

The Disciples of the Phoenix

V 1.0, August 2003

Before the Flight of Fiends, when the Flannaess were overrun by demons and devils, there existed many small adventuring groups that hunted the fiends that plagued the Kingdom. Aided by whatever good church would support their cause, these brave men and women fought what seemed a hopeless battle against the fiendish creatures that served the evil powers in the Great Kingdom. Collectively, they were called the Disciples of the Phoenix, named after the firebird that rose again and again at death to battle evil.

When the Flight of Fiends made an end to the presence of most of the Disciples' enemies, the adventurers scattered. Some returned home, others continued on to different ventures, forming their own groups to fight specific evils under another banner.

Years later, a set of scriptures were found during the rebuilding of a temple of Pelor, which held the grave of a half-elf named Mugande, who died during the battle of Rieuwood. Mugande was a priest of Rao, and instrumental in the foundation of the original Disciples. The scriptures he guarded in death are the founding notes, which contain the basic principles on which the Disciples were build, as well as many details of fiends to slay, and heroes that supported the cause.

Now, in Sunndi, the Disciples live on. Being brought alive by the temple of Pelor, and sponsored by the Solar Shields, the Sunndian disciples fight the fiends that remained in Ahlissa after the Flighth of Fiends – the demons and devils in the employ of Ivid the Undying and the Scarlet Brotherhood.

The Disciples base is housed in the very temple that holds Mugande's grave – the Light and Dawn in Axebjerg. From there, they strike out to bring a blow to evil everywhere, not resting till all fiends and their machinations have been driven from the Oerth.

Organization

Most of the Disciples do their work on a voluntary basis – driven by religious zeal or other, more personal motivations. As such, there is no commanding structure, and most missions are based on mutual consent and requests for aid. Any actual leadership and directions are accepted from the temple of Pelor, headed by high priest Nelvan of Newkeep.

The Disciples does have a number of ranks, which represent more a growing respect and renown for the Disciple's competence than actual commanding power.

There are three ranks: disciple, talon, and phoenix. Only talons and phoenixes are actually expected to step beyond voluntary missions, and perform tasks that would keep the Disciples' organization alive.

Note: There are currently no known Talons or Phoenixes. The ranking exists as it is taken from the original document written by Mugande. As time passes, these ranks will be filled. Also, it is conceivable some of the original members of the Disciples can be tracked down, and it is likely these will be offered a position as Talon or Phoenix in the organization,

For the moment, the Disciples are headquartered at the Dawn of Light temple of Pelor in Axebjerg. Currently being of small size, the administrative and other tasks are handled by one of the temple's Deans.

Goal

The Disciples work to rid the world of Fiends. "Fiends" in this context meaning all the evil denizens of the infernal planes, including demons, devils, and yugoloths. Creatures such as night hags, rakshasa, or shadow fiends may also become a target.

There seems to be no greater plan – Disciples are called to arms whenever fiendish presence is detected. While the notes Mugande left behind contained some plans for the eradication of certain powerful fields - specifically the fiend-sage of Rel-Astra - most of these are either half-formed or outdated. And since the Solnor Compact does not pose a direct threat to Sunndi, it is uncertain whether these plans will ever see the light.

Initiate Members (Disciples of the Phoenix)

Requirements

In order to join the Disciples, a disciple must:

- Have any Good alignment.
- Have defeated (slain, or driven off) a fiend in combat.

Permanent Costs

- A disciple blazes with holy fury and cannot hide her distaste of fiends and their labor. They get a –1 competence penalty to all Diplomacy checks when dealing with fiends and fiendish cult members. This penalty cannot be negated through disguise.
- A disciple pays a tithe of 10% of her earnings to the organization. Tithes are used by the organization to mend wrongs caused by fiends and their cults.

Benefits

- A disciple is an expert in tracking down fiends, and gains a +1 competence bonus on all Survival checks when tracking Fiends. They are also adept at recognizing fiendish works, and get a +1 competence bonus on Decipher Script, Spellcraft, and Knowledge(arcana) when trying to recognize scripts, spells, or magic devices created by fiends.
- A disciple always carries a holy symbol of Pelor, and a holy scripture describing the Flight of Fiends. The scripture is suitable as a spell focus for *recitation*. If any of these items is destroyed or lost, they are replaced for free.
- In regional scenarios, the disciple can shelter in the temple of Pelor, where available, and gets free adventurer's upkeep.
- Access to the following magical items:
 - o DMG: *Dimensional Shackles*, *Horn of Goodness*, *Silversheen*
 - o Defenders of the Faith: *Gate Amulet*, *Sacred Scabbard*
- Access to the following spell scrolls:
 - o DMG: *Banishment*, *Dismissal*, *Dispel Evil*
- Access to the following spells:
 - o Defenders of the Faith: *divine sacrifice*, *harrier*, *lesser aspect of the deity*, *recitation*, *righteous wrath of the faithful*, *weapon of the deity*, *zeal*
 - o Tome & Blood: *dimensional lock*
- Access to the following feats:
 - o Defenders of the Faith: *extra smiting*, *energy substitution*
- The following core prestige classes are appropriate to the Disciples, and mentors can be found in the organization or the supporting temple of Pelor :
 - o Defenders of the faith: *Exorcist*
 - o Masters of the Wild: *Blood Hound*, *Foe Hunter*

Members of the 2nd rank (Talons of the Phoenix)

Requirements

As an initiate member, plus:

- The prospective talon must be a member of the Disciples for at least one year.

Permanent Costs

As an initiate member, plus:

- A talon's hatred for fiends increases. Her penalty on all Diplomacy checks with fiends and fiendish cult members rises to -2.
- A talon actively involves herself in the organization, and is required to spend 2 TU's a year on various tasks to aid the organization.

Benefits

As an initiate member, plus:

- A talon gets better at tracking down fiends, and her competence bonus on all Survival, Decipher Script, Spellcraft, and Knowledge(arcana) checks versus Fiends and their creations increases to +2.
- In regional scenarios, a member now gets free rich upkeep. The 'rich' upkeep represents a growing awe and respect the talon receives. Housing itself is not different from that of initiate members.
- Access to the following weapon enchantments;
 - o DMG: *bane (evil outsiders only), holy*

Members of the 3rd rank (Phoenix)

Requirements

As a talon, plus:

- The prospective phoenix must be a member of the Disciples for at least one year as a talon.

Permanent Costs

As a talon, plus:

- A phoenix hatred for fiends reaches a peak. Her penalty on all Diplomacy checks with fiends and fiendish cult members rises to -3.
- A phoenix takes further responsibilities, and is required to spend an additional 2 TU on various tasks tot the benefit of the supporting temple of Pelor.

Benefits

As a talon, plus:

- A phoenix gets even better at tracking down fiends, and her competence bonus on all Survival, Decipher Script, Spellcraft, and Knowledge(arcana) checks versus Fiends and their creations increases to +3.
- In regional scenarios, a member now gets free luxury upkeep. The 'luxury' upkeep represents a growing awe and renown the phoenix receives. Housing itself is not different from that of initiate members or talons.
- The phoenix gains a permanent influence point with the temple of Pelor. The details for what the influence entails is yet to be determined by the Sunndi triad.