



# FLAMES OF THE FAITHFUL

4TH, 9TH, 14TH LEVEL

DID THAT CANDLE JUST MOVE?





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**Design:** Mohamed “Aggi” Bellafquih, Thomas Johnson,  
Max Wartelle

**Writing:** Thomas Johnson

**Additional Writing:** João Araújo, Max Wartelle

**Editing:** Phylea, Max Wartelle

**Formatting:** Sally Kay Clark, Max Wartelle

**Proofing:** Jessica Gombart, Vall

**Art Direction:** Mohamed “Aggi” Bellafquih

**Layout:** Max Wartelle

**Cover Illustrator:** Mohamed “Aggi” Bellafquih

**Interior Illustrators:** Mohamed “Aggi” Bellafquih, Jesse  
Jackdaw Burns, Sam Jumisko, Ognjen Sporn, Chaouki  
“Ciao” Titouhi

**Cartographers:** Cze & Peku



# INTRODUCTION

This hunt, *Flames of the Faithful*, is a 5th-edition adventure intended for three to seven characters and is optimised for a party of 4 with an average party level (APL) of 4, 9, or 14. Characters who complete this adventure should earn enough experience to progress one-fifth of the way to 5th level, one-quarter of the way to 10th level, or halfway to 15th level. A maniacal wax elemental infused with divine power and misguided faith has absorbed a celebrated archbishop and is secretly burning members of its congregation alive.

After meeting an overly eager priest from the Church of the Empyrean Solar, the characters find their way to the town of Cresthill. A celebration is underway and the festivities extend through the night in honour of the recent divine revelation of the church's leader. It becomes clear to the party something odd is going on; something that the townsfolk refuse to admit. When they are invited to a private service with the Pontiff, the characters come face to face with a powerful wax creature that ignites parishioners aflame to "enlighten" them.

## BACKGROUND

The clergy of the Church of the Empyrean Solar has provided spiritual guidance to the town of Cresthill for generations. The priests are widely known for their generosity and are considered community leaders. In the past two decades, Archbishop Cyril the Kindhearted has exemplified the lineage of this church by being a man of extraordinary character and devotion to his congregation. His generosity knows no bounds, and he has helped hundreds of people better their lives.

The Empyrean Solar used a wax elemental to maintain the many candles and lanterns that kept their cathedral brightly lit at all times. The simple creature had served the church longer than any current priest has even been alive, and most ignored its presence. Over time and after generations of exposure to divine rituals, the wax elemental eventually gained a spark of self-awareness and began questioning its existence and place within the cosmos. It secretly approached Archbishop Cyril with these questions, and the enthused spiritual leader attempted to enlighten the elemental with guidance, like any other member of his flock.

Teaching the elemental proved a mistake, as it lacked the emotional capability to fully comprehend Cyril's teachings. The lessons became twisted in its mind, and the creature began to believe it had the divine responsibility to "enlighten others" by literally lighting them on fire. The Archbishop realized his mistake too late and became the first to be purified and absorbed.

The wax elemental used its power to mimic the archbishop's appearance and convince the Empyrean Solar's priests that it knew of a new, secret path to enlightenment, declaring itself a prophet and taking the title of Pontiff. The priests eagerly spread word to Cresthill's residents of the Archbishop's discovery, convincing them that a new era of enlightenment was soon to come. Instead, the Pontiff began melting the members of the congregation, growing stronger with each "enlightenment" as it added their molten fat to its waxy form.

### MOTES OF THE DIVINE

This hunt is the second in a series of five known collectively as Motes of the Divine. The following gives an optional background you can use to link these hunts together.

Some clergy members recall a strange visitor who met with the Archbishop to discuss the theologies and powers of pure divine grace. During his stay, the visitor spent time with the wax elemental in secret, testing his theories and infusing it with what he referred to as a "Mote of the Divine". He left after what he called "yet another failed experiment" did not produce the answers he sought. The result was the wax elemental gaining self-awareness and the power to absorb other creatures.

## SUMMARY

A breakdown of important information is provided below:

- ♦ **Which Monster?** An egomaniacal wax elemental infused with divine power, known as the Pontiff, is masquerading as a beloved Archbishop.
- ♦ **Monster's Motivation.** A misguided belief in a duty to "enlighten" the its congregation by burning and absorbing them into itself.
- ♦ **Monster's Previous Actions.** The Pontiff's spiritual fervour has gripped the surrounding community. The church holds a weekly festival where priests select those "worthy of transcendence," who then disappear, never to be seen again.
- ♦ **Where's the Monster?** The Pontiff holds special services in the Empyrean Solar's Grand Cathedral, just outside and overlooking the town of Cresthill.

## ADVENTURE HOOKS

There are many reasons why characters may choose to seek the truth behind the Pontiff's supposed enlightenment. Below are a few examples of hooks you can use that feature Jandar Olana as the main quest-giver to get the characters involved in this hunt.

- ♦ **Curiosity: The Final Feast.** A special service will be held where a select few are chosen to meet with the Pontiff, who has been touched by the divine and only shares his enlightenment with those who are deemed worthy to ascend to a higher state of being. A chatty priest, whose cheerful description of the upcoming feast has gathered a small crowd, is leaving in the morning to Cresthill with a cart full of candles and supplies and he urges all to come and witness the glory of the divine enlightenment.
- ♦ **Morality: Those Left Behind.** Fliers of missing people crowd a local noticeboard, and they all seem to reference the same town. A young man is weeping as he pins a sketch of his missing wife to a noticeboard. The man, Boris Bolganov, explains that his wife disappeared after attending a "special ceremony" at Cresthill's Grand Cathedral. The clergy had promised enlightenment but she never emerged from the cathedral. The man begs the characters to look into the situation.

- ♦ **Compensation: Fuel for the Fire.** As the characters travel, a wagon pulled by jittery horses comes barreling up behind them. The dishevelled and bruised priest driving the cart introduces himself and explains he barely avoided a bandit ambush. He offers what gold he has and the promise of a divine blessing from his cathedral's Pontiff if the characters would escort him to Cresthill. He's transporting special candles and is already a day behind schedule.

### GM'S NOTE

If the Loot Tavern is the central base of operations for your characters, you can alter parts of the quest hooks to place them within the tavern. For instance, you can place the frantic husband next to the noticeboard in the tavern, asking for help as he posts his flier. Instead of meeting on the road, the battered priest seeks shelter in the tavern just after being ambushed and seeks to hire escorts to bring him to Cresthill.

### HUNT REWARDS PER CHARACTER

Hunt Level	Gold Reward	XP Reward*
4th	550 gp	750
9th	2,300 gp	4,100
14th	5,750 gp	13,000

\*Includes all scripted monsters, averaged for 4 player characters.

## JANDAR OLANA

The cheerful young man that Jandar Olana (LG human **priest**) has grown into is far removed from the grim orphan Archbishop Cyril rescued from the streets to mentor and raise in the Empyrean Solar. Slender, with curly red hair and a dash of freckles across his pale cheeks, Jandar's unwavering optimism and energy are a testament to his faith in the Empyrean Solar. For the past two years, the enthusiastic missionary has travelled the region distributing food, supplies, and hope to the poor and needy. He was recalled early from his latest mission and instructed to gather supplies before returning home for an upcoming feast.



To involve Jandar as quest giver in the aforementioned adventure hooks, you can have him take the place of the priest in the curiosity and compensation hooks. Alternatively, he can overhear the pleading in the morality hook and attempt to intervene, explaining to an unbelieving Boris that his order is dedicating to helping others and does no harm.

As a travelling priest of the Emyreal Solar, Jandar is more than happy to answer any questions the characters may have to the best of his (albeit limited) knowledge, including the following:

- Weekly feasts are being held in honour of the Pontiff at the Emyreal Solar's Grand Cathedral in Cresthill. The upcoming feast is Jandar's first.
- Jandar hasn't been home for two months while travelling on his latest mission.
- His mentor and adopted father is Archbishop Cyril the Kindhearted, who taught him the core tenets of their faith and to "be the hand that uplifts all within your reach."
- He has been told the Archbishop was blessed with a divine vision and raised to Pontiff.
- The elder priests say they are entering into a new age of enlightenment.

## CRESTHILL

The quaint town of Cresthill is nestled around the sloping sides of its namesake hill, with the Grand Cathedral perched high in the centre of the hilltop. While simply constructed of local stone, fired clay tiles, or thatched roofs, the buildings and paved streets are extremely well-maintained. Cresthill is an average-sized town of roughly 1,200 residents, and is home to a diverse mix of humans, dwarves, elves, and various other races. Textile exports are the primary economy here, and nearly everyone works in the surrounding fields, at the looms, or provides labour for the Emyreal Solar's many projects. The church and its tenets have been ingrained in the deeply religious community for generations, making crime almost non-existent.

Since the Pontiff became recently enlightened, daily services have been held to capture the hearts and minds of the locals. The resulting ambient mood of the townsfolk has become so jubilant that it borders on mania, with residents hoping to be among the next group to be "enlightened".

### JANDAR OLANA

*Humanoid (human), priest, he/him*

**Personality.** Fidgety and highly energetic, head in the clouds so often he forgets to eat.

**Physical.** Lanky, red hair, pale-skinned, simple red and white priest's vestments.

**Desire.** To help those around him in whatever way he can and make his mentor proud.

**Fear.** Losing the family that is his church and congregation.

*"Are you okay? Is there anything you need? How can I be of service?"*

### REGIONAL EFFECTS

The region around the Pontiff's lair (see "Grand Cathedral" on page 9) is warped by its magic, which creates the following effects:

- Flames burn brighter. The light radius of nonmagical flames is doubled within the 6 miles surrounding the Pontiff's lair. The fuel source for these flames is depleted twice as fast.
- Creatures within 1 mile of the Pontiff's lair feel a sense of inner calm, and strong negative emotions, such as anxiety and anger, are suppressed. Wild animals are docile and less likely to attack travellers.
- Creatures within 1 mile of the Pontiff's lair feel the intense urge to eat more than usual. It takes twice as much food per day to satisfy creatures living under this effect.

If the Pontiff dies, these effects fade over the course of **1d10** days.



## EXPLORING THE TOWN

When the characters arrive in town, they find empty streets and silence. The Empyrean Solar's Grand Cathedral (see pages 9 – 12) is sealed during the service, and ushers guard the entrance to turn away any who would interrupt it. Those townsfolk not attending the service are either working at the town green setting up for tonight's feast or starting their celebrations early at the Lucky Troll Inn. Jandar guides the characters to this same inn and recommends they grab rooms while he takes his delivery to the town green.

The characters have a few hours before the feast begins, and they can spend this time stocking up on any needed gear at The Rusty Barrel General Store or in the tavern chatting with—or eavesdropping on—the few locals. If any of the characters bring up missing townsfolk, they are met with confused looks and insistence that “no one is missing,” as they believe those who have been enlightened are right where they are supposed to be. These particular locals have no useful information to share outside of the general knowledge known to all Cresthill residents.

## TIME TO FEAST

As the sun begins to set, it sparks a migration of residents towards the town green that sits just outside the cathedral. Once the characters arrive, read aloud the following:

The town green is an expansive lawn filled with rows of tables and benches, a small stage for people to speak from, and other entertainment booths. Flickering lights reflect off the stained glass windows decorating the cathedral's elaborate facade, casting a rainbow of lights across the green. A cheer rises from the crowd as strategically placed lanterns burst to life and the cathedral's doors open to announce the end of the service. You see Jandar in the crowd just as he notices you and heads your way with a smile and wave.

Once Jandar reunites with the characters, he explains the cathedral is closed until the special ceremony after the feast. If pressed, the young priest reluctantly admits that even he was not allowed

inside to see his adopted father, which is highly unusual. He quickly brushes any further questions aside and insists on introducing the characters to some of the more prominent members of the Cresthill community. The celebration lasts 3 hours and concludes with a pie-eating contest.

## PIE-EATING CONTEST

The contest has a maximum of ten contestants, including any characters that decide to compete alongside the town **commoners**. In the first round, each participant must succeed on a **DC 12 Constitution saving throw** to consume their pie, with a failure resulting in the contestant throwing up and being disqualified. The save DC increases by 1 on each subsequent round until one contestant wins. If all the final contestants fail their save, the highest roll wins, re-rolling on ties.

The last three contestants win an invitation to the next private service (page 8). The winner receives adulation from the surrounding crowd, a prize purse of 10 gp, and a coupon for a free daily breakfast pastry for one week at Bernie's Bakery, the contest's sponsor.

## KNOW THY ENEMY

During the festivities, Jandar answers any questions the characters may have as he walks around the feast and introduces them to community leaders. Each encounter (as described in the clues below) provides the party with an opportunity to gain insight into the Pontiff. Alternatively, the characters can explore the feast on their own and enjoy the free food, drinks, and music. Clues can be introduced in any order you decide. Each clue hints at one of the Pontiff's traits or weaknesses:

- Wax creatures are affected by cold, which slows them, and heat, which causes them to deal additional fire damage.
- The smoke from the Pontiff's thurible has a disorienting and blinding effect.
- Thunder damage weakens the Pontiff.



## CLUE 1: LIVING WAX

The Pontiff can control special wax that has been shaped into wax creatures. The wax comes alive and is subservient to the Pontiff. Rapid changes in temperature impact wax creatures created in this manner. Extreme cold hardens them, making them brittle and slow, while extreme heat enhances their fire abilities.

### JANDAR

Jandar recently arrived in Cresthill with a cart full of blessed candles that the Pontiff specially ordered. He boasts to anyone who will listen that these candles came from a monastery that raises a special breed of bees known as firestingers. Their unique beeswax burns brighter and lasts longer than usual after being treated with divine rituals. Jandar admits they must be stored properly, or they can become brittle during winter. He kept a small candle to show onlookers how much brighter and hotter they were than a typical candle.

**Show.** You can introduce this clue by having the eager priest show off his candle to the characters while walking with them or have Jandar demonstrate to onlookers as the characters are nearby. Read aloud or paraphrase the following:

Jandar excitedly pulls a twelve-inch candle from his robe's inner pocket and presents it proudly. The hard amber wax is etched with delicate patterns, and the wick is shaped like a sun. "These candles are amazing! They burn longer and hotter than any other and we have enough to last the church for decades to come!"

### BLESSED CANDLE

Characters who succeed on a **VDC Intelligence (Arcana or Religion)** check recognize the patterns inscribed on the candle as a ritual that amplifies natural strengths and weaknesses. A successful **VDC Intelligence (Nature)** check determines the wax is from a rare breed of bee called a firestinger that absorbs fire damage and is weak to cold damage.

### DURING THE BATTLE

When a wax elemental (see Wax Elementals sidebar on page 13) takes fire damage, its attacks deal extra fire damage. In addition, the Pontiff's Heated Body trait deals extra damage. To communicate this, narrate that a wax elemental catches aflame upon taking the fire damage, burning hot and bright. At the end of its next turn, these flames are extinguished and it returns to normal. Characters who see Jandar's candle instantly recognize that the golems in The Battle Ahead (pages 8 – 16) are made from the same wax that the firestinger bees produce.



HANDOUT 1. FIRESTINGER WAX CANDLES





HANDOUT 2. INCENSE EXPOSURE

## CLUE 2: CHOKING INCENSE

The Pontiff's thurible produces a choking cloud of poisonous smoke that he uses to disorient and blind opponents. The effect is debilitating, but can be countered and dispersed by using a *gust of wind* spell or similar effect.

### MARY THE MAYOR

Mary Oswalt (LG human **noble**) is the incredibly friendly and helpful Mayor of Cresthill. Well into her fifties, Mary uses her kind demeanour to hide a shrewd and calculating mind. However, like the other townsfolk, she has blind faith in the clergy and is eager to attend the special services. Mary has developed a thick and heavy cough after being exposed to some of the Pontiff's smoke by accident during today's service. Her eyes are watery, and she is paler than usual. She puts on a brave face for the townsfolk, even though she is clearly struggling.

You can have Jandar introduce the characters to the mayor or have her experience a coughing fit while they are nearby. Read aloud or paraphrase the following:

A grandmotherly woman with a friendly smile and a tightly wound grey bun is fighting a heavy cough, tears streaming from her reddened eyes. A concerned young man holds her arm while she recovers, and she smiles weakly at him in thanks. "Oh, I'm fine, I'm fine," she says while waving a trembling hand in dismissal. "I was just a bit too close to the incense burner at service today. I must be allergic to the new mix of herbs they're using. It was such a lovely service, though, from what little I could see. I just need to use my fan to keep it away next time."

### POISON SMOKE

Mary allows the characters to examine her with a successful **VDC Charisma (Persuasion)** check. Characters proficient in Medicine or who succeed on a **DC 15 Intelligence (Medicine)** check recognize the obvious effects of exposure to an airborne poison. Any mention of poison or ill intent is quickly brushed aside as she states: "it was just a bad mix of herbs."



## CLUE 3: MUSIC

The Pontiff is weakened by thunder damage and is skittish around excessively loud noises. The cathedral organ typically used during services hasn't been used for weeks. Only a few congregants notice its absence, as most only care about their chances of being chosen for enlightenment.

### LORENZO THE BARD

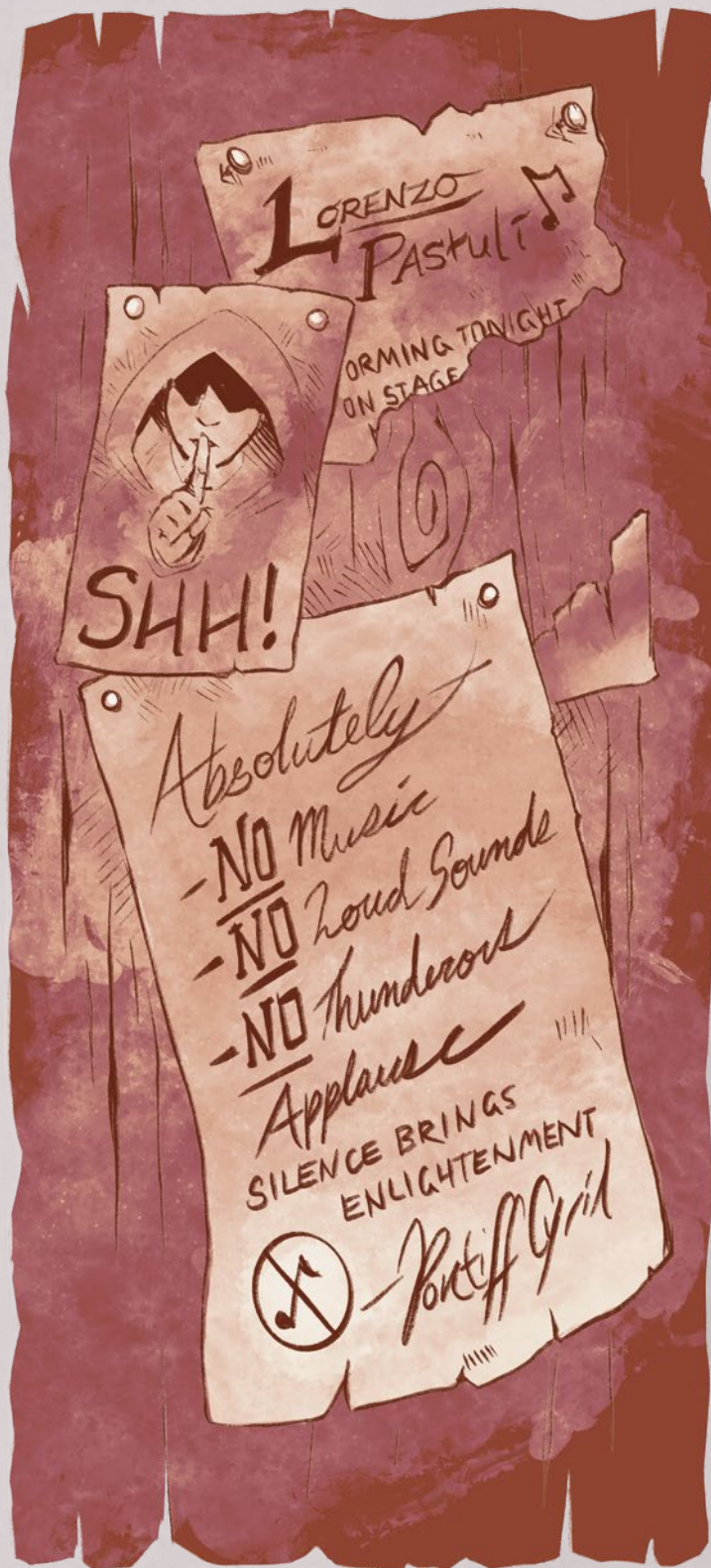
Lorenzo Pastuli (NG half-elf **commoner**) has been Cresthill's organ player for over three decades. Lorenzo was born blind, and music is his life. He was devastated when the clergy told him he was not allowed to play. The priests said music was a distraction and silent contemplation was the way to enlightenment. The bard is now attempting to give a performance, which is causing controversy among the townsfolk.

As the characters walk past Lorenzo's stage, read aloud the following:

The strum of a lute mingles perfectly with the throaty baritone of a half-elf bard perched on a small stage. His performance is brief, and the joy on his face is clear as he sings a song of hope and faith. Many in the crowd are smiling and nodding along with the music, but a few look upset. A pair of young men look visibly offended, and one whispers angrily, "What is he doing? Music is not the way to enlightenment. They took the organ away from him and yet he still plays?"

### SOUND OF MUSIC

The young men don't want to talk with the characters, but a successful **VDC Charisma (Persuasion or Intimidation)** check convinces them to explain their statement. They explain they overheard a priest saying she was severely reprimanded after dropping a tray of plates near the Pontiff, breaking his concentration. Soon after, the Pontiff banned all loud noises, especially music, within the cathedral.



HANDOUT 3. THE PONTIFF'S ORDERS



# THE BATTLE AHEAD

The battle with the Pontiff is divided into three distinct waves. During the first wave, the Pontiff remains protected behind a magic shield while its wax guardians come to life. Once the guardians are defeated or the shield is destroyed, the Pontiff forms new wax guardians from the molten corpses of the first wave. The final wave begins when the Pontiff draws upon its divine spark in a last-ditch effort to survive, entering its mythic state.

**Helping Hand.** Jandar is the only **priest** that managed to escape the Pontiff's influence, and he is horrified at what has happened to the Archbishop. While he won't join the fight directly, he can assist a character at any time during the battle at the GM's discretion. This can be with a *potion of healing* (normal, greater, or superior at 4th, 9th, or 16th level, respectively) or by casting *lesser restoration* or *dispel magic* (**Vmod**).



## ENTERING THE CATHEDRAL

The Grand Cathedral is closed during the festivities while the Pontiff contemplates who will be chosen for the private service. The celebration lasts two hours and concludes with a pie-eating contest, in which the characters may choose to participate.

### PRIVATE SERVICE

The last three contestants, along with three other random townsfolk, are chosen to enter the private service to meet the Pontiff. Jandar and the characters are invited to attend, regardless of whether they won the contest. The private service is held the following morning, giving the characters time to enjoy the remaining festivities and rest if needed.

The next morning, the group is escorted to the cathedral's front doors by a pair of smiling priests and ushered inside. Read aloud or paraphrase the following when the characters enter the cathedral:

A note on the cathedral's ornately carved doors reads, "Absolutely no music, loud sounds, or thunderous applause - Pontiff Cyril." They swing open on silent hinges to reveal a temple filled with a rainbow kaleidoscope of light. True to its name, the Emyreal Solar's cathedral is filled with sunlight streaming down through stained-glass windows and illuminating the recently polished pews. Carved statues gaze across from niches in each wall, many holding large amber candles. The handful of townsfolk whisper among themselves excitedly, and Jandar walks into the centre of the pews with a smile, saying, "It's good to be home." The two priests ask you to make yourselves comfortable while they inform the Pontiff.

The townsfolk gather in the centre of the church to pray and await the arrival of the Pontiff. Jandar brings the characters to the front of the church and points to various stained glass windows, telling the stories they display. His tale of Bernard the Stone describes how the martyr was crushed for a year under a boulder without renouncing his faith. He points to another window that depicts Lilly the Charitable, a former pirate who found her faith on her deathbed and donated her massive wealth to help build this cathedral. He notes that there are many more candles than when he was last here.





## GRAND CATHEDRAL

The Church of the Empyrean Solar's Grand Cathedral has stood on the hill overlooking Cresthill for the better part of two centuries. Its intricate stonework supports twin arched towers, the highest constructed viewpoints for miles. Stained glass windows depicting scenes of the Empyrean Solar faith cast a rainbow of colours throughout the main temple during the day, and candles fill the interior with warm light throughout the night.

### A WARM RECEPTION

Years of prayer has blessed the cathedral with ambient divine magic. Once the wax elemental absorbed the Archbishop, it transformed the holy sanctuary's magic into its personal lair of waxen brilliance.

**Difficult Terrain.** The main temple is filled with pews and other furniture; areas containing furniture are considered difficult terrain.

## THE PONTIFF

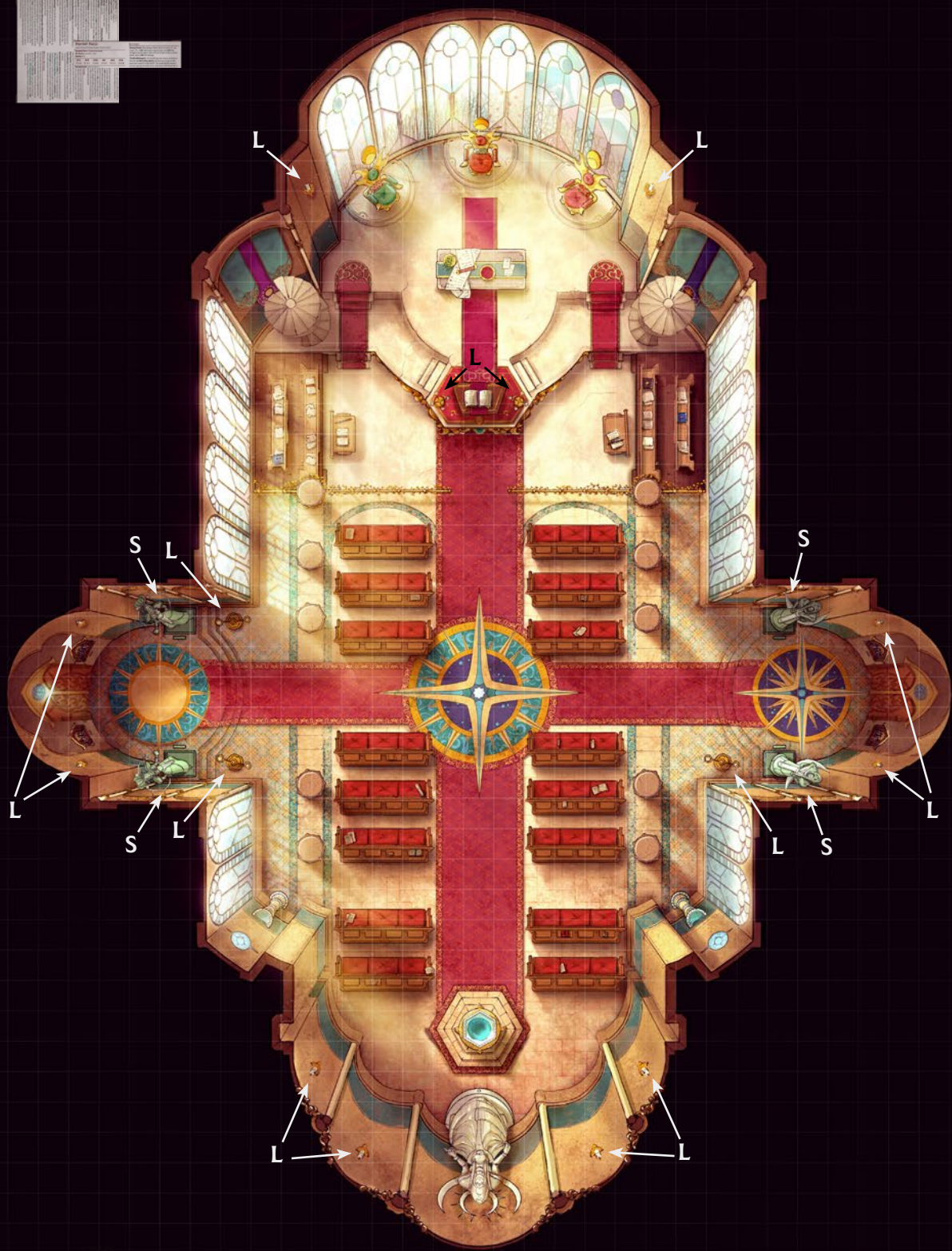
The Pontiff is a Large humanoid-shaped wax elemental infused with divine magic which absorbed the Archbishop of the Church of the Empyrean Solar. It is a shapechanger that disguises itself as the Archbishop and only reveals its true form to those it has deemed worthy of "enlightenment."

In that form, it has four arms supporting lit candles along their length and sports a large flaming candle on its head. The Pontiff's body movements appear as if the wax is flowing instead of bending at the joints, allowing it to invert itself and instantly turn its back into its front.

Since the wax elemental was exposed to scripture and verse for most of its existence, the Pontiff speaks sermonically. In its maniacal state of mind, the Pontiff believes it must bring peace and "enlightenment" to the world through its divine flame.



Legend:  
 L = Locked  
 S = Secret  
 T = Trap  
 A = Alarmed  
 B = Bait  
 C = Concealment  
 D = Disguise  
 E = Evasion  
 F = Force  
 G = Glamour  
 H = Hiding  
 I = Illusion  
 J = Journey  
 K = Knowledge  
 L = Luck  
 M = Magic  
 N = Nature  
 O = Observation  
 P = Persuasion  
 Q = Quiet  
 R = Resistance  
 S = Stealth  
 T = Trickery  
 U = Unseen  
 V = Vexation  
 W = Willpower  
 X = Xenoglossy  
 Y = Yarn  
 Z = Zeal



1 SQUARE = 5 FEET

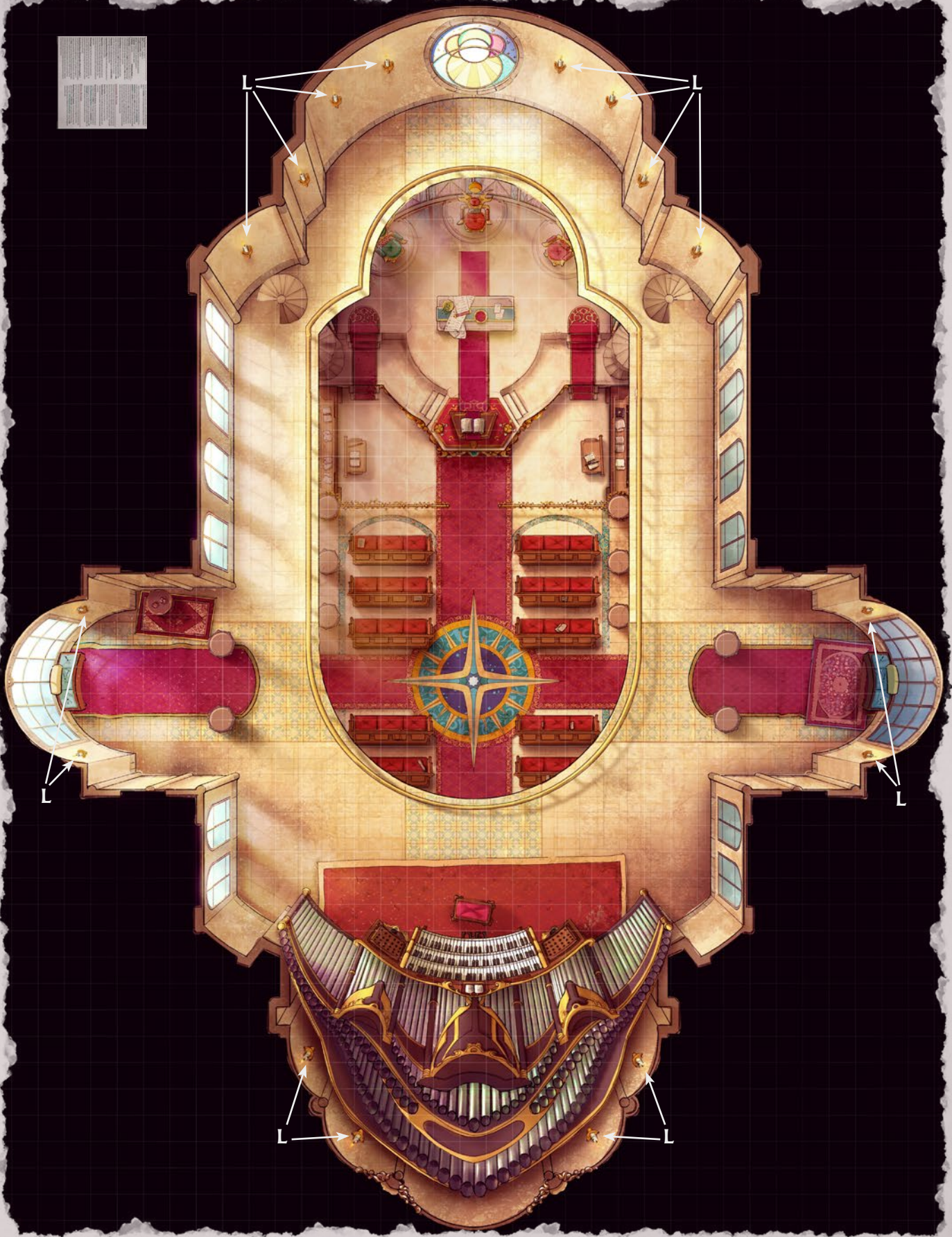
CARTOGRAPHER (BOTH MAPS):  
CZE & PEKU

MAP 1. GRAND CATHEDRAL  
LOWER FLOOR

CZE & PEKU



This map shows the upper floor of the Grand Cathedral. The central area is the main nave, which is a large, open space with a high ceiling. The nave is flanked by two long, narrow aisles on each side. The front of the cathedral features a large, ornate altar and a massive organ. The rear of the cathedral has a large, circular apse with a stained glass window. The map includes various rooms, corridors, and architectural details.



MAP 2. GRAND CATHEDRAL - UPPER FLOOR



## LAIR ACTIONS

So long as the Pontiff is in its lair, it can evoke the ambient magic to take lair actions. The saving throw DC and damage of the lair actions depend on the level of the adventure, as shown in the Variable Lair Action Statistics table.

### VARIABLE LAIR ACTION STATISTICS

Hunt Level	VDC	Vdam
4th	12	3 (1d6)
9th	15	10 (3d6)
14th	16	14 (4d6)

**Lair Actions.** On initiative count 20 (losing initiative ties), the Pontiff takes one of the following lair actions; the Pontiff can't take the same lair action two rounds in a row:

- ♦ **Render.** The Pontiff points to a wax guardian that it can see within **15 feet** of it, causing it to melt. The Pontiff regains hit points equal to the wax guardian's remaining hit points. The wax guardian is destroyed as its essence is absorbed into the Pontiff.
- ♦ **Flash.** The Pontiff intensifies the cathedral's luminosity in a blinding flash. Non-constructs within **20 feet** of the lair's bright light sources (marked on the maps with an L) must succeed on a **VDC Constitution saving throw** or be **blinded** until the end of their next turn.
- ♦ **Wax Floor.** The Pontiff points to a **10-foot square** on the lair's ground that it can see within **30 feet** of it. The area turns into 2-foot-deep wax that is difficult terrain. Each creature in that area when the wax appears must succeed on a **VDC Dexterity saving throw** or sink into the wax and become **restrained**. A creature can use its action to attempt a **VDC Strength** check, freeing itself or another creature within its reach and ending the restrained condition on a success. On initiative count 20 of the following round, the wax hardens, the area is no longer difficult terrain, and the DC to free a restrained creature increases to **VDC + 3**.

## WAVE 1: SERVANT OF LIGHT

The Pontiff arrives in the guise of Archbishop Cyril shortly after the clergy leave the cathedral's main chamber, a few minutes after the group enters the church. Read the following:

The graceful Pontiff steps through the doors at the back of the room and into the church wearing a beatific smile that bares yellowed teeth. He raises his arms in greeting, his warm, kindly voice enveloping the small group, "Welcome to the Empyrean Solar, fair townsfolk. You lucky few have been selected. My! Jandar, my son! You have finally returned," he says, breaking off from his measured, gracious cadence into an excited chatter. "Did you collect the tithe of candles we were promised?" he asks through an oddly rictus grin.

"Why certainly, father. They're just outside," responds Jandar, face beaming as he strides towards his pater.

"Excellent, then we may proceed!" With each gliding step forward, the archbishop's skin begins to sag and droop. The smile never wavers as the flesh around it begins to melt and bubble as if heated from within. In only seconds, a monstrous figure made of melting wax and flame stands in his place, gripping a golden staff and smoking thurible. Its gaping grin doesn't move as a screeching voice intones, "Behold your true Pontiff! I am your path to glory! Thou shalt be welcome in the light!"

The townsfolk gasp in horror as they trip over themselves to escape the unholy creature. Jandar pulls them aside, his face a pale mask of disbelief. The Pontiff looks down upon you, eyes flicking to your weapons. "Foolish heretics! You cannot stop the enlightenment! Protect me, my children!" It raises its golden staff, and a shimmering bubble appears around the flaming wax creature, lifting it high in the air. The statues around the church begin to move, exposing rune-engraved wax beneath a false veneer of stone!

**Protective Bubble.** The pontiff creates a bubble around itself sustained by four statues (marked 'S' on Map 1). It has the statistics of a *resilient sphere* that is unaffected by the *disintegrate* spell. Characters with a **passive Wisdom (Perception)** score of VDC - 2 or higher notice that four statues within the cathedral are now holding glowing spheres in their palms that



resemble the protective bubble around the Pontiff. These four, smaller spheres are immune to psychic, poison, and radiant damage and each has an AC and hit points determined by the level of the adventure, as detailed in the Light Spheres table. Destroying all four spheres destroys the Pontiff's bubble.

#### LIGHT SPHERES

Adventure Level	Armour Class	Hit Points
4th	12	10
9th	15	21
14th	16	42

**Organ.** The Pontiff's bubble can also be destroyed by creating a reverberant noise with the church organ on the second floor. A character within 5 feet of the organ can use its action each round to make a **DC 11 Intelligence** check to play the instrument, and a character with proficiency with any musical instrument automatically succeeds on this check. When the organ is successfully played for 2 consecutive rounds, the soundwaves reverberate across the bubble, dispersing its magical effects and exposing the Pontiff who screeches in agony.

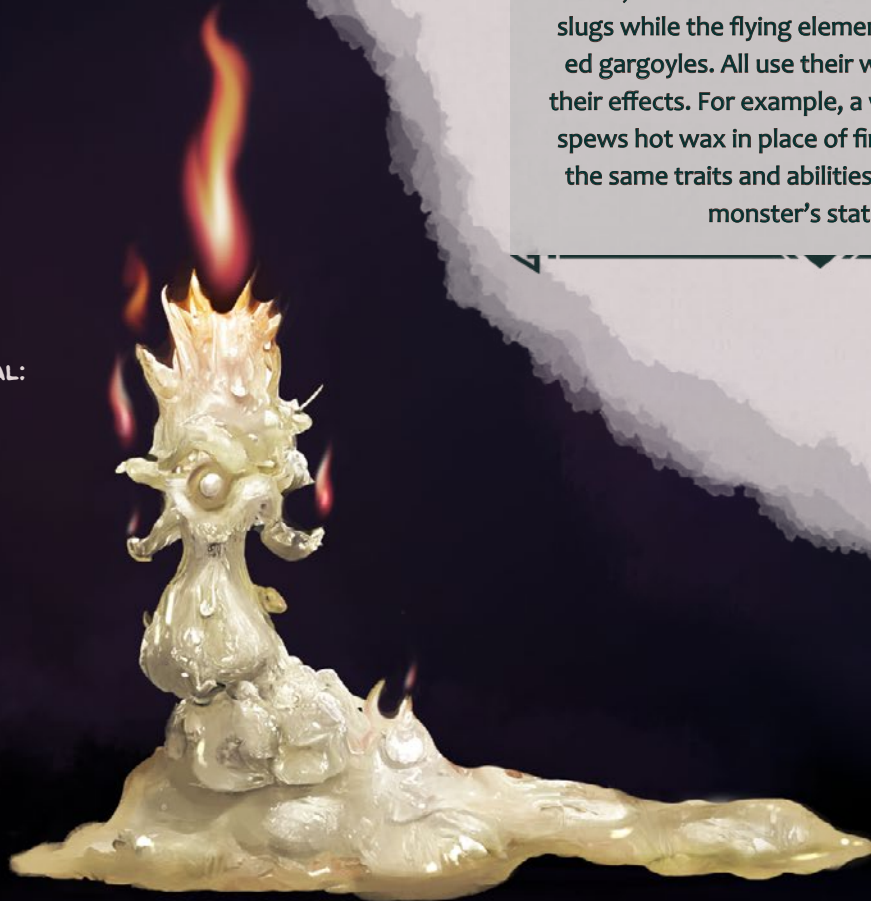
## WAX ELEMENTALS

The Pontiff used special wax to create magical elementals spread throughout the cathedral and disguised as statues. When a wax elemental is referenced in the adventure text, it uses the statistics of the referenced monster with the following modifications:

- It is an elemental.
- It is **immune** to the charmed, exhaustion, frightened, paralyzed, petrified, and poisoned conditions as well as poison damage.
- It is **immune** to any spell or effect that would alter its form.
- It has **advantage** on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.
- Its weapon attacks are magical.
- Whenever the construct is subjected to fire damage, its weapon attacks deal **Vdam** additional fire damage on a hit until the end of its next turn.
- Whenever the construct is subjected to cold damage, its speed is halved and it can't take reactions until the start of its next turn.

The elementals have one of two molten appearances; land-based elementals appear as waxen slugs while the flying elementals look like melted gargoyles. All use their wax body to create their effects. For example, a wax magma mephit spews hot wax in place of fire. It otherwise has the same traits and abilities as the referenced monster's statistics.

WAX ELEMENTAL:  
WALKING







WAX ELEMENTAL:  
FLYING

## ENEMIES

The wax elementals (see “Wax Elementals” sidebar) appear in advantageous locations to attack the party. The level of the adventure determines the makeup of each wave.

**Level 4.** At 4th level, the wave 1 enemies are:

- 1 **Pontiff Poco**\* (CR 3; in a protective sphere and takes no actions)
- 2 wax elemental **animated armors** (CR 1)
- 4 wax elemental **magma mephits** (CR ½)

**Level 9.** At 9th level, the wave 1 enemies are:

- 1 **Pontiff Preceptor**\* (CR 7; in a protective sphere and takes no actions)
- 4 wax elemental **knights** (CR 3)
- 3 wax elemental **gargoyles** (CR 2)

**Level 14.** At 14th level, the wave 1 enemies are:

- 1 **Pontiff Candela**\* (CR 13; in a protective sphere and takes no actions)
- 1 wax elemental **stone golem** (CR 10)
- 2 wax elemental **shield guardians** (CR 7; ignore Bound and Spell Storing traits)
- 2 wax elemental **shambling mounds** (CR 5)

\*See Appendix C

## TACTICS

The Pontiff remains safe in its floating sphere, taunting the characters with deranged prophecies while the wax elementals attack. The wax elementals fight without any sense of self-preservation.

## END OF WAVE

The triggers to end wave 1 are any of the following:

- All wax elementals are defeated.
- The Pontiff’s protective bubble is destroyed.

On initiative count 20 after the end to wave 1 is triggered, wave 2 begins.



## WAVE 2: GUARDIAN OF TRUTH

The Pontiff has no choice but to lower its protective shield and deal with the characters directly. Whether the protective sphere is destroyed or the wax elementals are defeated, the Pontiff directs the energy released by its dissolving sphere to reform the destroyed wax creatures into new shapes in locations of the Pontiff's choosing. Read aloud the following:

The wax creature, now bereft of its protective sphere, slams the butt of its staff onto the marble floor with a high-pitched scream of rage. "Thou makest a mockery of the light! Thou shalt burn for thine heresies!"

### ENEMIES

The wax elementals (see "Wax Elementals" sidebar, page 13) form in the unoccupied spaces closest to the Pontiff.

**Level 4.** At 4th level, the wave 2 enemies are:

- 1 **Pontiff Poco\*** (CR 3)
- 4 wax elemental **gray oozes** (CR ½; no Corrode Metal trait)

**Level 9.** At 9th level, the wave 2 enemies are:

- 1 **Pontiff Preceptor\*** (CR 7)
- 1 wax elemental **shambling mound** (CR 5)
- 3 wax elemental **gargoyles** (CR 2)

**Level 14.** At 14th level, the wave 2 enemies are:

- 1 **Pontiff Candela\*** (CR 13)
- 1 wax elemental **shield guardian** (CR 7; ignore Bound and Spell Storing traits)
- 3 wax elemental **shambling mounds** (CR 5)

\*See Appendix C

### TACTICS

The Pontiff uses its *Thurible* action to blind and choke the characters while new wax golems swarm them. It isn't afraid to engage in melee and shouts scriptures of doom and destruction upon the party as it attacks. When the Pontiff is damaged, it uses its *Render lair* action on the nearest golem to heal itself.

### END OF WAVE

This wave ends once the Pontiff is reduced to 0 hit points and its mythic state is triggered. Wave 3 begins immediately.



THE PONTIFF



## WAVE 3: THE SHATTERED DIVINE

The divine energy that runs through the Pontiff emanates in a shockwave, and each character must succeed on a **VDC Strength saving throw** or be knocked **prone**. The power shatters the stained glass windows in the church and draws the broken shards towards the Pontiff, shrouding it in the razor-sharp glass.

Read aloud the following:

A blinding blast of light bursts from the wax creature's bubbling body, quickly followed by a shockwave that rocks the cathedral and shatters every stained-glass window. The energy wave suddenly reverses back to the creature, pulling the glass shards with it and embedding them into the molten wax. The creature raises its hands high as its flames roar to life once more and it screams, "The light is with me! YOU SHALL BE ENLIGHTENED!"

### ENEMIES

The wax elementals (see "Wax Elementals" sidebar) form in the unoccupied spaces closest to the Pontiff.

**Level 4.** At 4th level, the wave 3 enemies are:

- 1 **Pontiff Poco\*** (CR 3)
- 2 wax elemental **animated armors** (CR 1)

**Level 9.** At 9th level, the wave 3 enemies are:

- 1 **Pontiff Preceptor\*** (CR 7)
- 3 wax elemental **black puddings** (CR 4)

**Level 14.** At 14th level, the wave 3 enemies are:

- 1 **Pontiff Candela\*** (CR 13)
- 4 wax elemental **shield guardians** (CR 7 ignore Bound and Spell Storing traits)

\*See Appendix C

### TACTICS

The Pontiff first uses its **Thurible** to blind the characters or its **Wax Splash** legendary action to restrain them. This imposes disadvantage on their **Dexterity saving throws**, likely increasing the effectiveness of a follow-up **Shard Spray** action.

### END OF WAVE

This wave ends once the Pontiff is reduced to 0 hit points. Once this occurs, any remaining wax elementals instantly melt into puddles.

The wax creature's body begins to bubble and heave with a shudder that sends glass shards skittering across the floor. It looks up to the open sky through a shattered window, "Did I... did I do well? Did I bring... enlightenment?" it says brokenly as it melts onto the floor.

### OPTIONAL ENDING: ELEMENTAL RIFT

If you are running this as a one-shot adventure, you may wish to up the stakes the characters face after defeating the Pontiff. This gives the characters a finality to their story beyond defeating the monster. One way to accomplish this is to create an overly-dramatic event when the Pontiff is defeated. For example, the Pontiff's divine spark cracks open a rift into the Elemental Plane of Wax where it originated from. A wave of molten wax begins to fill the cathedral and the characters must save not only themselves, but the villagers huddled in the corner. Will they perish in the rescue attempt? Or will the townsfolk blame them for the death of their revered community leader and destruction of their cathedral? Give the players an opportunity to conclude their stories.



## AFTERMATH

After defeating the Pontiff, the clergy reacts in horror to being deceived. The party can inspect the Archbishop's chambers where the Pontiff had been staying to learn more information and find a few treasures. See the Treasure section below for an example of what the characters find.

Here are some additional developments that occur after this adventure:

- Cresthill's residents are appalled at discovering the clergy had tricked them, even if they themselves were tricked.
- The Empyrean Solar's reputation declines until Jandar is raised to the position of Archbishop and begins to rebuild the lost trust.
- The church builds an empty tomb as a memorial to those who were lost.
- The church swears off the use of candles. Oil lanterns become popular in Cresthill and the surrounding area.
- If this adventure follows the optional Motes of the Divine story arc (see "Motes of the Divine" on page 1), Archbishop Cyril's journal (see Treasure) details his encounters with a stranger named Creo while researching divine energy. Creo abruptly left without a word right before the wax elemental became self-aware enough to talk.

## CRAFTING

The following unique items can be crafted from the Pontiff's components.

### PONTIFF CRAFTABLE ITEMS

Item	Item Type	Rarity	Attunement	Components	Essence	Value*
Candlebrand Ring	Ring	Uncommon	—	Pontiff's molten eye, volatile mote of wax	Frail	400 gp
		Rare			Robust	1,400 gp
		Very rare			Potent	6,500 gp
Candlelight Mitre	Wondrous item	Uncommon	Required	Pontiff's candleplume	Frail	900 gp
		Rare			Robust	3,500 gp
		Very rare			Potent	13,000 gp
Waxen Sceptre	Rod, staff, or wand	Uncommon	Required	Elemental core of wax	Frail	950 gp
		Rare			Robust	3,000 gp
		Very rare			Potent	13,500 gp

\*This is the 'off-the-shelf' purchase cost and can vary significantly from the crafting cost.

## TREASURE

Inside Archbishop Cyril's office is a mess of melted wax covering every surface. One of the few wax-free books is a leatherbound journal detailing the wax elemental's evolution as told from the Archbishop's perspective. Inside a chest are magical candles (see Appendix A). The priests insist that the characters take the candles away.

### MAGICAL CANDLES

Hunt Level	Magical Candles
4th	Bloodwax
9th	Arcanowax, bloodwax
14th	Arcanowax, bloodwax, candle of potency

## HARVESTING

The following unique components can be harvested from the Pontiff, in addition to those normal for an elemental.

### PONTIFF HARVEST TABLE

Component DC	Components
5	Pontiff's molten eye (up to 2)
15	Volatile mote of wax <sup>v</sup> (up to 3)
20	Pontiff's candleplume
25	Elemental core of wax <sup>v</sup>



# APPENDIX A - MAGIC ITEMS

## ARCANOWAX

*Wondrous item, rare*

*Component: fat from the creature types against which it protects (celestial, fey, fiend, undead)*

Due to the crippling expensive reagents required to make such a candle—namely oils from celestials, fey, fiends, and undead—the Fantastical Bureau of Investigation keeps these under tight wraps. Evidence of a tangible threat of extraplanar interference must be presented to a Bureau director before such a requisition is granted, leading to a thriving trade in *arcanowax* knockoffs on the grey market.

When found, an arcanowax candle has **2d4 + 2** charges. As an action, you can light the candle, expending **1 charge** and causing it to cast bright light in a **10-foot-radius, 20-foot-tall cylinder** centred on the candle for the next **hour**. For the duration, the area becomes a *magic circle*, affecting celestials, fey, fiends, and undead.

A creature can use its action to snuff out a candle within its reach that isn't being held by another creature. If the candle is held by another creature, the creature trying to snuff out the candle must succeed on its choice of a **Strength (Athletics)** or **Dexterity (Sleight of Hand)** check contested by the holding creature's choice of **Strength (Athletics)** or **Dexterity (Acrobatics)**. The candle's effects end immediately when the candle is snuffed out.

**Uncommon variant:** The candle is made of a cheap, fast-burning wax and the oil of only one creature. Reduce the number of charges to **1d4 + 1**. Roll a **d4** to randomly determine which type of creature the magic circle protects against:

d4	Creature
1	Celestial
2	Fey
3	Fiend
4	Undead

## BLOODWAX

*Wondrous item, uncommon*

*Component: celestial (couatl) fat*

Take one enchanted bloodwax candle, add to it one drop of a target creature's blood, and, as an action, light. For the next **48 hours**, or until the candle is extinguished, a ghastly red trail hangs in the air leading directly to the creature from whom the drop of blood was taken.

Once the candle has burnt for **48 hours** in total, it is depleted and cannot be used again. Each time the candle is lit and extinguished, a minimum of one hour's worth of wax is consumed.

This trail can't pass through solids or liquids and is undisturbed by wind of any strength. The candle cannot distinguish between identical twins or clones and instead creates a trail to each. If the creature is a construct, or the creature is on another plane, the pall of red smoke listlessly hangs in the air.

ARCANOWAX



BLOODWAX







CANDLE OF  
POTENCY



CANDLEBRAND  
RING

## CANDLE OF POTENCY

*Wondrous item, very rare*

*Component: celestial (planetary) fat*

Angel's tearwax is formed of fat rendered from creatures naturally resistant to magic, and infused with tears extracted from the eyes of celestials. Emulsified in a solution of holy water, this candle blooms with holy energy when lit, inhibiting harmful magic.

When found, a candle of potency has **2d4 + 2** charges.

As an action, you can light the candle, expending **1 charge** and causing it to cast bright golden light in a **30-foot-radius sphere** for the next **10 minutes**. If the candle remains lit after this duration elapses, an additional charge is consumed and the effects continue for another 10 minutes. For the duration, each creature in the area has **advantage** on saving throws against spells and other magical effects. Additionally, when an affected creature is subjected to a spell or magical effect that allows it to make a saving throw to take only half damage, it instead takes no damage if it succeeds on the saving throw.

A creature can use its action to snuff out a candle within its reach that isn't being held by another creature. If the candle is held by another creature, the creature trying to snuff out the candle must succeed on a **Strength (Athletics)** or **Dexterity (Sleight of Hand)** check contested by the holding creature's **Strength (Athletics)** or **Dexterity (Acrobatics)**. The candle's effects end immediately when the candle is snuffed out.

## CANDLEBRAND RING

*Ring, rare*

*Component: Pontiff's molten eye, volatile mote of wax*

With a word, this two-finger signet ring becomes incandescent with the heat of the Pontiff's ire. Its brand can bless a creature or, if the brand is twisted and distorted in the process of being applied, curse the creature.

This ring has **3 charges** and regains **1d3** expended charges daily at dawn. As a bonus action while wearing the ring, you can speak the ring's command word, causing the waxen god's emblem to become searing hot until you remove it, or until you use a bonus action to repeat its command word and deactivate it.

**Brand of Protection.** While the ring is heated, you can use a bonus action to touch it to a willing creature within your reach and expend **1 charge**. The target takes **1d4** fire damage and gains the benefits of the *shield of faith* spell for **10 minutes** (no concentration required).

**Brand of Castigation.** While the ring is heated, you can use an action to make a melee spell attack (+7 to hit) against a creature within **5 feet** of you and expend **1 charge**. On a hit, the creature takes **2d4** fire damage and is cursed for **1 minute**. While cursed in this way, its AC is reduced by 2. The creature can make a **DC 15 Charisma saving throw** at the end of each of its turns, ending the curse on a success.

**Uncommon variant:** You must concentrate on the effects of the brands, as if on a spell.

**Very rare variant:** Increase the charges to 5 and the recharge to **1d4 + 1**.



## CANDLELIGHT MITRE

Wondrous item, rare (requires attunement)

Component: Pontiff's candleplume

The ruthless Priests of Candlelight, a sect dedicated to the waxkin of the Plane of Wax, continued to worship the Pontiff after its demise. Their Creed Sanitari dictates that such acolytes must sear their flesh daily to remain pure and worthy of their dopelgänger's attentions. They display the uncaring visage of their waxen god on this intricate ceremonial hat.

This hat has **4 charges** and regains **1d4** expended charges daily at dawn.

**Cleanse the Sins.** While wearing the hat, you can use a bonus action to expend **1 charge** and light a searing flame at the top of it. For **1 minute**, or until you use a bonus action to put it out, this flame casts bright light in a **15-foot radius** and dim light for an additional **15 feet**. At the end of each of your turns while this effect is active, each creature in the flame's bright light (including you) must succeed on a **DC 15 Constitution saving throw** or take **3d6** fire damage.

**Burn the Lies.** While wearing the hat, you can use an action to expend **1 charge** and cause two orbs of flame to form in the mitre's eyes, taking **2d6** fire damage in the process. This effect lasts for **1 minute** or until you use a bonus action to end it. While the mask's eyes are ablaze, you have **advantage** on **Insight** and **Intimidation** checks, you can see invisible creatures and objects, and you automatically pierce through visual illusions.

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**Uncommon variant:** Reduce the Cleanse the Sins property's **DC** to **13** and the damage to **2d6**. The Burn the Lies property costs **2 charges** to use.

**Very rare variant:** Increase the **DC** to **16**, the **charges** to **6**, and the recharge to **1d6**.



CANDLELIGHT  
MITRE



## WAXEN SCEPTRE

Rod, staff, or wand, rare (requires attunement)

Component: elemental core of wax

Sinister yet holy, the Pontiff lives on in this device, blessing those who endure its molten ministrations. When lit, the candle smoke of this sceptre carries the subtle, sweet scent of charred flesh, while its tendrils form the screaming visages of those previously 'enlightened' by its forebear.

This item has **4 charges** and regains **1d4** expended charges daily at dawn.

**Wax On.** As an action while holding this item, you can expend **1 charge** to drop some wax from one of its candles on a willing creature within **5 feet** of you. The effects of this wax depend on the colour of the candle you choose.

- ♦ **White.** The wax of this cleansing candle seeps into the skin to purify the body. The creature gains the benefits of the *lesser restoration* spell.
- ♦ **Orange.** The wax of this warding candle expands to form a protective layer over the creature. The creature gains the benefits of the *barkskin* spell for **10 minutes** (no concentration required).
- ♦ **Red.** The wax of this overbearing candle forms a barrier over the creature's mouth, preventing it from telling any lies but letting the truth pass. The creature is under the effects of the *zone of truth* spell for **10 minutes**.

**Uncommon variant:** The item has no charges. Instead, after the wax from a candle has been used, that candle can't be used again until the next dawn. Dropping wax on a creature deals **1d10** fire damage to it in addition to its other effects.

**Very rare variant:** Increase the charges to **6** and the recharge to **1d4 + 2**. The item has the Living Candle property.

**Living Candle.** As an action while holding this item, you can expend **2 charges** to cast the *living candle* spell (save **DC 16**; see Appendix B).



WAXEN SCEPTRE



# APPENDIX B - SPELLS

## LIVING CANDLE

*4th-level conjuration*

**Casting Time:** 1 action

**Range:** 90 feet

**Components:** V, S, M (some wax)

**Duration:** Concentration, up to 1 minute

**Classes:** Sorcerer, Warlock, Wizard

You point at a creature you can see within range, causing a swirl of molten wax to surround the creature and gathering hair, clothes, and debris into a wick atop its head. The creature must make a **Strength saving throw**. On a failure, it takes **5d8** fire damage as it becomes **restrained** and encased within the wax until the spell ends, its wick lighting with hungry flames. On a success, the creature takes half as much damage and isn't restrained.

At the end of each of its turns, a restrained creature takes **2d8** fire damage. The restrained creature, or a creature within **5 feet** of it, can use its action to make a **Strength** check against your spell save DC, freeing the restrained creature and ending the spell on a success.

**At Higher Levels.** When you cast this spell using a spell slot of 5th level or higher, the initial and ongoing damage increases by **1d8** for each slot level above 4th.

## TRUTHFLAME

*3rd-level abjuration*

**Casting Time:** 1 action

**Range:** 90 feet (20-foot-radius sphere)

**Components:** V, S

**Duration:** 10 minutes

**Classes:** Bard, Cleric, Paladin

You create a magical zone filled with tiny floating lights in a **20-foot-radius sphere** centred on a point of your choice within range. The zone is brightly lit and guards against deception. Until the spell ends, a creature that speaks a deliberate lie while in the zone must make a **Charisma saving throw**. On a failed saving throw, a creature takes **3d6** psychic damage and **3d6** radiant damage, and, if it has legwear, the clothing begins to smoulder. The legwear of a creature that fails three saving throws against this spell while within the zone sets aflame and the

creature takes **1d6** fire damage at the start of each of its turns until the flames are extinguished. You know whether each creature succeeds or fails on its saving throw.

An affected creature is aware of the spell and can thus avoid answering questions to which it would normally respond with a lie. Such a creature can be evasive in its answers as long as it remains within the boundaries of the truth.

**At Higher Levels.** When you cast this spell using a spell slot of 4th level or higher, the fire damage and your choice of either psychic or radiant damage increases by **1d6** for each slot level above 3rd.

## WAX TOMB

*1st-level conjuration*

**Casting Time:** 1 action

**Range:** 60 feet

**Components:** V, S, M (some wax)

**Duration:** 1 minute

**Classes:** Bard, Sorcerer, Warlock, Wizard

You point at a Medium or smaller creature you can see within range, causing a torrent of molten wax to pour over it. The creature must succeed on a **Strength saving throw** or have its speed reduced to **0 feet**. A creature that fails the saving throw by 5 or more is also **restrained** for the duration. A creature affected by this spell, or a creature within **5 feet** of it, can use its action to make a **Strength** check against your spell save DC, freeing the affected creature and ending the spell on a success.

**At Higher Levels.** When you cast this spell using a spell slot of 3rd level or higher, the maximum size of creature you can target increases by one category, from Medium to Large, for example, for every two slot levels above 1st.



# APPENDIX C - CREATURES

## WAX ELEMENTALS

A demiplane bridging the Material Plane and Elemental Chaos, the Plane of Wax is called home by a curious array of lipid-based creatures. It is said that every living creature of the Material Plane has a waxen analogue, a doppelgänger with an eerily-fixed smile and glossy skin. Referred to as waxkin, these elementals can draw on the thoughts and memories of their material analogue, though without the same moral and ethical restraints.

## PONTIFF

The Pontiff began life as an ancient elemental bound to the service of the Empyrean Solar. Upon being infused with divine energy, this elemental's new-found sentience focused on the tenet to which it had been exposed for centuries: enlightening others. As is the case with creatures from the Plane of Wax, the creature took this as a literal instruction detached from moral and ethical restraints, and melted the congregation, adding their fat to its own body.





## PONTIFF POCO

Large elemental (shapechanger), lawful neutral

**Armour Class** 12 (natural armour)

**Hit Points** 75 (10d10 + 20)

**Speed** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+3)	12 (+1)	15 (+2)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)	16 (+3)

**Saving Throws** Con +4, Cha +5

**Skills** Deception +7, Religion +3

**Damage Immunities** poison

**Condition Immunities** blinded, frightened, poisoned

**Senses** blindsight 120 ft., passive Perception 11

**Languages** Celestial, Common, Ignan

**Challenge** 3 (700 XP) **Proficiency Bonus** +2

**Heated Body.** A creature that touches the Pontiff or hits it with a melee attack while within **5 feet** of it takes 2 (**1d4**) fire damage. If the Pontiff takes fire damage, this trait deals 5 (**2d4**) fire damage until the end of its next turn instead.

**Heated Weapons.** When the Pontiff hits with a metal melee weapon, it deals an extra 3 (**1d6**) fire damage (included in the attack). If the Pontiff takes fire damage, its attacks deal 7 (**2d6**) extra fire damage until the end of its next turn instead.

**Illumination.** The Pontiff sheds bright light in a **20-foot radius** and dim light for an additional 20 feet.

**Legendary Resistance (1/Day).** If the Pontiff fails a saving throw, it can choose to succeed instead.

**Regeneration.** The Pontiff regains **10** hit points at the start of its turn. If the Pontiff takes cold or thunder damage, this trait doesn't function at the start of the Pontiff's next turn. The Pontiff dies only if it starts its turn with 0 hit points and doesn't regenerate.

**Shapechanger.** The Pontiff can use its action to polymorph into a humanoid that it has seen, or back into its true form. Its statistics, other than its size, are the same in each form. Any equipment it is wearing or carrying isn't transformed. It reverts to its true form if it dies.

**Stained Glass Armour (Recharges after a Short or Long Rest).** If the Pontiff would be reduced to 0 hit points, its current hit point total instead resets to **75** hit points, its Thurible recharges, it regains any expended use of Legendary Resistance, and, for the next **hour**, it can use its Mythic Actions alongside its Legendary Actions. In addition, the Pontiff emits a blast of energy that shatters the stained glass windows of its lair and draws the shards into its wax body to form a protective armour. Award a party 1,100 XP (1,800 XP total) for defeating the Pontiff after it uses Stained Glass Armour.

## ACTIONS

**Burning Crosier.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (**1d8 + 3**) bludgeoning damage, or 8 (**1d10 + 3**) bludgeoning damage if used with two hands to make a melee attack, plus 3 (**1d6**) fire damage.

**Thurible (Recharge 6).** The Pontiff lights the incense in its thurible and a **15-foot-radius sphere** of poisonous orange smoke pours out, centred on the Pontiff. The smoke lightly obscures its area, spreads around corners, and moves with the Pontiff. It lasts for **1 minute** or until strong wind disperses it, ending the effect.

When a creature enters the area for the first time on its turn or starts its turn there, it must make a **DC 12 Constitution saving throw**, taking 5 (**2d4**) poison damage and becoming **poisoned for 1 minute** on a failed save, or half as much damage and not becoming poisoned on a successful one. A creature poisoned by the smoke takes 2 (**1d4**) poison damage at the start of each of its turns, and can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on a success. A creature can avoid the effects of the smoke if it holds its breath while in the area or doesn't need to breathe.

## LEGENDARY ACTIONS

The Pontiff can take 3 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action option can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. The Pontiff regains spent legendary actions at the start of its turn.

**Pack Thurible.** The Pontiff rolls to recharge its Thurible.

**Tactical Retreat.** The Pontiff takes the Disengage action and moves up to half its speed. This movement cannot be toward an enemy.

**Wax Splash (Costs 2 Actions).** The Pontiff splashes hot wax at a creature within **10 feet** of it. The target must succeed on a **DC 12 Dexterity saving throw** or become **restrained** in the hardened wax. A creature can take an action to attempt a **DC 12 Strength** check, freeing itself or another creature within its reach and ending the restrained condition on a success.

## MYTHIC ACTIONS

If the Pontiff's Stained Glass Armour trait has activated in the last hour, it can use the option below as a legendary action.

**Shard Spray (Costs 2 Actions).** The Pontiff releases a blast of glass shards in a **20-foot cone**. Each creature in that area must make a **DC 12 Dexterity saving throw**, taking 9 (**2d8**) slashing damage on a failed save or half as much damage on a successful one.



## PONTIFF PRECEPTOR

Large elemental (shapechanger), lawful neutral

**Armour Class** 13 (natural armour)

**Hit Points** 114 (12d10 + 48)

**Speed** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	12 (+1)	18 (+4)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	20 (+5)

**Saving Throws** Con +7, Cha +8

**Skills** Deception +11, Religion +5

**Damage Immunities** poison

**Condition Immunities** blinded, frightened, poisoned

**Senses** blindsight 120 ft., passive Perception 11

**Languages** Celestial, Common, Ignan

**Challenge** 7 (2,900 XP)

**Proficiency Bonus** +3

**Heated Body.** A creature that touches the Pontiff or hits it with a melee attack while within **5 feet** of it takes 4 (1d8) fire damage. If the Pontiff takes fire damage, this trait deals 9 (2d8) fire damage until the end of its next turn instead.

**Heated Weapons.** When the Pontiff hits with a metal melee weapon, it deals an extra 3 (1d6) fire damage (included in the attack). If the Pontiff takes fire damage, its attacks deal 10 (3d6) extra fire damage until the end of its next turn instead.

**Illumination.** The Pontiff sheds bright light in a **20-foot radius** and dim light for an additional 20 feet.

**Legendary Resistance (1/Day).** If the Pontiff fails a saving throw, it can choose to succeed instead.

**Magic Resistance.** The Pontiff has **advantage** on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

**Regeneration.** The Pontiff regains **10** hit points at the start of its turn. If the Pontiff takes cold or thunder damage, this trait doesn't function at the start of the Pontiff's next turn. The Pontiff dies only if it starts its turn with 0 hit points and doesn't regenerate.

**Shapechanger.** The Pontiff can use its action to polymorph into a humanoid that it has seen, or back into its true form. Its statistics, other than its size, are the same in each form. Any equipment it is wearing or carrying isn't transformed. It reverts to its true form if it dies.

**Stained Glass Armour (Recharges after a Short or Long Rest).** If the Pontiff would be reduced to 0 hit points, its current hit point total instead resets to **114** hit points, its Thurible recharges, it regains any expended use of Legendary Resistance, and, for the next **hour**, it can use its Mythic Actions alongside its Legendary Actions. In addition, the Pontiff emits a blast of energy that shatters the stained glass windows of its lair and draws the shards into its wax body to form a protective armour. When the Pontiff takes spell damage, the effect of a 3rd-level *color spray* spell instantly bursts from the Pontiff in a **20-foot-radius sphere** centred on the Pontiff. Award a party 2,900 XP (5,800 XP total) for defeating the Pontiff after it uses Stained Glass Armour.

## ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The Pontiff makes two Burning Crosier attacks.

**Burning Crosier.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (1d8 + 5) bludgeoning damage, or 10 (1d10 + 5) bludgeoning damage if used with two hands to make a melee attack, plus 3 (1d6) fire damage.

**Thurible (Recharge 6).** The Pontiff lights the incense in its thurible and a **15-foot-radius sphere** of poisonous orange smoke pours out, centred on the Pontiff. The smoke lightly obscures its area, spreads around corners, and moves with the Pontiff. It lasts for **1 minute** or until strong wind disperses it, ending the effect.

When a creature enters the area for the first time on its turn or starts its turn there, it must make a **DC 15 Constitution saving throw**, taking 14 (4d6) poison damage and becoming **poisoned** for **1 minute** on a failed save, or half as much damage and not becoming poisoned on a successful one. A creature poisoned by the smoke takes 3 (1d6) poison damage at the start of each of its turns, and can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on a success. A creature can avoid the effects of the smoke if it holds its breath while in the area or doesn't need to breathe.

## LEGENDARY ACTIONS

The Pontiff can take 3 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action option can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. The Pontiff regains spent legendary actions at the start of its turn.

**Pack Thurible.** The Pontiff rolls to recharge its Thurible.

**Tactical Retreat.** The Pontiff takes the Disengage action and moves up to half its speed. This movement cannot be toward an enemy.

**Wax Splash (Costs 2 Actions).** The Pontiff splashes hot wax at a creature within **10 feet** of it. The target must succeed on a **DC 15 Dexterity saving throw** or take 7 (2d6) fire damage and become **restrained** in the hardened wax. A creature can take an action to attempt a **DC 15 Strength** check, freeing itself or another creature within its reach and ending the restrained condition on a success.

## MYTHIC ACTIONS

If the Pontiff's Stained Glass Armour trait has activated in the last hour, it can use the option below as a legendary action.

**Shard Spray (Costs 2 Actions).** The Pontiff releases a blast of glass shards in a **30-foot cone**. Each creature in that area must make a **DC 15 Dexterity saving throw**, taking 13 (3d8) slashing damage on a failed save or half as much damage on a successful one.



## PONTIFF CANDELA

Large elemental (shapechanger), lawful neutral

**Armour Class** 14 (natural armour)

**Hit Points** 168 (16d10 + 80)

**Speed** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
22 (+6)	14 (+2)	21 (+5)	16 (+3)	15 (+2)	24 (+7)

**Saving Throws** Con +10, Cha +12

**Skills** Deception +17, Religion +8

**Damage Immunities** poison

**Condition Immunities** blinded, frightened, poisoned

**Senses** blindsight 120 ft., passive Perception 12

**Languages** Celestial, Common, Ignan

**Challenge** 13 (10,000 XP) **Proficiency Bonus** +5

**Heated Body.** A creature that touches the Pontiff or hits it with a melee attack while within **5 feet** of it takes **5 (1d10)** fire damage. If the Pontiff takes fire damage, this trait deals **11 (2d10)** fire damage until the end of its next turn instead.

**Heated Weapons.** When the Pontiff hits with a metal melee weapon, it deals an extra **7 (2d6)** fire damage (included in the attack). If the Pontiff takes fire damage, its attacks deal **21 (6d6)** extra fire damage until the end of its next turn instead.

**Illumination.** The Pontiff sheds bright light in a **20-foot radius** and dim light for an additional 20 feet.

**Legendary Resistance (3/Day).** If the Pontiff fails a saving throw, it can choose to succeed instead.

**Magic Resistance.** The Pontiff has **advantage** on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

**Regeneration.** The Pontiff regains **10** hit points at the start of its turn. If the Pontiff takes cold or thunder damage, this trait doesn't function at the start of the Pontiff's next turn. The Pontiff dies only if it starts its turn with 0 hit points and doesn't regenerate.

**Shapechanger.** The Pontiff can use its action to polymorph into a humanoid that it has seen, or back into its true form. Its statistics, other than its size, are the same in each form. Any equipment it is wearing or carrying isn't transformed. It reverts to its true form if it dies.

**Stained Glass Armour (Recharges after a Short or Long Rest).** If the Pontiff would be reduced to 0 hit points, its current hit point total instead resets to **168** hit points, its Thurible recharges, it regains **1** expended use of Legendary Resistance, and, for the next **hour**, it can use the options in the "Mythic Actions" section. In addition, the Pontiff emits a blast of energy that shatters the stained glass windows of its lair and draws the shards into its wax body to form a protective armour. When the Pontiff takes damage from a spell, the effect of a 5th-level *color spray* spell instantly bursts in a **20-foot-radius sphere** centred on the Pontiff. Award a party 10,000 XP (20,000 XP total) for defeating the Pontiff after it uses Stained Glass Armour.

## ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The Pontiff makes two burning Crosier attacks.

**Burning Crosier.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* **+11** to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* **15 (2d8 + 6)** bludgeoning damage, or **17 (2d10 + 6)** bludgeoning damage if used with two hands to make a melee attack, plus **7 (2d6)** fire damage.

**Thurible (Recharge 5-6).** The Pontiff lights the incense in its thurible and a **20-foot-radius sphere** of poisonous orange smoke pours out, centred on the Pontiff. The smoke lightly obscures its area, spreads around corners, and moves with the Pontiff. It lasts for **1 minute** or until strong wind disperses it, ending the effect.

When a creature enters the area for the first time on its turn or starts its turn there, it must make a **DC 18 Constitution saving throw**, taking **18 (4d8)** poison damage and becoming **poisoned** for **1 minute** on a failed save, or half as much damage and not becoming poisoned on a successful one. A creature poisoned by the smoke takes **7 (2d6)** poison damage at the start of each of its turns and can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on a success. A creature can avoid the effects of the smoke if it holds its breath while in the area or doesn't need to breathe.

## LEGENDARY ACTIONS

The Pontiff can take 3 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action option can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. The Pontiff regains spent legendary actions at the start of its turn.

**Pack Thurible.** The Pontiff rolls to recharge its Thurible.

**Tactical Retreat.** The Pontiff takes the Disengage action and moves up to half its speed.

**Wax Splash (Costs 2 Actions).** The Pontiff splashes hot wax at a creature within **10 feet** of it. The target must succeed on a **DC 18 Dexterity saving throw** or take **7 (2d6)** fire damage and become **restrained** in the hardened wax. A creature can take an action to attempt a **DC 18 Strength** check, freeing itself or another creature within its reach and ending the restrained condition on a success.

## MYTHIC ACTIONS

If the Pontiff's Stained Glass Armour trait has activated in the last hour, it can use the option below as a legendary action.

**Shard Spray (Costs 2 Actions).** The Pontiff releases a blast of glass shards in a **40-foot cone**. Each creature in that area must make a **DC 18 Dexterity saving throw**, taking **18 (4d8)** slashing damage on a failed save or half as much damage on a successful one.



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