

NEO CLERICS: THE OPUS PRIEST

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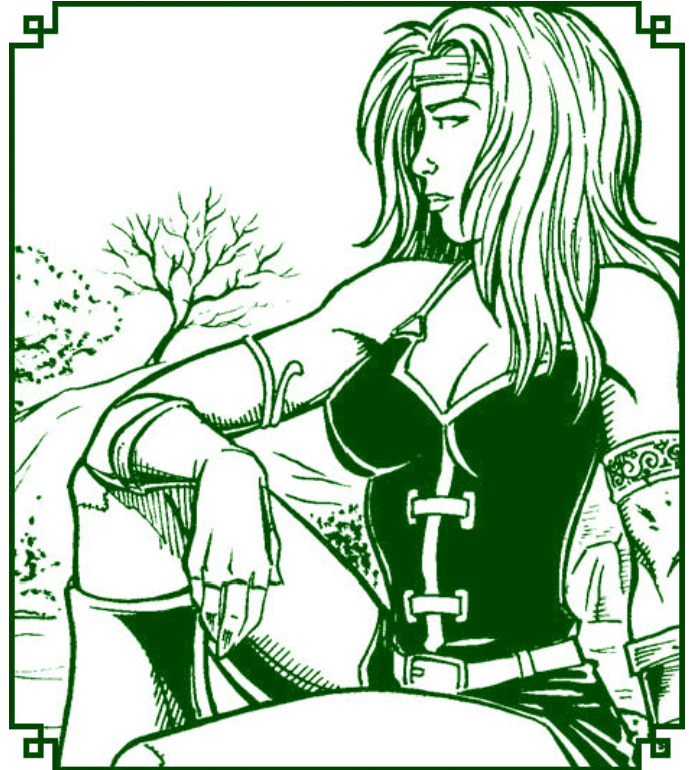
The Opus Priest

The Opus Priest is a clerical path devoted to one god, the Patron of Works. Where regular clerics may have varying philosophies and religions, Opus Priests dedicate themselves simply to a life of hard work and good deeds. They are granted no spells and no domains, but receive occasional boons from their deity to aid them along their way. The rest is up to their own strength and willingness to overcome.

Opus Priests dedicate themselves to showing others how to live life without magic; to rely on the old ways and survive using mundane means. Powerful Opus Priests work to become the bane of dragons, liches, magic item crafters, spellcasters and even magic-abusing adventuring groups.

Adventures

Not every Opus Priest is called to the adventuring lifestyle. Some remain attached to a community (and are usually farmers, fishermen, miners, or other laborers in addition to serving with the clergy). Those that do stake out into the wild world are typically individuals seeking to spread the philosophy of hard work as a path to spiritual fulfillment. There are others who join with parties in order to vanquish some particular abomination to the Patron of Works: usually a lich (liches are used by Opus Priests as a prime example of how relying on magic leads to spiritual corruption).



The core beliefs of the Opus Priest put them at odds with the average party (who typically use magic items extensively and have one or two spellcasters). However, this does not mean that they cannot get along or work as a team; most Opus Priests strive to be a living example of their credo. They will not go out of their way to lecture their fellow adventurers about their magic habits, but they will prove through action that doing things the hard way is more rewarding.

Opus Priests make effective party leaders, especially if one can convince a group of adventurers to forsake magical aid.

Characteristics

Opus Priests differ from each other in many ways, but the one thing they share is a strong desire to work hard. It doesn't matter what particular work is done, as long as it is productive and performed honestly. They often possess a proactive attitude and an eagerness to engage a task. Patience is also a quality most Opus Priests possess, as they understand that hard work is not always the quickest method of completing a task.

Alignment

The path of the Opus Priest requires discipline, patience, and dedication. They strive to help others and create useful things. They abhor laziness and senseless destruction. Thus, Opus Priests are Lawful Good individuals.

Religion

Opus Priests revere the Patron of Works, a god that embodies the purity of hard work. They practice this faith not in a church, but in a profession, trade, or craft. To an Opus Priest, a day spent tilling a field or adventuring with a party is worth more than a lifetime of cloistered prayer and meditation. To work with one's own hands and some simple tools is how the Opus Priest pleases the Patron of Works; some even say that Opus Priests worship no god, but work itself.

Background

Some Opus Priests come from small, rural communities or farmlands. They can also be found in more urban areas, especially among the laboring class; urban Opus Priests

often work in construction or civil maintenance. Many Opus Priests use the same implements for labor and for combat; it is not uncommon for an Opus Priest farmer to fight with a scythe, or an Opus Priest fisherman to tangle his opponent with nets.

Races

Any race can become an Opus Priest, but some are more inclined towards it than others. Dwarves and halflings are more likely to follow the Patron of Works, simply by virtue of their common geography (areas rich in either mining or agriculture). Dwarves are especially likely, as their natural aversion to magic falls in line with the philosophy of an Opus Priest. Elves and gnomes are less predisposed, as these races are more inclined towards magic. Any race with spell-like abilities is also more likely to view magic favorably, and thus not as likely to be found among the ranks of the Opus Priesthood.

Other Classes

Opus Priests get along best with fighters, barbarians, and monks, as these walks of life develop natural abilities (monks especially are prime examples of the rewards of hard work, to an Opus Priest). Obviously, they will look unfavorably upon spellcasters such as wizards, sorcerers, bards, druids, and other clerics. However, Opus Priests usually tolerate the company of such "sinners" in an effort to convert them. Opus Priests look somewhat favorably upon rangers and paladins, who they see as similar to themselves: hard workers who