Wands

Divination by rune wands is the most common traditional method. It is also the most time-consuming, but when done properly, it yields the best results.

The period of preparation is nine days and nights. During this time the cleric undergoes moderate fasting and ritual purification to focus his mind on the question. On the morning of the 10th day, the cleric goes to a nearby wood and selects a tree - oak, apple, cherry, and chestnut are the most advantageous. At the moment of sunrise, he strikes off a branch with a knife that has been sprinkled with water and exposed to open flame, and then offered in prayer to the service of the rune gods. Using the same knife, the cleric then makes a cut in the palm of his right hand and applies it to the tree stump - sacrifice given for the taking of the branch. The branch is then cut into wands, a single wand for each rune in the alphabet. Then the runes are inscribed (check against the cleric's skill with the rune if using Rune Magic, p. M90), one per wand, while the cleric meditates upon the meaning of each. The runes are then stained with the cleric's own blood.

Continued on next page...

Runic Divination ***(Continued)***

Once the wands are prepared, the actual divination can occur. First a clean cloth is laid out upon the ground, symbolizing a holy altar. The wands are gathered into one hand, and the hand held out over the cloth. Ritual gestures are appropriate here, as well as prayer to the gods for a true divination. In game terms, the cleric casts the Divination spell (or Activate Runes, if Rune Magic is used; see p. M92), and then lets the wands fall so that they scatter all over the cloth. With his eyes closed, he then chooses three wands at random.

The runes are read in the order of selection. The first represents past, or the circumstances that gave rise to the question. The second gives insight into the current situation. The third indicates the course of future events, or comments upon the potential outcome.

Rune Cards

Rune cards are made by applying each rune to a single card, usually made from cardboard or some other sturdy paper-like substance. Each rune is inscribed (using the skill for the rune if Rune Magic is used, see p. M90), and then the card is varnished. Once completed, the cards are prayed over, and a Consecrate spell is cast.

Rune cards are read much like the tarot. The questioner holds the cards while concentrating on his question. Then the cleric takes the deck, shuffles it thoroughly and lays the cards out in a spread. This is the ritual of casting the Divination spell (or Activate Runes if Rune Magic is used; see p. M92).

The simplest spread is a ran of three, exactly like that used in the Rune Wand reading. The first card represents the past, the second the present, and the third the future. Reversed cards have negative interpretations.

A more in-depth reading may be done by using a more complicated spread. The *Five Elements* spread is another one commonly used. Here five cards are laid out, the first four in a square cross, with the vertical arm from top to bottom laid first, and then the horizontal from left to right. The fifth card goes in the center. The first card (top, center) represents the intellect, and marks the element of air. The second card (bottom, center) is desire and marks the element of fire. The third card (left) is strength and marks the element of earth. The fourth card (right) is love, and marks the element of water. The fifth card is balance; from it the others are born and to it they return. With this spread, a detailed analysis of the life and character of a person can be obtained.

Shamanism

Clerics communicate with spirits of this and other realms, which grant them visions of the past, present and future, and the ability to command, entrap and banish their spiritual allies. Such manipulations bring great potential dangers for the cleric and those associated with him, and often have unpredictable results.

Shamanistic magic is only appropriate for a cosmos inhabited by meddling spirits who interfere frequently with the daily affairs of people. Major deities may exist, but they are either unable or unwilling to grant such power to their followers. Shamanism is a lower-powered, less-predictable version of divine magics than the others discussed in this chapter.

World View

The shaman is commonly found in tribal or totemic cultures having a strong spiritualistic worldview. Their world is one filled with spirits of varying natures - from the helpful to the malign, each having its own particular place and function. Shamans do not gain their powers directly from the divine, (except, perhaps, for the original gift of the ability that grants them their power - the *World Sight*, below). Rather they are born marked, or gifted, with a special talent that manifests itself around the time of puberty, frequently in the form of an illness or near-death experience.

One should not assume, however, that shamans and their associated worldview can only exist in primitive or tribal societies. Modern-day channeling and attempts to rediscover past-life experiences borrow a lot from the shamanistic worldview and methodology. Trancing techniques are used by many "New Age" religions. It is quite possible to envision a future where experimentation with the mind has led to the rediscovery of the spiritualistic worldview, and provided new techniques for people to reach beyond this world into a different plane of existence.

World Sight

A shaman is one with the ability to voluntarily enter into a state of ecstasy from which he can enter the domain of gods and spirits. This advantage is called *World Sight* (see p. 94). Using this ability, the shaman can interact freely with all sorts of spirits, perform acts of diagnosis and healing, determine future events, initiate spirit-related attacks, escort the souls of the dead to their proper resting place, and so forth.

Each use of the *World Sight* ability is ritualistic in nature, requiring the shaman to voluntarily enter an ecstatic trance state and link with the spiritual entities that aid him in his tasks. Often a shaman will have one or more particular spirits which will accompany him time and time again. At times these spirits



may possess his body, using him as a mouthpiece or agent in their works. But it is the shaman who controls the interaction with the spirits. It is his willing sacrifice which allows the spirits to enter his body, and it is at his behest that they leave.

Spirits

Spirits are disembodied creatures made up entirely of mana. As such, they have numerous powers, the magnitude of which varies greatly from spirit to spirit. Spirits have IQ and ST attributes which determine their relative intelligence, Will and Fatigue. Most have the ability to possess the bodies of living persons, thereby gaining the HT and DX attributes of the body, while retaining their own IQ and ST. They are generally willful and capricious creatures, but a shaman can bargain with them on an individual basis. They are usually quite loyal to those who aid them.

Shamans have limited means of controlling or befriending spirits. He can then consult these spirits for information, or ask them to aid in some other way. Powerful evil spirits are called demons.

Spirit Combat

Spirit combat is a Contest of Will between the spirit and the shaman. If the spirit wins, it may either choose to possess the shaman, or escape his immediate area. If the shaman wins, the spirit must perform one task (of limited duration, subject to the GM's approval) for the shaman - usually this will be to divulge some bit of information, or to remove itself from the vicinity.

Once beaten, the spirit will be respectful toward the shaman, and is unlikely to initiate such combat again.



Excommunication

The expulsion of a believer from a religious fellowship or church is called excommunication. This rite is done only under the most dire circumstances. Its intent, however, is not to exile the sinner permanently, but to bring about his repentance. Most excommunications are decreed after a *Canon* trial.

Canon law regulates the internal workings of a religious organization. It is a set of rules regarding worship, sacraments and other matters of religious living. An excommunicant is forbidden to participate in (or receive benefit from) holy rites and ceremonies - in effect, he is cut off from his god. No longer will a priest intercede in his behalf. In game terms, an excommunicant PC will not benefit from any clerical magic.

Any high-ranking cleric can perform the rite of excommunication. In magical religions, this takes the form of a spell. If it succeeds, then the god approves. A ban of excommunication can only be lifted by divine intervention. It is possible that the church may *still* consider the offender officially excommunicated even if the spell did not work. In such a case, should the PC find a cleric willing to disobey a superior, the PC could still benefit from divine magic.

Excommunication can be a dangerous tool. Historically, fear of excommunication has been one of the Roman Catholic Church's most potent political weapons. Often if a noble or royal personage was excommunicated the ban extended to his vassals. Pressure from fearful peasants who were denied the sacraments of the church would often cause a noble to back down, or at least to pretend repentance.

This can backfire, however, if it is aimed at an overly powerful person. Henry VIII of England ignored the ban of excommunication that the Pope placed on him and went on to create his own church - the Church of England - with himself as its spiritual and temporal head.

The Cost of Favor

In the worldview of *Miraculous Magic*, the recipient of Divine Favor need not be a cleric or associated with the official religion in any way. He may be born to a particular purpose or task that the god desires (and will, no doubt, inform him of, somewhere along the line). He may have a simple affinity for the power of the divine, or have performed some action that attracts the interest and favor of the deity. It is possible that the person does not even "believe" in the deity, though this will likely change quite quickly.

Holy People can fill many different roles. They can be wise elders, or young miracle workers who capture the imagination of all who see them. They can be prophets, saviors, or simple folk with a talent or calling. They should be quite rare. PCs with this advantage may find they have a duty or obligation to the deity that has little to do with clerical rank or responsibility. It may even be that the individual is fated to "correct" a corrupt or misguided church.

The GM must also decide how much direct contact the Holy Person has with the deity who favors him. The deity might speak to him silently, when he is alone, providing guidance or plans. It may simply ensure that the individual "knows" what is right and/or wrong. Or the deity might send divine messengers to deliver instructions. Alternatively, the deity might not speak to the person at all, responding in terms of "miracles," with the assumption that the Holy Person will figure out how to make the best use of that which is given.



Given the dangers of spirit combat, most shamans prefer to use spells to deal with spirits (see pp. 122-125). However, an unprepared shaman may find spirit combat an acceptable means of improvisation.

People without the World Sight advantage may be possessed through spirit combat. Should they happen to win, they accomplish nothing, but avoid an unhappy fate.

Possession

A possessed individual is subject to the whim of the possessing spirit. The spirit will probably control the person a great deal of the time, only granting control to the usual personality when the spirit is fatigued or feels threatened in some way. The person will have no idea what is occurring, and will most likely be quite disoriented by the lapses of time when the spirit is in control. Most possessing spirits are malicious, and will force the victim to act in violent and degrading ways. Once the spirit is banished, the usual personality will reassert control.

Those with the World Sight advantage are particularly likely targets for such attacks. Such a person with no training may get his first clue about the nature of the spirit world by surviving a demon's attack!

Shamanistic Methods

Trancing

The trance is the shaman's primary method of contacting the spirit world. Most shamanistic spells can only be cast while in a trance state, and trancing is an important method of gathering information. While in the trance state, a shaman can see spirits that are normally invisible to humans. He may travel to other realms and places. He may also see visions of animals, people and places - even ones he has never seen in waking life. The interpretation of these visions provides the shaman with information. Correct interpretation is aided by a successful roll against his Theology skill, with whatever modifiers the GM thinks appropriate.

Note: Trance visions are not intended to replace the Divination spell. Unlike the spell, visions may bear no relation to the questions or problems of the tranced person. These visions are primarily a method by which the GM can offer information to the characters, or a desperate long shot for a shaman who is completely stumped during the course of an adventure. Shamans usually have more reliable means of getting information.

For game purposes, the trance is treated as an extended period of concentration. The depth of the trance (the shaman's awareness of his surroundings, and the ease with which the trance can be broken) as well as the length of the trance, depend on the method used.

Meditation: The simplest way to enter a trance is through use of the Meditation skill (see p. 97). The shaman secludes himself and concentrates. He may use chanting or breathing exercises to enhance his concentration, or have an assistant beat a drum. On a successful roll, the shaman will achieve a trance in about 10 minutes, and can maintain it as long as he wishes. The advantage of this method is that the shaman remains aware of his surroundings. The disadvantage is that the trance is easy to disturb. Any loud noise or physical contact outside of the usual trancing ritual will break the trance unless the shaman makes a Will-3 roll (see pp. B93 and B148). If he is injured, an additional -1 is added for every hit taken! Once the trance is broken, the shaman must begin again.



Shamans with the Autotrance advantage (see p. 93) may enter a trance whenever they desire on a successful IQ roll, though they will find it more difficult to break away from. Distractions only affect them on a failed Will roll (though modifiers for injuries taken still apply), and they must make another successful IQ roll to awaken.

Hallucinogens: Another common way of reaching the trance state is through the ingestion of hallucinogenic drugs, usually made from plants. The trance will begin within a short period, determined by the strength of the drug and how it is taken (see *Herbalism*, below). In any case, less than half an hour is required, during which time the shaman is fully alert. When the drug takes effect, however, the shaman is only vaguely aware of what is happening around him. Duration and other details vary with the drug being used. It is the drug, however, not the shaman, which controls the length of the trance, and a recovery period is almost always necessary once the drug wears off. This method of trancing provides the most numerous and vivid visions, but is limited by the availability of the hallucinogen and the skill to prepare it for use.

Fasting and Sleep Deprivation: The shaman forgoes all food, water and sleep until physical exhaustion brings on the trance and its visions. The theory is that by denying physical needs, one's soul is freed to leave the body and enter the spirit world. It will require 24-48 hours for this method to work, and the trance which ensues is very deep. The trance will last until the shaman is brought out of it by someone else, or he becomes unconscious from fatigue. Only extreme pain or the administration of an herbal stimulant will bring the shaman out of it, and only on a successful roll vs. HT-3. When the trance has ended, the shaman will be unconscious for 2dx6 hours, and will have a ST of 1 upon awakening. The problem with this method is that it saps the shaman's strength for Spellcasting. The advantage is that no special training or drug is necessary, making it the most common method for training new shamans.

Gifts of the Gods

In some worlds, the gods might choose to grant each individual person gifts or abilities which indicate divine favor, rather than granting their power only to those who choose to serve them. These gifts might be in addition to those given to their clerics, often marking a person as being particularly holy or blessed. Or they might be the sole way in which the deity directly grants powers to a person.

Generally it is thought that these people are special and holy to whatever deity is responsible for the gift (usually easily discerned by the nature of the gift itself). Often they will be marked for the service of the deity from a young age, whether they will it or not! In those cases where the only manifestation of the deity's power is through these gifts, a religion's clerics might be chosen only from those who manifest the gifts. However, it is more likely that a fundamental core of clerics without the gifts will support the day-to-day workings of the church, while those *with* the gifts work on those tasks directly applicable to their gift. In some cases, those so gifted will be fated to perform certain functions or tasks for the deity, with the rest existing so that the fated one will have the time and ability to do what is needed.

It is even possible that such gifts are *not* divinely inspired, but are viewed as being such by the local church. Alternatively, the "gifts" might be seen as curses, marking a particular person as being foul or unclean, aligned with some malign force.

There are generally three different types of gifts that can be given: Psionics (as described in the *GURPS Basic Set*, *GURPS Psionics*, or *GURPS Supers*), Magical Knacks (p. M96), and Blessings (see p. 93). Whichever the case, in order to be considered the gift of the divine, the powers and abilities must be in line with the nature of the deity in question. It is also possible that these gifts might be hereditary, the result of a bloodline considered particularly holy or divine. In this case all members of the family would be naturally accepted into the priesthood as a matter of course. Indeed, they might be the only ones *allowed* in.