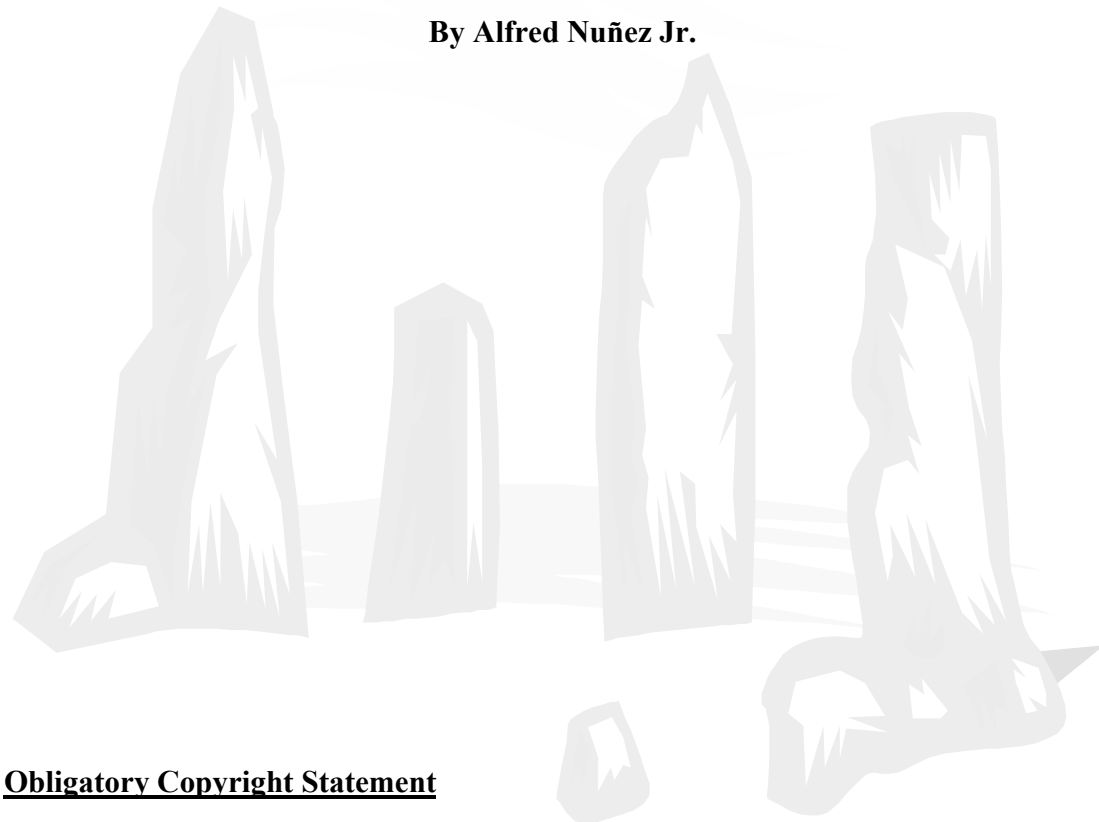




Presents

Lost in Translation: In Search of the Old Faith

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Introduction

In the first edition of Warhammer Fantasy Roleplay, the Old Faith was Man's earliest religion, though its influence had shrunk under pressure from newer, more aggressive cults. By the time of the game's setting, it was practised mainly by country folk and recent immigrants to the cities. Over the millennia of its decline, the once-unified Old Faith had splintered into many different but related sects: their common heritage could be recognised by the universal worship of an "Earth Mother" figure, often known by various names, and their reverence for the spirits of natural phenomena.

In the second edition of WFRP, the Old Faith no longer exists in the Empire, having given way to the worship of Taal and Rhya as well as the other gods. There are hints that the Druids and their followers left the Old World for other lands, particularly Albion.

But, what if they haven't left? What if, instead, the children of the Old Faith lived on in the backcountry and isolated villages of the Empire, quietly practicing their ancient faith and remaining as unobtrusive as possible? Living in constant fear of another Great Persecution, how do followers of the Old Faith fit in the Empire?

History

The Old Faith is Man's oldest religion, arriving with the earliest human settlements in the Old World. Many scholars incorrectly believe that the Old Faith is descended from the beliefs of the Wood Elves. While there are many similarities, such as the reverence for nature and the raising of standing stones, there are significant differences: the followers of the Old Faith built barrows and mounds as places of burial and constructed stone circles as centres of worship, a practice the Elves disdain. The Old Faith's clearly defined hierarchy within their priesthood also distinguishes them from the Wood Elves.

Up from the South

About 1500 years before the crowning of Sigmar, Dwarf observers recorded the arrival of a pastoral people in the lands that would one day become the Empire. These

peaceful human tribes revered the natural world of Ishernos the Earth Mother as well as the many spirits of the forest, streams, winds, fire, and even the rocks. Dwarf records indicate that these timid people – known as the Belthani – vanished into the forests as the Elf-Dwarf war waned and a few years before the Orc and Goblin onslaught from the east.

In the early stages of the Dwarf-Orc war, the Belthani had the land essentially to themselves. It was during this time that the Druids, the priests of the Old Faith, built many of the megalithic stone circles, burial barrows and earthen mounds found in many parts of the Empire. The power of the Old Faith was at its height as it used these structures to tap and channel the power of the ley lines. It was the harvesting of this power that enabled the Druids of old to keep the greenskins away from the lands of the Belthani.

Five hundred years later, more aggressive human tribes entered the lands north of the Black Mountains and east of the Worlds Edge. Ancestors of the tribes that would unite to form the Empire, these newcomers rode chariots and brought with them weapons made of bronze, superior to the obsidian and flint used by the Belthani, but no match for the crude iron weaponry of the greenskins.

Wars broke out between the Belthani and the invaders, and the newcomers pushed the Belthani out of the best lands and took them

for their own. This and the desecration of their sacred sites weakened the Druids considerably; they no longer wielded the power to hold the greenskins back. The war between Dwarfs and Orcs spilled into the lands west of the Dwarf Empire of Karaz Ankor. For sake of their people, the Belthani chieftains reached an agreement with some of the new tribes, allowing the people of the Old Faith peace and tolerance in return for tributary status and protection. This arrangement continued after the Empire's foundation, until no one really knew its origins.

Sidebar: Ley Lines and Earthpower

Players and GMs of WFRP2e are well acquainted with the notion that all magical power in Warhammer comes from Chaos and take the form of Magic Winds that can be manipulated by Wizards skilled in a particular lore. Why the theory seems to hang together well when it comes to Colour Magic, it seems to lose its consistency with other types of Magic. This article on the Old Faith assumes that there are other, less understood forms of magic in Warhammer.

The power of the Earth Mother permeates the world in much the same manner as the Winds of Magic, but radiates in certain linear directions known as ley lines. Ley lines are no more than a foot or two thick and reach a height of about 4-10 feet. They travel in a straight line no matter the terrain. The intersection where two or more lines cross is a nexus of earthpower. In ancient times, the High Druids were able to find these locations and erect some structure or marker to focus the power of the Mother. Small nexuses would be indicated by the erection of barrows, freestanding megaliths, or dolmens (two large erect stones with a third stone laying on the respective tops). Stone circles were built on the larger ones (with four or more lines intersecting).

Though some of the Old Faith sites fell into disuse, particularly after the violent oppression of the first millennium, the path of the ley lines remain unaffected until the Great War of Chaos in 2303 I.C. The southward expansion of the Chaos Wastes and the outpouring of magic from the northern and south Warp Gates caused great disruption to the ley lines. Some of these were altered, which had an effect on the known sites, weakening some while strengthening others. In particular, the weakening of ley lines rendered the dead interred within the barrows restless. Though wights were not unknown in the Old World previous to the Chaos Incursion, they became more frequent in number.

Attack on the Old Faith

The rise of the cult of Sigmar and the growth of the Imperial towns heralded the expansion of the political power of the established Imperial cults. The Old Faith remained on the margins of society as its

adherents, those descended from the Belthani, were dispersed throughout the rural Empire. The leaders of the Old Faith were slow to react to the new reality of Imperial politics and eventually found themselves outmanoeuvred.

More than 1500 years ago, the Empire made war on the Old Faith, also known as the Cult of the Mother. Along with the battles, sieges, hangings, and burnings, there was also spiritual combat. In a realm most men never see, the gods and their divine servants struggled with the aid of their priests and druids. In the end, the Mother surrendered as the mortal servants of the newer gods won their final victories. While she fell into quiescence, her divine servants were either bound to Taal and Rhya, or hid themselves in remote places with just a few worshippers to sustain them.

The Old Faith Today

Though never a strong centralised religion, the Old Faith has become even more fragmented over time. Many hide behind the façade of worshipping Taal and Rhya, as well as their divine servants. One school of theological thought considers divine

servants (e.g. the Rubezähl in the Färlic Hills of Talabecland) and local gods (Bogenauer in Bögenhafen) to be examples of Old Faith spirits that survived into modern times.

In fact, some theologians believed that the nomadic Strigany people – who immigrated to the Empire from the Border Princes around 1583 I.C. – worship another dark variant of the Old Faith. The Strigany commonly invoke Écate, the Goddess of the White Moon, to protect their clan and take vengeance on those who abuse them.

The ruins and places of the Old Faith – from stone circles to barrows to sacred groves – are scattered across the Empire, even in areas the worshippers don't exist in anymore. These places are objects of superstition and dark rumour among the locals.

Druids and their Lore

The Old Faith represents a way of life that harkens back to the time before the coming of Sigmar. More than a religion, the worship of the Mother and the natural world are closely intertwined with daily life. It is actually hard for its followers to separate aspects of their lives between the religious and secular since the words have no real meaning to them.

Careers

Druidic Initiate (Basic)

Druidic Initiates are similar to those of other cults, save they almost always come from deeply rural areas and are often illiterate. Dedicated to the ancient faith of The Mother, they have become probationary priests in training for a lifetime of service. Because of the persecution of the Druids and their people

This unified role finds its clearest expression in the dual role the Druids play as religious and societal leaders of their respective villages. Their position gives them greater influence among their people than that accorded to priests elsewhere. Due to the isolation of these settlements, the Druids are very protective of their folk and typically view outsiders with suspicion.

in the ancient past, Druidic Initiates keep their calling a secret from outsiders, only revealing it to trusted friends. Like the Druids they assist, their job is to keep faith in the Mother alive and to protect all believers from oppression, whether descended from the Belthani or not. The training is long and hard; many fail and pass on into other careers. Though not

allowed to conduct services yet, Druidic Initiates are trained in the basics of the faith
Druidic Initiate Advance Scheme-

Main Profile

| WS | BS | S | T | Ag | Int | WP | Fel |
|-----|-----|---|-----|------|------|------|-----|
| +5% | +5% | | +5% | +10% | +10% | +10% | |

Secondary Profile

| A | W | SB | TB | M | Mag | IP | FP |
|---|----|----|----|---|-----|----|----|
| | +2 | | | | | | |

Skills: Academic Knowledge (Herbalism), Animal Care, Common Knowledge (Old Faith), Heal, Speak Language (Reikspiel)

Druid (Advanced)

Druids arise from those Druidic Initiates who have shown great dedication to the faith of The Mother. They are able to officiate at ceremonies, and have responsibility for the well-being of believers within the local area. They are leaders in the community, taking roles that allow them to speak their people's case

Druid Advance Scheme-

Main Profile

| WS | BS | S | T | Ag | Int | WP | Fel |
|------|------|-----|------|------|------|------|------|
| +10% | +10% | +5% | +10% | +15% | +15% | +15% | +10% |

Secondary Profile

| A | W | SB | TB | M | Mag | IP | FP |
|---|----|----|----|---|-----|----|----|
| | +4 | | | | +1 | | |

Skills: Academic Knowledge (Theology), Animal Training, Channelling, Common Knowledge (The Empire), Concealment, Magical Sense, Navigation, Perception, Prepare Poison, Secret Signs (Old Faith), Set Trap, Silent Move, Speak Arcane Language (Old Faith)

and weapon use.

Talents: Hardy, Orientation, Rover

Trappings: Religious symbols, homespun robes, hand weapon, sling bag and a bundle of healing herbs

Career Entries: Charcoal-Burner, Fieldwarden, Fisherman, Hunter, Hedge Wizard, Peasant, Woodsman

Career Exits: Agitator, Charlatan, Druid, Innkeeper, Physician, Scout

before authority while keeping their identities a secret.

It is also the Druid's role to care for the land and the life it gives, preserving the natural cycles of birth and death and opposing those who would scar and poison the land. Many an orc warband has been lead to its doom by a Druid tricking them down a false trail.

Talents: Aethyric Attunement or Dark Magic, Divine Lore (Old Faith), Hardy or Keen Senses, Meditation, Rover, Very Resilient

Trappings: Sickle and bowl, pouch with herbs and spell components, hand weapon, religious symbols

Career Entries: Druidic Initiate

Career Exits: Charlatan, Demagogue, Elder Druid, Outlaw Chief, Scout

Elder Druid (Advanced)

Elder Druids have achieved the highest rank in the Old Faith. Not necessarily old, they have been honoured for their wisdom, learning, and dedication. In each province in which the Old Faith survives, a secret council of Elder Druids guides the affairs of their people. Most of the time, they work to maintain a low profile for the cult, always mindful of their massacre under the Drak Wald Emperors. In times of active persecution, however, Elder Druids have been known to take revenge, arranging for

the deaths of those who harm the children of The Mother.

Some Elder Druids who are still vigorous life resign their seats on the Council to serve The Mother in other ways. While some travel the world and others agitate for their faith's place in the Empire, a few dedicate themselves to the fight against the Undead, which they see as a crime against the natural order. In their unholy crypts and defiled tombs, vampires quake in fear at the thought of an Elder Druid hunting them.

Elder Druid Advance Scheme-

Main Profile

| WS | BS | S | T | Ag | Int | WP | Fel |
|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| +20% | +20% | +15% | +20% | +25% | +20% | +30% | +20% |

Secondary Profile

| A | W | SB | TB | M | Mag | IP | FP |
|----|----|----|----|---|-----|----|----|
| +1 | +7 | | | | +3 | | |

Skills: Academic Knowledge (Astronomy, any one other), Academic Knowledge (Theology), Channelling, Charm, Common Knowledge (any two), Intimidate, Magical Sense, Navigation, Outdoor Survival, Perception, Read/ Write, Speak Language (Any one)

New Talent

Ley Traveller

This talent allows the Druidic character to detect a ley line within one half a mile from her position, even if the Druid does not have line of sight. In addition, the Druid can walk along the ley line at normal speed irrespective of the terrain. Thus, a Druid can walk across a bog or through a thick forest with the same speed as they would on flat grassland. In contrast, physical objects – such as trees, large bodies of water or wide rivers – still remain an obstacle.

Talents: Aethyric Attunement or Dark Magic, Divine Lore (Old Faith), Hardy or Keen Senses, Ley Traveller, Luck or Seasoned Traveller, Public Speaking, Rover, Sixth Sense

Trappings: Religious relic

Career Entries: Druid

Career Exits: Demagogue, Explorer, Navigator, Vampire Hunter

Cult of the Mother

Followers of the Old Faith have revered Ishernos the Earth Mother and her children, the spirits of the forest, streams, mountains, etc., since well before their migration to the lands of the Empire. This aspect is the only unifying principle for what are actually separate, highly localised sub-cults. These local cults range from benevolent nature-lovers –dismissed as “tree-huggers” by ignorant outsiders- to dark and secretive fanatics practicing blood sacrifice.

Her worshippers consider the Mother as the goddess who personifies the life-giving

force of the Earth. They believe that she is more powerful than her more remote and uncaring husband, Oermath the Sun God. The more powerful offspring of the two primal gods' union are the three who became Rhya, Taal, and Ulric, the first of the Young Gods. In the days when the world was young and humanity few in number, the five gods – along with their own divine children and powerful alien entities – joined together in a war against other darker, unworldly invaders. This Gods' War led to a stalemate, and Oermath demanded that his wife use her power to banish the invaders forever, even though it would mean the death of all living creatures, including the Young Gods. The Mother's refusal to do so led to a confrontation with Oermath, causing a rift between the two that has never healed.

Most of the Old Faith adherents believe that the Mother's children turned on her as their power grew, and that she decided to surrender rather than fight her sons and daughters. This myth corresponds to the decision of the Belthani chieftains, advised by the Druids, to follow the Mother's example when confronted by the more aggressive tribes.

Unlike the worshippers of the Young Gods, followers of the Old Faith believe that her divine children are just powerful versions of other natural spirits. They are the embodiment of one aspect of the Mother and, thus, a part of her.

In some local cults, there is a belief that Ishernos will rise again one day to take back what is hers from her squabbling children. Moreover, it is believed that the Mother's mortal children, the descendants of the Belthani, will be able to return to the lands of their ancestors. Until that day, the Her faithful continue to live in harmony with their natural surroundings, defending their holy places from the further

depredations of her enemies and honouring the spirits that live with them.

Other local cults believe that Ishernos knew that her Divine Children would seek her death in order to make their bid for supremacy complete. In their stories, the Mother secretly gave birth to a daughter goddess who would take her place after her "demise" at the hands of her First-Born. These Old Faith sub-cults are distinguished by the names of the goddesses they worship, some of which they call "Mother" to confuse the uninitiated, and differing degrees of hostility towards the established Imperial cults and their followers.

Symbols

The swirls and stylised animals etched upon the standing stones of the sacred circles – as well as the stones blocking the entrance to the various barrows – indicate that the Old Faith was a more unified religion in the distant past. These days, the symbols of the Old Faith vary greatly from one isolated sect to another. Many use the symbols of the green man – usually a human face with oak or elm leaves for hair, moustache, and beard – to represent the spirit of the woodlands. Some sub-cults use sheaves of wheat bound into the shape of a woman to represent the Harvest Queen, particularly in the open lands in the south. Other known symbols include a stylised acorn or pansy to signify the Lady of the Spring, a water jug to stand for the River Maiden, the sickle representing the harvesting of the Mother's bounty, and the circle representing life and rebirth.

Areas of Worship

Though officially denied, the worship of the Old Faith is believed to exist in many of the remote regions of the Empire in some form. Possible centres of worship include the region of Wissenland known as Solland or

Sudenland, the northwest corner of Nordland, the central hills of Talabecland, the moors of Ostermark, the interior of Averland, the more remote reaches of the Reikland, and parts of Sylvania.

Scholars studying the Old Faith have claim that they can be found in other locations in the Old World. These include pockets of northwestern Bretonnia, the island of Albion, remote areas in the Irrana Mountains, and in the eastern and central portions of the Border Princes.

Temperament

The Mother cares for and protects her worshippers, but her reaction to outsiders ranges from friendly and respectful to hostile and vindictive. Her attitude is generally consistent with those of her local worshippers.

Strictures

Druids must adhere to the following strictures:

- Protect the Mother's sacred places from desecration.
- Honour the spirits of the land for they are the Mother's divine children.
- Give unto these spirits that which they require as service for their deeds.
- Take only from the bounty of the Mother what one's clan needs to live.
- Never harm an animal except in self-defence or for food.
- Do not waste whatever the Mother provides.
- Protect one's clans from the Mother's enemies with any means possible.
- Treat outsiders with hospitality
- Always remain cautious and vigilant for strangers who may bring evil with them.

Holy Sites

Unlike the other organised religions of the Old World, the Old Faith no longer constructs temples, shrines, or similar types of structures. The natural world is their temple and the most venerated places are sacred groves. Stone circles and barrows are also revered as they represent the ancient power of the Mother. The Druids no longer build these, but they are maintained as sacred places. Barrows within the stone circles or sacred groves are particularly revered since it is believed the combination of the two represent the fullness and power of life and death.

Sub-Cults

There are many sub-cults within the Old Faith, a number of which bear little resemblance to what would be consider the original religion.

One of the more common – though often perceived to be a different cult – is the worship of Écate, the Strigany Goddess of the White Moon. Through they travel the roads of the Empire in brightly covered wagons, the Strigany are very secretive about their religious beliefs, even to the point of referring to their Druids (always female) as “Grandmother.” The cult of Écate is very protective of her people and considers outsiders as lesser persons of whom the Strigany can take advantage. They tend to be outwardly friendly and very emotional folk, quick to laughter and anger. Socially, the Strigany are quite different than Imperials and other Old Worlders and are seen by some as immoral. Some Imperials, especially young men lusting after the exotic Strigany women, become enamoured with the lifestyle of the wandering folk and run away from home to join them. Some are accepted into the clan, but a number find themselves sacrificed to Écate far from home and alone when the Goddess demands their blood.

In contrast, the people of Unterbaum in southwestern Talabecland are an example of Old Faith followers who are as peaceful as they are isolated. The village of these folks is located just north of the confluence of the River Narn with the River Stir. A protective ring of ancient megaliths surrounds the area around the village. Though merchants and traders use the River Stir to move their goods from Wurtbad and other settlements along the river to Kemperbad, most by-pass the poor village. The few who visit there believe the simple folk of Unterbaum to be as friendly as they are strange. The only thing that the Unterbaumers sacrifice to the spirits in their land is a small sampling of their harvest and some of the food they have collected.

Skills and Talents

As Druids do not follow the common Priestly careers, their special skills and talents are detailed in the career descriptions above.

Prominent Figures

Given the semi-secretive nature of the Old Faith in the Old World, there are no commonly recognised prominent figures in the cult. Druids are known to those who follow them.

Holy Days

Common to all Old Faith sub-cults are the four holy days: Mondstille Winter Solstice, Mitterfruhl Spring Equinox, Sonnstill Summer Solstice, and Mitterhebst Autumn Equinox. Most local cults celebrate both Hexensnacht and Geheimnisnacht with the young dressing up as spirits of the land and going from one dwelling to another exchanging the Mother's blessings in

exchange for treats. Others celebrate this event with a procession led by a Druid invoking the guardian spirits' protection against the evil that is abroad during both "witching night" and "night of mystery." Each sub-cult has their own set of minor holy days, mostly associated with full and new phases of the moon Mannslieb, which are celebrated in a manner particular to their followers. Two of the better known of these lesser days are 18 Sigmarzeit (Beltain) and 18 Kaldezeit (Samhain).

Magical Lore

Like the religious leaders of other cults, the Druids are able to draw on the power of the Mother through use of prayer and ritual to defend their folk from those who would seek to harm them. This ability requires dedication of time and effort.

To gain any prayer, the Druid character must spend two weeks in a holy site entreating the Mother for a particular divine prayer. To represent this in game terms, the Druid character must pass a **Fel+10%** test before purchasing one Divine Lore (Old Faith) talent for that prayer at a cost of 100 ep. If this test fails, then the Druid has been found wanting at the time and must spend another two weeks in communion with the Mother before trying again.

The higher cost of obtaining divine prayers is offset by the fact that the Druid need only test on the "Mother's Anger" table below rather than "The Wrath of the Gods" table (**WFRP2e**, page 144) whenever they roll doubles or triples on their casting roll. Druids are still penalised with an Automatic Failure whenever they roll a 1 on all the dice in their casting roll (**WFRP2e**, page 142).

| Mother's Anger Table | |
|-----------------------------|--|
| D100 Roll | Effect |
| 01-25 | The Mother renders the ingredient used to invoke the divine prayer inert. The prayer's effects will still take place only if the Druid's casting roll would have exceeded the casting number without the use of the ingredient. |
| 26-50 | As a warning, the Mother causes the Druid to have an excruciating headache and nose bleed for one round, which causes the Druid to lose one W irrespective of TB . |
| 51-75 | The Druid is stunned for one round after invoking the prayer. She may do nothing for that time and counts as a <i>prone</i> target. |
| 76-85 | The Druid becomes suddenly and extremely agitated for 1D10+4 rounds, thereby losing -10 to both her Int and WP for the entire episode. |
| 86-95 | The Druid is wracked with pain after invoking the prayer and loses 1D10 W irrespective of TB . |
| 96-99 | The Druid is visited by a disturbing vision that stuns her for 1D10 rounds. In addition, the Druid receives a number of W equal to her TB and is rendered as a <i>prone</i> target. Once recovered, the Druid may not invoke another prayer until dawn of the following day. |
| 00 | The Druid's prayer is tainted by the local Winds of Chaos and the effects can be determined by a roll on the Major Chaos Manifestation table (WFRP2e , page 143) |

There are two situations in which the Druid does not need to roll on the above table when her casting roll invoking a divine prayer normally dictates such an action: (1) when the Druid is defending a sacred place or (2) the Druid is invoking prayers from within the confines of a holy site (sacred grove, stone circle).

There are some Druids who seek a quicker road to power; they see enemies everywhere, even among other Imperials. One particular target is the cult of Taal and Rhya since it is believed that this cult benefited the most from the historic persecution of the Old Faith. These Druids turn to Dark Magic (*Dhar*) as a means to an end. When using this unaltered Chaos

magic, the Druid gains the same benefit (learning all the spells with the purchase of the Arcane Lore talent) as well as bearing the same risk as any other practitioner of this art: whenever he or she rolls doubles or triples on the casting roll, they must test on the appropriate "Tzeentch's Curse" table (**WFRP2e**, page 143).

Lore of the Old Faith

Due to the variety of Old Faith sub-cults spread across the Old World, Druidic lore contains a fairly large number of prayers that a Druid may obtain. The prayers below reflect those that the Druids are traditionally granted by the Mother's benevolence.

Cure Poison

Casting Number: 4

Casting Time: Full Action

Ingredient: A sprig of mistletoe (+1)

Description: With this prayer, the Druid lays her hand on the part of the body where the poison entered the victim. The prayer and touch negates the effect of the poison (**WFRP 2e corebook**, pages 122-123), provided that it is cast within one hour of the poison entering the victim and the victim is still alive.

Delouse

Casting Number: 4

Casting Time: Full Action

Ingredient: A pinch of pepper (+1)

Description: The prayer allows the Druid to remove parasitic infestations of all kinds from any character or non-Chaotic, non-giant creature touched by the Druid.

Heal Injury

Casting Number: 4

Casting Time: Full Action

Ingredient: A spider's web (+1)

Description: Placing her hand on a lightly wounded character or non-Chaotic, non-giant creature, the Druid is able to heal the injured of a number of **W** equal to 1d10 plus the Druid's **Magic** characteristic. If heavily wounded, the character or creature only regains 1 **W** plus the Druid's **Magic** characteristic. The Druid can heal herself.

Identify Nature

Casting Number: 4

Casting Time: Full Action

Ingredient: A sprig of any natural herb and a hair from any natural animal (+1)

Description: This prayer enables the

Druid to survey the area before her up to 100 yards and determine if there is any "unnatural" flora or fauna for what they are. These include predatory plants such as bloodsedge and damaging moulds; plants and animals "created" by magical spells such as "Illusion"; werecreatures; and Chaos creatures. The prayer does not allow the Druid to detect such as snares and pits, or information about the natural flora and fauna which are unfamiliar to her. The prayer lasts for one hour.

Animal Mastery

Casting Number: 5

Casting Time: Full Action

Ingredient: A tooth from any animal (+1)

Description: The Druid is able to establish a telepathic connection with any non-Chaotic, non-giant creature of low **Int** (6-15%) within 6 yards for 1D10+5 minutes. The Druid may freely communicate with the animal, which is generally well-disposed as a result of the prayer. She may also command the creature, but it tests against its **WP** if the Druid commands it to do something dangerous or outside its normal behaviour.

Mist Cloud

Casting Number: 7

Casting Time: Full Action

Ingredient: A drop of water (+1)

Description: The Druid creates a 10-yard diameter cloud of mist within 50 yards of her. The cloud totally obscures the vision of those within it, halving their movement and modifying any **Perception** tests by -20. The Druid and any friendly group with her can see and move normally within the cloud. The mist cloud lasts for 5 minutes.

Hiding

Casting Number: 8

Casting Time: Full Action

Ingredient: A piece of cloth (+1)

Description: Through use of this prayer, the Druid is able to create a magical zone with a diameter of 6 yards centred on herself that allows all characters and non-Chaotic, non-giant creatures within to merge with the surrounding terrain. As long as the creatures within the area remain stationary, they are impossible to be seen at distances over 12 yards. Any individual coming within the 12 yards may detect the hidden Druid, characters, and creatures if he makes a **Perception**-20% test (+10% for *Excellent Vision*).

Summon Spirit Familiar

Casting Number: 10

Casting Time: Full Action

Ingredient: Tuft of fur or feathers from the type of creature in whose form the familiar is summoned (+1)

Description: This prayer allows the Druid to summon a spirit in one of the following animal forms for 1 hour: auroch, bear, bison, eagle, horse, mountain cat, raven, stag, or wolf. The spirit is only visible to the Druid, though anyone with the *Magical Sense* skill will be able to detect it as a vague outline. The spirit has the profile of a normal creature with an **Int** of 89% and appears as a white or light grey coloured creature with deep amber eyes. The spirit informs the Druid of anything amiss – “unnatural” flora and fauna as well as traps and ambushes – within 100 yards of where it is summoned. It remains within 5 yards of the Druid and reports anything it senses telepathically. Though the spirit can pass through walls or other physical obstructions, it can be harmed by magic.

Cause Rain

Casting Number: 11

Casting Time: Full Action

Ingredient: A drop of water (+1)

Description: The Druid is able to create a sudden downpour of rain within 100 yards of her in any outdoor situation (except desert) and lasts 1 round. This burst of rain reduces fire damage by 1D10 points, makes long-range missile fire impossible and gives a penalty of –10% to the **BS** of any firing short-range. In addition, fire-based magic is instantly dispelled, and any flaming magical weapons are nullified for the duration of the prayer. Moreover, gunpowder weapons cannot be fired during the rain and there is a 10% chance of these becoming waterlogged and unable to fire until dried out.

Cure Disease

Casting Number: 11

Casting Time: Full Action

Ingredient: A sprig of mistletoe (+1)

Description: The Druid is able to cure an afflicted person of any one disease by touch so long as the person is still alive.

Giant Animal Mastery

Casting Number: 12

Casting Time: Full Action

Ingredient: A tooth or some other body part of a giant animal (+2)

Description: The Druid is able to establish a telepathic connection with any non-Chaotic, giant creature of low intelligence (6-18%) within 6 yards for 1D10+5 minutes. Giant creatures may make a **WP** test to resist the effects of the prayer. If they fail, the Druid may freely communicate with the giant animal, which is generally well-disposed as a result of the prayer. She may also command the creature, but it tests against its **WP** if the Druid commands it to do something dangerous or outside its normal behaviour.

Heal Vegetation

Casting Number: 12

Casting Time: Full Action

Ingredient: A small bag of auroch, deer, or horse dung (+1)

Description: The Druid can heal the vegetation in a 10-yard by 10-yard patch of ground within 50 yards from the effects of drought, poisoning, blight, plant disease, parasites, and so on, even if caused by other magical spells.

Leave No Trace

Casting Number: 12

Casting Time: Full Action

Ingredient: A feather or tuft of fur (+1)

Description: The Druid can travel in the wilderness for one hour and leave no discernible trace of their passage, no matter the terrain. Thus, the Druid can travel through the thickest forest or open grassland without leaving any trail. A opposing character with the *Follow Trail* skill will have a -30% modifier imposed on their respective **Ag** characteristic when attempting to track the Druid. The opposing character must test every round in order to not lose what little trail they have come across.

Plague of Lice

Casting Number: 12

Casting Time: Full Action

Ingredient: A drop of blood (+1)

Description: The Druid is able to afflict a plague of lice upon any individual or group within 25 yards and in her line of sight for 1D10 minutes. The victims begin to itch terribly and need to make a **WP** test. Those who succeed suffer a penalty of -20% to all tests while the prayer lasts. Those who fail instantly strip off their armour and scratch frantically, counting as a *prone* for the duration of the prayer.

Stampede

Casting Number: 14

Casting Time: Full Action

Ingredient: The jawbone of a snake of the skull of a wolf (+1)

Description: The Druid is able to force any single, or group of, non-Chaotic, giant creature(s) within 50 yards to uncontrollably flee away (as if affected by *Fear*) from her at their maximum movement rate for 1D10+5 rounds. In the case of mounted creatures, such as horses, the rider is permitted a **Fel** test (+10% for *Animal Care*, +10% for *Animal Training*) each round after the first to bring the animal under control. Creatures failing a **WP** test will not approach within 50 yards of the Druid until the next sunrise.

Area of Purity

Casting Number: 15

Casting Time: Full Action

Ingredient: A bronze dagger (+1)

Description: The Druid creates a 10-yard diameter area centred on herself. The area lasts for one hour and moves with the Druid. Druids, followers of the Old Faith, and normal animals may enter and leave the area freely. Other creatures and beings must successfully pass a **WP** test with the following modifiers to enter:

| | |
|-------------------------|------|
| Elves, Giant Animals | 0% |
| Halflings, other Humans | -10% |
| Dwarfs | -20% |
| Anything else | -40% |

Decompose

Casting Number: 16

Casting Time: Full Action

Ingredient: A dried leaf (+1)

Description: A ray of dark green light instantly projects from the Druid's fingertips up to a range of 50 yards. Anything organic (such as wood,

leather, plant fibre) in the path of the beam of light will immediately rot away into dust. This prayer will affect nothing living or magically animated with the exception of Zombies. When struck, these Undead become Skeletons.

Tanglethorn

Casting Number: 16

Casting Time: Full Action

Ingredient: A briar or bramble (+1)

Description: This prayer enables the Druid to cause a 20 square foot area of plants or bushes within 25 yards to become partially animated. The plants lash out and wrap themselves around anything trying to move through them for 1 minute (6 rounds). Any creature in the area of effect takes 1D10+4 **W** at SB1 every round from lashing branches and must make a **S** test each round in order to move or attack. Failure means that the creature is considered prone.

Travel along the Ley Line

Casting Number: 16

Casting Time: Full Action

Ingredient: A feather of a swift or falcon (+1)

Description: This prayer allows the Druidic character to instantly (in one round) travel along a ley line through solid objects for up to a half a mile. From an outside observer's point of view, the Druid essentially disappears from where they stood at the beginning of the round and re-appears up to a half-mile away at the end of the round.

Steam Cloud

Casting Number: 17

Casting Time: Full Action

Ingredient: A drop of water and a burning torch within 10 yards (+1)

Description: With this prayer, the Druid brings forth a cloud of superheated steam 10 yards in diameter within 50 yards of the Druid. The cloud lasts for 1 minute (6 rounds). Creatures suffer 2**W** for each round they remain within the *Steam Cloud* irrespective of **TB** and any protections, magical or otherwise. Creatures inside the cloud must make an **Ag** test each round. If successful, they can move towards the nearest edge to escape the cloud and its effects. A failed **Ag** test means that the creature is disoriented and moves in a random direction.

Shapechange

Casting Number: 18

Casting Time: Two Full Actions

Ingredient: The skin of the animal to change into (+2)

Description: The Druid is able to take the form of any non-Chaotic, non-giant animal, gaining the profile of the animal in question (except for **Int**, which remains the Druid's) together with any abilities it has. While in animal form, the Druid is not able to use prayers or perform any other functions of which the animal is not capable. If rendered unconscious by **W** loss or any other means, the Druid returns to her human form. The prayer lasts 5 minutes or until the Druid ends the effects of the prayer.

Summon Swarm

Casting Number: 18

Casting Time: Full Action

Ingredient: A preserved part of the type of creature summoned (+1)

Description: The Druid can summon and command a swarm of small creatures: beetles, ants, ticks, scorpions, spiders, frogs and toads, snakes, lizards, rats, or bats. The swarm appears within 50

yards of the Druid and will follow simple instructions. The Swarm lasts for 1 hour and has the following profile:

Main Profile

| WS | BS | S | T | Ag | Int | WP | Fel |
|-----|----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| 33% | 0 | 10% | 14% | 10% | 5% | 89% | 0 |

Secondary Profile

| A | W | SB | TB | M | Mag | IP | FP |
|----|----|----|----|---|-----|----|----|
| 10 | 20 | 1 | 1 | 4 | - | - | - |

Skills: Perception

Talents: Flier (Bats), Keen Senses, Natural Weapons

Tap Earthpower

Casting Number: 18

Casting Time: One minute

Ingredient: A stone bowl with three drops of Druid's blood (+2)

Description: This prayer can only be performed in a stone circle or sacred grove and enables the Druid to draw upon the power of the sacred site to facilitate other prayers. For the next hour, the casting number for any prayer is reduced by 3 and the Druid is not subject to the Automatic Failure penalty.

Animate Tree

Casting Number: 20

Casting Time: Two Full Actions

Ingredient: A seed or berry from the type of tree to be animated (+1)

Description: The Druid can animate one tree for five minutes, effectively becoming a Treeman under her control. The animated tree has the profile and abilities of a Treeman (**Old World Bestiary**, pages 110-111). The Druid must touch the tree when invoking the prayer and then remain within 10 feet of it.

Create Vegetation

Casting Number: 20

Casting Time: Two Full Actions

Ingredient: A small bag of herbivore dung and a handful of seeds (+1)

Description: Centred on a spot within 50 yards, the Druid causes a mass of tangled vegetation to grow over an area 12 yards in diameter. If there are any seeds in the ground, these will sprout and grow to full maturity in 1D10 rounds, momentarily tangling anyone standing in the area and possibly lift up on a bed of verdure. The plants will be whatever is natural for the area. Once the plants reach maturity, they will behave naturally given the climate conditions and season of year. Trees will not reach full growth, but will get to the sapling stage.

If the ground is barren, then the plants will grow from whatever seeds the Druid uses when invoking this prayer. The plants will grow, but will wither away after 1D10 hours.

Entanglement

Casting Number: 20

Casting Time: Full Action

Ingredient: A pinch of dung and sprig of Bloodsedge (+2)

Description: The Druid can cause vegetation to erupt from any point within 100 yards, irrespective of terrain type, instantly covering an area with a 25-yard diameter and turning the terrain into *difficult* ground, affecting movement accordingly. For the five minutes the prayer lasts, creatures caught within the area of effect are entangled in the first round and need to successfully pass a **S**-10% test on any subsequent round to move at **Hampered** rate (**WFRP2e**, pages 137-138). Entangled creatures cannot move, cast spells, or use magical items to create spells and spell-like effects. In addition, entangled creatures suffer -20% to **BS** and -10% to **WS**.

Hedge of Thorns

Casting Number: 20

Casting Time: Full Action

Ingredient: A stem from wild rose or berry bush (+1)

Description: The Druid is able to create a hedge of thorns with 50 yards. The hedge instantly springs up from the ground filling an area in 2 x 25 yard strip or in a circle of a radius of 6 yards. The hedge can be made to grow in front of, around, or even on top of groups of creatures as the Druid wishes. Each creature within the area of thorns receives 3D10 **W** at **SB6**, reduced by **TB** and leg armour only. In addition, movement is reduced to the **Hampered** rate.

Once created, the wall of thorns cannot be dispelled. It is flammable and a section of hedge has **TB7** and **W25**.

Rainbow Bridge

Casting Number: 20

Casting Time: Full Action

Ingredient: A wooden miniature sculptured bridge, painted with the colours of a rainbow (+2)

Description: This prayer can only be cast if a rainbow appears within the Druid's sight (roughly 10% chance after it rains). The Druid brings the rainbow to her feet in one round and can lead a group (eight character and/or natural animals) onto the rainbow. Once all are on, the rainbow travels 1 mile per round to a maximum of 20 miles. The Druid may have herself and the group set down at any point of time within that distance. Creatures hostile to the Druid must make a **WP** test to step onto the rainbow and then for every round they are on the rainbow. If any subsequent **WP** test fails, the hostile creature falls off the rainbow from a height of 400 feet and to their death.

Create Bog

Casting Number: 24

Casting Time: Full Action

Ingredient: A ball of mud (+1)

Description: The Druid creates an area of soft and marshy ground on any bare patch of bare ground in an outside setting within 50 yards. Lasting three minutes, the bog covers an area up to 50 square yards; counting as difficult ground. When the prayer ends, the ground dries out and hardens back to normal ground. Any creature mired in the bog when it dries out finds itself trapped unless it makes a successful **S** test. Trapped creatures count as *prone* and need to be dug out to move again.

Drawing down the Moon

Casting Number: 24

Casting Time: Full Action

Ingredient: Two moonstones (+2)

Description: If moonlight is present, the Druid brings down a form of moon madness upon a single or group of creatures within 100 yards. The target creature(s) are bathed by the glowing moonlight which weakens their resolve (**WP**-10%) and very quickly drives them insane. The effects of the prayer lasts one minute (6 rounds) and affected creatures suffer from -10% to both **S** and **T** (-1 to **SB** and **TB**) and, as they are experiencing hallucinations, -20% to **WS** and **BS**. Affected Wizards and Priests must first pass a **WP**-10% test in order to cast a spell or prayer. At the end of the prayer, the affected characters must make a **WP**-10% test or gain 2 **Insanity Points**. Daemons and Undead are affected differently, suffering from one automatic **SB4** hit per round.

Sunbeam

Casting Number: 24

Casting Time: Full Action

Ingredient: A 1-inch diameter disc of burnished copper (+2)

Description: The effects of this prayer only take effect when sunlight is present (anytime daylight hours except when dark storm clouds cover the whole sky). The Druid instantly calls down a roaring column of fire from the sky within 100 yards which affects all creatures within an 8-yard diameter circle. Most creatures suffer 2D10 **W** at **SB8**, while flammable targets suffer 4D10 **W** at **SB8**. This prayer has great power against Daemons and Undead, both of which suffer 4D10 **W** at **SB10**.

Create Sacred Grove (Ritual)

Type: Divine

Arcane Language: Old Faith

Magic: 3

XP: 300

Ingredients: A golden sickle, a bowl of sacrificial blood (may be Druid's), and a sprig of mistletoe.

Conditions: Centre of a suitable clearing in the depth of a forest that is first be marked out by *Area of Purity* prayer and the ritual begins during the full moon (of Mannslieb)

Consequences: None

Casting Number: 18

Casting Time: One hour each night starting at midnight until the day of the new moon (of Mannslieb)

Description: Druid is able to dedicate a grove of trees to the Mother as sacred ground. This ritual can also be used to re-dedicate a grove that had been desecrated, as well as a stone circle or barrow (in the latter case, the ritual must be performed on the outside).

Adventure Hooks

When Evil Collides

During the first millennium of the Empire, many variations of the Old Faith sprang up in the isolated regions in the Empire. One centred around the god Gurheid, whose cult had grown dominant among the Fennone tribe of the eastern Empire. Some scholars blamed the poor soil and farming conditions in the lands that became Sylvania and southern Ostermark for this darker version of the Old Faith. Human sacrifice was common, for the religion believed that the goddess demanded blood to restore the fertility of the earth. Many scholars of history and religion believe that, given the sad and horrific past of Sylvania, the worship of Gurheid thrived for some time in opposition to the ruling houses of the von Teufelheims and von Draks.

Gerhard von der Lasa of the Streissen Lyceum has argued that the cult of Gurheid was finally exterminated during the early reign of the von Carsteins, between 1800-1850 I.C.

While the PCs are relaxing in a tavern in Nuln, Kemperbad or some other city near Stirland, an elderly man approaches them with a job offer. He tells the PCs that his master, Baron Hermann von Schleicher (an antiquarian of no small fame), is looking to hire a talented group of individuals to undertake a dangerous job involving a high degree of discretion and "creativity." The job also entails travel to the town of Teufelheim in the eastern marches of Stirland (Sylvania) to uncover an ancient artefact that once belonged to the High

Priest of the extinct and mysterious cult of Gurheid. The relic is described as a foot-tall woman-shaped statuette made of pure silver believed to have been lost somewhere among the nearby ruined castle. Once in their possession, the PCs are to deliver the priceless objet d'art to the Baron's manor house on the outskirts of Wurtbad for a substantial fee (the initial offer is 200 GCs for the group, though the Baron is willing to go as high as 100 GCs per person).

Things get interesting for the PCs when they approach Sylvania from the River Stir. At Siegfriedhof, the PCs come across a patrol of Raven Knights and must assure the Mórrian Templars that their plans do not conflict with the Order's mission in the region. Shortly after that stop, a man dressed in black (a secret worshippers of Gurheid) trails the PCs from a safe distance. The mystery man scatters whenever the PCs turn to confront him. He also carefully avoids any traps or ambushes they might set. Near Waldenhof, the PCs find that another group, wearing the livery of the Count of Drakenhof, have taken interest in their activities. The man in black is no longer in evidence. The PCs will have to determine if there is any connection between the mystery man and this group. After all, the countryside the PCs are travelling in is spooky enough without having to deal with men who may be bent on their destruction.

As they near their destination, the PCs find signs of inhabitation near the ruined castle, yet they have come across nobody. The mystery deepens as PCs with *Magical Sense* see some vague shape from the corner of their eyes that is no longer present when directly looked at. The shape could be a restless spirit or something summoned for some foul purpose. And what of the people who have left signs of their presence? Could the adherents to the cult of Gurheid somehow survived the von

Carstein persecution? Or, did they form some unholy alliance? Why do the ruins ahead seem unnaturally quiet? Could someone else know that the PCs have arrived? Or, are they expecting someone else? Perhaps someone else is interested in the statuette? And what are the men wearing the livery of Drakenhof doing here? Could they be in league with whoever is guarding the statuette? Perhaps the PCs have led them to the prize, which may have been sought by their Master for years? Or, is there something more nefarious afoot here?

Mystery at Dorchen

There is a steep-sided hill about 200 feet in height with a flat top about a mile and a half outside the Reikland village of Dorchen, which is located northeast of Altdorf. The top of Heiligenhöhlen Hill is roughly 10 yards wide and 6 yards deep. Though surrounded by forest, not one tree grows on this hill. Ancient folklore tells of a story where some malevolent spirit tried to steal Taal's bear-furred cloak as the god slept nearby. A battle ensued and the unnamed spirit stabbed Taal in the thigh with a knife made of enchanted antler. The God of the Wilds threw down the spirit. Before the spirit could regain its wits, Taal picked up a small hill and slammed it on the spirit's head, thereby entombing it. To mark this prison, a large bronze cover was placed on the hilltop. Sometime later, a temple dedicated to Taal was built on the Heiligenhöhlen Hill's summit.

The fact is Heiligenhöhlen Hill is an artificial mound constructed long ago by the Belthani people for reasons long forgotten save by a shrinking number of Druids living in the hilly region of western Talabecland.

The night before the PCs pass through Dorchen, a howling northern wind blew

through the area, breaking off tree branches and causing some structural damage to some of the buildings. A shepherd passed by the Heiligenhöhlen Hill and noticed that the Temple to Taal no longer stood there (the angle of the slope prohibited the young lad from seeing the ruins of the temple).

Fearful and superstitious, no one from Dorchen wanted to check on the temple, much less the priest. The Headman of the village approaches the PCs, who, as outsiders, are expendable, to hire them to investigate. The village cannot pay much in coin, but many of the folk are willing to barter provisions and some goods (average quality, at best) for the service.

If the PCs agree, they arrive at the base of Heiligenhöhlen Hill after a 30-minute trek. Reaching the summit, they can see that the Temple has been crushed as if by a giant's club. There is no sign of Brother Ottar or his remains, but there is a large bronze wheel or plug next to an open, narrow shaft that descends into the darkness.

PCs investigating the opening of the shaft will find two sets of five roughly parallel furrows cut into the soil as if made by human hands. The furrows are deepest by the aperture, and some hold traces of skin and blood. The bronze construct is large

enough to stopper the shaft and is quite heavy at around 700 lbs. The top of the bronze cover has been worn by age, but shows none of the expected corrosion. There is some sort of worn engraving on the bronze, but the PCs would have to do a rubbing to get an idea of the mysterious glyph's shape. The glyph itself radiates magic of a variety unknown to those who are skilled in sorcery.

What makes things more complicated is that there is an elderly man in the hooded brown clothing watching them from the edge of the woods below. The PCs will easily spot him if they scan the edge of the surrounding forest. Should the PCs call out, the man retreats into the forest.

The PCs are now stuck with a mystery of sorts. What happened to Brother Ottar? Was he really a cleric of Taal? Or, did he follow some other religion? Who or what moved the capstone? What was the significance of the glyph on the capstone? Was there something really imprisoned within the hill? Or, buried? How was whatever down there aroused? More to the point, is it still within the hill or lurking about the countryside? And, who is the elderly man? Did he bear witness to what happened? Or, is he the freed spirit of the ancient story?

Conclusion

The exclusion of the Old Faith from **WERP2e** should not deter GMs from using its potential to add mystery, horror, and a rich depth to the world in which their players characters live. There are many possibilities, from simple interactions when encountering a friendly folk with strange

customs to creating non-Chaotic adversaries for the PCs with unknown powers and beliefs. The varied nature of many Old Faith sects provides the GM with tools to offer his players something unexpected, challenges other than yet another band of orcs.