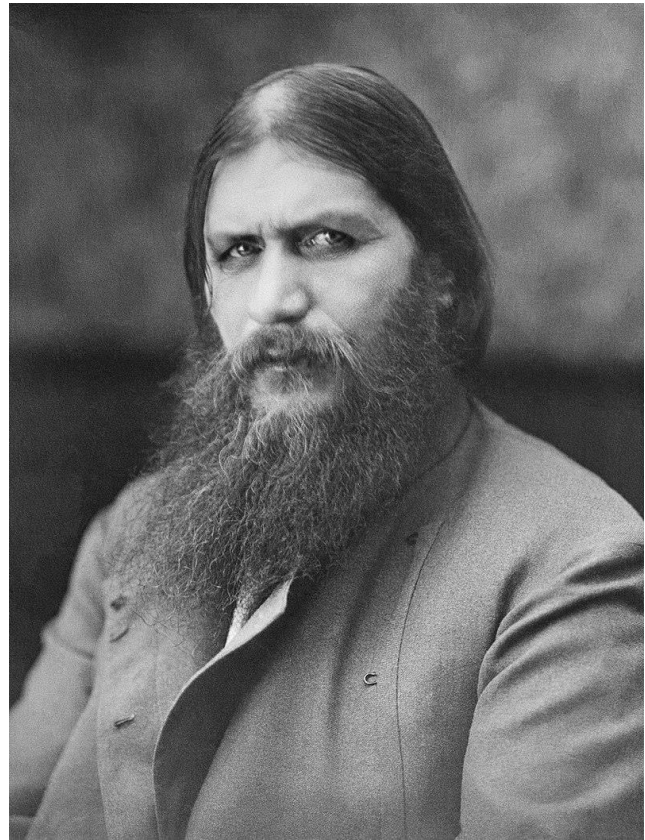


Priest of Vice P.C.C.

By Scott Zaboem, with additional material
by Steven Dawes for the houseofbts.net

Writer's Note: Kevin has a non-official policy about contemporary religions; he won't touch them. The Priests of Vice are not specifically representative of any particular religion, but their guiding philosophy and origins are tied to Christianity. As such, they don't pass Kevin's policy. I will probably never submit the Priests of Vice to Palladium Books, but I think they fit quite well here at the House of BTS.

Steve's Note: I edited a few rules changes and added some extra notes to make this P.C.C. more "priest like", but left it alone otherwise as I love this P.C.C.



The Priests of Vice are a sect of monks who acknowledge Grigori Rasputin as the founder and guiding philosopher of their order. Grigori Rasputin is known to many as the *Mad Monk of Russia* who gained considerable influence during the late period imperial Russia. His mystical abilities and reputation as a holy man who could heal the sick and the infirm were well known during his own lifetime. As a young man, Rasputin joined a sect of Christian Monks who believed that acceptance to Heaven could only happen after habitual confession and forgiveness – therefore, habitual sinning was a requirement for salvation. Rasputin took this concept to an extreme application by dedicating himself to a daily regimen of sin and confession. He was particularly fond of the Seven Deadly Sins. According to legend, Rasputin was eventually assassinated by a group of conservative noblemen who believed him to be a religious charlatan, as well as becoming fearful of his influence over the Romanov family and therefore Imperial Russia. He was poisoned with enough cyanide to kill five men, stabbed, shot three times, beaten, frozen and drowned. His super-human resilience is a direct result of the years spent abusing his body and mind, followed by periods of strict sobriety, contrition, prayer and meditation.

A Priest of Vice follows Rasputin's teachings and examples, systematically indulging in sin and vice and then subjecting himself to periods of strict abstinence and virtue. As a Priest of Vice advances in experience, he gains more vices. These vices can be any addictive or self-destructive indulgences. A priest may enter a period of vice by using alcohol, any particular drug, sexual activity or even wrathful temper-tantrums. A vice could be something as basic as sugary treats (a favorite of Rasputin) or as specific and rare as Aztec hot chocolate. It is the act of surrendering to desire that's important – not the specific form of each vice. While engaging in any vice, the priest gains access to certain physical psychic abilities and bonuses. Of course, a priest can engage in as many indulgences as he wants, but the number of vices from which he gains benefits is limited by his experience level.

Periods of Vice

The Priest of Vice acquires their first vice at first level. This vice, and all subsequent vices taken, must be specific. It could be (and most often is) a “lighter” or “easier” vice to start with, like cigarettes, cannabis, or alcohol (using it excessively to the point of Gluttony) or pursuing more dangerous vices right out of the gate, such as excessively taking a specific drug like meth, cocaine, heroin, steroids, or hallucinogenics. Specific activities seen as a vice, like gambling, stealing, adultery/infidelity, prostitution (soliciting or engaging), arson, hoarding, acts of vengeance, narcissism, and other specific actions frowned upon in general society are acceptable vices. Note that performing general “bad behavior” is not specific enough, although others may see the priest’s various excesses and vices as bad behavior and will react to them accordingly.

Concerning Sloth: While any activities considered one of the *Seven Deadly Sins* can be a vice for the priest, the *Sin of Sloth* can refer to the modern definition of “extreme laziness” or the more historic version of *lacking in spiritual hunger*. This means the priest gives up all passion and desire to engage in prayer, read scripture, or be involved in any spiritual activities. In short, a *Traditionally Slothful* Priest of Vice abandons all religious endeavors entirely. This vice is frowned upon by some priests as it risks becoming so lost to this sin that they never recover or become virtuous again, therefore losing the entire point of acquiring the vice, or even being a Priest. On the other hand, there are Priests of Vice (especially the more seasoned ones) who see this particular vice as a challenge or test to completely lose themselves to Traditional Sloth and finding their way back to virtue again.

Whether by accident or intent, a period of vice is hard on the priest’s body, but the practices and rituals involved quickly builds resiliency to all the excess and abuse, making him incredible enduring. His psychic abilities also enable him to perform some impressive feats of endurance, as well as take a beating and keep on coming. Over time he’ll look several years older than he really is, he’ll likely have a variety of scars and aches and pains from all the excess and abuse, but he’ll be as sinful and as tough as ever during a period of vice.

To enter a period of vice, the priest must consciously plan on entering this period while fully indulging in their vice(s) for 1D4X10+20 minutes. The Priest of Vice may gain one new vice at each experience level. Some Priests of Vice are content with just their original vice and never acquire more. Others can’t seem to get enough, which can cause problems and situations with the people around him. (*“That man is not welcome in my home! My god, he stinks of booze, weed and urine! I don’t care if he’s a priest, if he can’t stand up without help and is so drunk and high that he’s pissing himself, he’s of no help to my ailing son!”*)

Bonuses and abilities gained during a Period of Vice

Immune to knockout/stun.

Impervious to poisons and toxins, but not what the priest considers to be “drugs”.

Automatically succeeds at all attempts to Roll with Punch, Fall or Impact (still requires an action).

Gets an additional 1D4+2 temporary Hit Points per vice. Roll each time they enter a period of vice.

Gets a +1 bonus to ALL saving throws per vice, including a +1% per vice to save vs coma/death.

Gets a +2 bonus to save vs pain.

Suffers no combat penalties and only half the skill penalties while under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs.

Whenever the priest makes a successful roll to save vs magic, he does not suffer any bad or lingering effects from the magic spells and curses he made the save throw against.

Available Psychic Abilities: Death Trance (1), Impervious to Cold (2), Impervious to Fire (4), Impervious to Poison/Toxin (4; note: This can speed up the process of going into a period of virtue), Liedenfrost Effect (2), Resist Fatigue (4), Resist Hunger (2), Resist Pain (6), Resist Thirst (6), Stop Bleeding (self, 4), Suppress Fear (8), and Summon Inner Strength (4).

The priest selects eight abilities to start, and chooses a new ability upon taking his 4th **vice**, and again with his 9th and 14th vice.

Becomes immune to both mind control and possession while in the presence of the Supernatural (threat level x4 or higher).

Gets a bonus +6 I.S.P. to use as needed. Note that while this bonus I.S.P. is not added to the priest's base I.S.P., it recovers at the same rate of 2 per hour (mediation isn't possible during a period of vice). Perhaps even more impressive, any psychic abilities powered through this bonus I.S.P. ignores the *Under the Microscope* penalty noted in BTS-2, page 31. These bonus points allow the priest to use one of his psychic abilities mentioned above he might not have enough I.S.P. to use otherwise (especially when not in the presence of the supernatural or magic).

Example: To prove his endurance to others (showing off, performing a sermon, etc.), the priest can use this 6 I.S.P. to summon the *Impervious to Fire* ability to walk through fire, or summon the *Liedenfrost Effect* (2 I.S.P.) to walk across a path of hot coals and then immediately *Summon Inner Strength* (4 I.S.P.) afterwards for a show of strength through the power of God.

Note that no matter how many non-believer's or Nega-Psychics are present, this ability functions as normal, allowing the priest to show off his impressive endurance and tolerance to pain. Of course, being stable enough to perform while intoxicated, high, hallucinating or otherwise is another matter.

Periods of Virtue

When the priest is not in a period of vice, he's in a period of virtue. To enter a period of virtue, all of the drugs, toxins and/or alcohol must be out of the priest's system (completely clean and sober) while repenting their sinful actions and praying to God to beg for forgiveness. During these virtuous times, the Priest of Vice becomes a humble yet charismatic holy man, philosopher, visionary, and an incredible healer.

Bonuses and abilities during a Period of Virtue

+5 to M.A. (minimum of 20) and +2 to M.E.

+10% to all Medical Skills, Psychology, and Philosophy Skill.

Immune to Possession.

Available Psychic Abilities: Meditation (0), Psychic Diagnosis (4), Psychic Purification (8),

Induce Sleep (4), Cure Insanity (15), Increased Healing (10), Deaden Pain (4), Attack Disease (12), and gets one new healing ability upon taking his 4th **vice**, and again with the 9th and 14th vice.

Extra powers gained in the presence of supernatural evil (threat level x4 or higher):

Stop Bleeding (others, 4), Healing Touch (6), Group Mind Block (22) and Call to Life (8; new).

Special Abilities of the Priest of Vice:

1. **Faith:** Like all priests, Faith is the driving force behind the Priest of Vice. It is the absolute, unshakable belief in God and the principles they stand for. It's believed that both their Faith and their unique, specific religious beliefs, practices and rituals are what grants the Priest of Vice their psychic abilities, and the I.S.P. to use them.

Their faith and practices are just as important to their being gifted healers as they are their impressive toughness.

Losing Faith: It is possible for a Priest of Vice to lose their Faith. This occurs when something extraordinarily traumatic happens, such as a death in the family, or the loss of a body part, or even becoming *traditionally slothful* for too long. A Priest who's lost his Faith cannot continue in his priestly duties, at least not at full effectiveness.

When something traumatic occurs, such as a failed saving roll vs Insanity or Trauma when something happens that could shake his Faith in God, roll against their M.E. If the roll comes in under the M.E. (or rolls higher than a Natural 1 if M.E. is higher than 20), then the Priest retains his Faith. If not, the Priest loses all Faith bonuses and can no longer use any of his Abilities.

Regaining Faith: Should a Priest of Vice lose his Faith; he will lose all bonuses and abilities. But not all is lost. He can regain his Faith in one of two ways. The first, and most often used, is counseling with other Priests of Vice and believers combined with prayer and intense study of one's religious texts. This process could take anywhere from several months to more than a year (4D6 months). Once regained, he will once again have his Faith, but only at starting levels (including bonuses), which then increase as though the Priest had restarted at level one.

The other, and the far more dramatic method, is that he simply goes on with his life until something truly special or unusual happens. Perhaps he will witness a miracle, such as seeing a dying person recover from a terminal disease. Alternately, he may face something horrific, or witness a series of events that instantly revives his belief in Good and Evil, such as a personal encounter with a demon or alien intelligence (evil creatures with a Horror Factor of 17 or higher). When this happens, his Faith flares back to life in a spectacular flash. For a 24-hour period, the Priest of Vice's Faith and P.C.C. abilities will return at whatever level it was lost, but at four times its original strength! After that period, Faith returns to the level it was at when the priest had lost it.

2. **Exorcism:** This is fundamentally identical to the psychic ability found on page 99 in the BTS book. In this case however, it can only be performed as a ritual, so a slow process is required (it is not an instant cast and effect). The process itself can be quite involved; first requiring the Priest of Vice to enter a Period of Virtue (see below) and cast their *Psychic Diagnosis* ability to determine if the person is possessed, and if not, what their true malady is, whether they're truly possessed, or suffering from a mental or physical illness, or just wants attention.

Once the Priest of Vice is certain that the person is truly possessed by an evil spirit or entity, the real task begins as the Priest must follow the practices and rituals of the Rite of Exorcism as part of performing this ability. Ideally, this will all take place on consecrated (Holy) ground. If not, it should be in the person's home or any place away from the public eye. First, the priest must deduce as much as possible about the possessing spirit, usually by talking to it and asking it questions. What kind of spirit is it? When did it first possess the victim? What does it want? This kind of questioning will help the priest learn what parts of the Rite of Exorcism will work best, as well as discover if there's some outside force holding the spirit inside the victim's body (spells, ancient scrolls, amulets, orders from a more powerful demon, and the like).

The Rite of Exorcism can take days to weeks of prayer, fasting, and reading from select scriptures and using the proper tools. It's not uncommon for Priest of Vice to enter a period of Vice to help withstand the endurance challenge of such a rite.

Once completed, the Priest must perform another *Psychic Diagnosis* on the victim, to see if the entity/spirit is still possessing them, hiding in some dark corner of the victim's psyche, or is fully exorcised. If the spirit has not been exorcised, the process must be repeated until it is finally driven out.

The driving force behind this rite is the Priest's Faith. As such, it really only costs them time, effort and the I.S.P. to perform their psychic abilities.

Requirements: Holy Water, a copy of the Bible, and a Crucifix for the victim to hold onto.

Duration: The ritual itself takes 1D4+2 days, and each attempt has the same success ratio as per the psychic ability on page 99 for the BTS-2 book.

3. **Create Holy Water:** A Priest of Vice is capable of blessing water. Besides the usual anti-vampire applications, holy water is needed in exorcisms and for blessing people and items. The amount of water blessed is irrelevant, but it's not possible to bless natural bodies of water (GM's, use common sense as the priest cannot carry large containers of water with him). Requires 2 rounds to perform the blessing and the blessed water lasts until the holy water is either mixed with normal water or dries up in whatever container held it (vial, cup, bowl, etc.)
4. **Perform Blessing:** A Priest of Vice can also bless people and objects during *Periods of Virtue*. Blessed people are +2 to save vs Psionics and Magic, and get a temporary bonus of +2 to M.E. Blessed objects are effective as melee weapons against the supernatural, regardless of the monster's vulnerabilities, similar to *Magic Weapons*. There's no multiplier to damage, just straight rolls, identical to the item's normal weapon damage. This type of blessing takes two rounds to perform and lasts 1D4 hours. A Priest of Vice can bless a number of people and/or objects up to his level of experience every hour. Note: Blessing the same person or object while a blessing is still in effect will not "re-start" the blessing; the original blessing must wear off first.
Non-Believers note: Those who do not believe in the priest's blessing (are of a different religious conviction, or are atheist for example), or are immune to magic and blessing effects (such as the Nega-Psychic) and do not receive any benefits from being blessed, nor do the weapons they're carrying/using.
5. **Holy Symbol:** As their practice is based in Christianity, the Priest of Vice's main symbol is the Cross/Crucifix, and it becomes a weapon in the hands of a Priest of Vice. Supernatural beings that are affected by holy symbols suffer double the effects of a crucifix held in the hands of a Priest of Vice.
6. **Bio-Regeneration:** This unique self-healing ability works just like the Bio-Feedback ability (restoring 1 Hit Point or 1D6 S.D.C. per hour) but costs no I.S.P. While the priest must activate this ability through prayer, it doesn't require him to go into a trance for it to take effect. However, he cannot use any other psychic abilities while this one is in effect; if he cancels this ability before the hour is up, he does not get any regeneration benefits. This ability is one of the many secrets of how a Priest of Vice can take so much punishment and abuse.

Priest of Vice P.C.C.

Attributes: Standard 3D6 determination; see character creation in the rules section of BTS.

Alignment(new): Vice & Virtue (Selfish). The character moral pendulum swings between extremes of good and evil like a schizophrenic lunatic, but he is not insane. The character is purposefully exploiting different sides of morality so to gain a deeper understanding of both.

The ultimate goal is to build a deeper connection with God. Over time, he will slowly lean more towards good or evil, but balance is what's taught in training and what is preferred, if not expected. Per the teachings of Rasputin, special attention is given to the Seven Deadly Sins (Envy, Greed, Gluttony, Lust, Pride, Sloth and Wrath) and Seven Virtues (Charity, Chastity, Faith, Fortitude, Hope, Love and Patience).

A Vice and Virtue aligned character will:

Will keep his word, but only to people he respects.

Will lie and cheat during a period of vice (especially if it suits a vice, but tries to avoid lying during a period of virtue (usually needs a good reason to lie).

Will kill people (including an innocent), but only if he's extremely angry with them (Wrath).

Will harm an innocent during a period of vice (especially when it suits one of his vices), but will not during a period of virtue.

Will break the law to achieve his goals during a period of vice, but will avoid breaking the law during a period of vice (needs to have a good reason for it).

While the priest fully respects authority, the law, and self-discipline (especially during a period of virtue), he fully understands that he must do things during a period of vice that effectively disrespects them, but he has to for the sake of finding his deeper connection to God.

Will take dirty money one day (Greed), but then give it all away the next (Charity).

Will not torture, because it serves none of the Seven and Seven.

Will not steal, unless it's something he particularly desired enough to make him jealous (Envy) or is incapable of getting it otherwise (such as stealing the drugs he needs for a vice when he can't afford them).

Will betray a friend during a period of vice, and still might during a period of virtue, but has to have a good reason for it.

Attribute Requirements: There are no attribute requirements, although a high M.E. is helpful.

There are no known women who have been trained as Priests of Vice (the requirements of a period of vice are difficult for most women to stomach), but it is possible for women to become a *Priestess of Vice*.

Attribute Bonuses: +1D4 to M.E.

P.C.C. Bonuses: Needs a 12 or higher to save vs psionic attacks, +10 to S.D.C. and Hit Points, +1 to save vs Psionics at levels 4, 8, 12, and 15, +1 to save vs Magic; gains an additional +1 at levels 3, 6, 9, 12 and 15, and +1 to save vs Horror Factor at levels 4, 8, 12, and 15.

P.C.C. Limitations & Penalties: Closed to the Supernatural as per the *Psychic Healer P.C.C.*

P.P.E.: 1D4.

Recovering I.S.P.: During a *Period of Vice*, the priest is unable to meditate and thus can only recover one I.S.P. for every hour of *total relaxation* or *sleep* to both his base and bonus I.S.P.

During a *Period of Virtue*, the priest can meditate as normal, restoring 2 I.S.P. per thirty minutes of meditation.

I.S.P.: 1D6+5 (x2, x3, x4, x5), +1 per each experience level, starting at second level.

Standard Equipment, Housing, Pay, & Money: as per the *Latent Psychic P.C.C.* (page 58).

Experience: Uses the Nega-Psychic experience level chart on Page 146.

Specialized Knowledge of Religion & the Paranormal: Language: Native Tongue +4%, Literacy: Native +4%, Language & Literacy: Russian +10%, Language: One other of choice (usually Latin), Math: Basic +10%, Public Speaking, 3 Medical Skills of choice, Lore: Religion +25%, One Paranormal Study Skill of choice, Chemistry, Psychology or Philosophy, History, Meditation +20% and one Transportation Skill of choice and Fasting +20%.

Elective Skills: Select 5 from the Elective Skill list on Page 173.

Court of Tarot option: A Priest of Vice working for the *Court of Tarot* (who sees value in their teachings and practices and supports this sect) will get this Elective skill package: Lore: Cults & Secret Societies +10%, Swimming, Research +10%, and 2 Science Skills of Choice, W.P. Blunt, W.P. Rifles or Handguns, and Hand to Hand: Expert.

Secondary Skills: Select three from the Secondary Skills List, +1 at levels four, eight, & twelve.

|Why I love being a Priest of Vice: Priests of Vice are not among the strongest of psychic, but they are among the toughest. Furthermore, their unusual combination of physical and healing powers makes them one of the more diverse psychic classes available. Keeping two separate character sheets (one for the Period of Vice and one for Virtue), makes using such a character easier to keep track of.

Last updated on 2/21/2022