

CHURCH OF RAO

Symbol: White heart of wood or metal or a heart-shaped mask with a calm expression

Background and Goals: The Church of Rao is a voice of reason and diplomacy in the Viscounty of Verbobonc, with followers advocating the acquisition of knowledge, paths of logical thought, theology and introspective meditation. Second only to the Church of Rao in terms of spiritual authority, the Church of Rao also serves as a reminder of the Viscounty's vassalage to the Archclericy of Veluna and enjoys a status disproportionate to the number of followers in Verbobonc. Conscious of their place within the Viscounty, those in the Church of Rao prefer to act through diplomatic channels rather than through overt action. By doing so, they serve to broker accords that would otherwise be difficult to facilitate.

Bishop Ebaddon Brill, ambassador from Veluna, serves as the head of the Church of Rao in Verbobonc.

Members: Most members of the Church of Rao are clerics. The Church of Rao defines a cleric as a character with the majority (over 50%) of non-prestige class levels in the Cleric class. Followers of Rao prefer peaceful methods rather than violence, but are not above using force when sound reasoning has fallen upon deaf ears. Vestments for members of Rao are white robes or tabards with gold trim.

Type: Religious

Scale: 10 (regional [Verbobonc])

Affiliation Score Criteria: The Church of Rao is open to all non-chaotic characters that have Verbobonc as their home region and have Rao as their patron deity. Characters that do not receive divine power from Rao may not rise above the rank of **Congregant**. Those that receive divine power from Rao (such as clerics, favored souls, paladins, and so forth), may rise to the rank of **Priest**, but only clerics may rise to the level of **Canon**.

Criterion (One Time)	Modifier
Character level	+½ PC's level
Possesses levels in cleric or paladin	+1/level
Possesses the True Believer ^{CD} feat (must choose Rao as your deity)	+3
Ranks in Diplomacy or Knowledge [Religion]	+½ per rank
Establishes a Utility structure in the Verbobonc Town Project that teaches a Knowledge skill ⁽¹⁾	Special
Possesses a feat that grants a bonus to Diplomacy checks	+3/feat
Willingly gives up own life for that of another.	+8

Criterion (Multiple Occurrence)	Modifier
Aids the less fortunate with own funds ⁽²⁾	+1/500 gp expended
Plays a key role in brokering a peaceful resolution between two or more opposing individuals or factions.	+2
Plays a Veluna or Verbobonc regional adventure, or a Velverdyva Trade Route metaregional adventure, as a member of the Church of Rao. ⁽²⁾	+½/TU
Plays an adventure that directly involves the Church of Rao or is listed as a metaorganizational focus. ⁽²⁾	+1/TU
Resorts to violence against non-evil creatures without first exploring nonviolent alternatives.	-3
Disobeys a teaching or an edict from a higher-ranking member of the Church of Rao	-6
Acts against alignment ⁽⁴⁾	-10

Notes:

- The bonus is equal to the circumstance bonus provided by the Utility structure.
- This bonus overlaps (does not stack with itself). If earned multiple times, only the highest bonus is applied.
- These benefits overlap (do not stack) with each other; apply the highest benefit only if both Criterion apply.
- Cannot improve Affiliation score until undergoing *atonement* from a **Canon** of Rao.

Titles, Benefits and Duties: As you advance in the Church of Rao, you learn to prosecute the will of Rao and your superiors within the lands of Verbobonc as well as beyond. You cannot use any benefit if it would result in demotion to a lower tier.

Score 3 or lower **Title: Benefits and Duties** (benefits and duties are cumulative)
No affiliation

4-10 **Congregant/Acolyte:** The Church of Rao welcomes you as a faithful follower and a voice of reason in a troubled land. Characters that do not receive divine power from Rao are known as **Congregants**, while those that do are known as **Acolytes**. You receive the following benefits during any Verbobonc regional adventure. Benefits marked with a dagger (†) are only available to **Acolytes**.

- ⚔ **Associated Skills:** The following skills are associated with the Church of Rao: Diplomacy, Knowledge [Religion]. You receive a +2 circumstance bonus to skill checks made with your associated skills
- ⚔ **Divine Spellcasting:** You are granted the free casting of Open divine spells of levels 1-3 from an attending cleric of Rao. This does not extend to any of your companions, and all costs for material components must be provided by you.
- ⚔ **Dwelling†:** Should you move to a town in the Verbobonc Town Project, you are provided with a Residence [Simple House] to serve as rectory. This residence belongs to the church and is lost should you leave the Church of Rao. You do not need to pay any annual taxes on the residence. For more information on Residences, see *Verbobonc Town Project: Player's Guide and Sourcebook*.
- ⚔ **Equipment Purchases:** You may purchase the following equipment at a 20% discount: chain mail, light mace, holy water sprinkler ^{LM}, priest's bullet ^{LM}, and signature ring ^{RS}
- ⚔ **Influence:** You may use your affiliation as influence with the Church of Rao. Spending 1 Affiliation point earns you 1 standard Influence point with the Church of Rao. You can likewise convert Influence Points into Affiliation points using the same ratio in reverse.

Serving the Church: The Church of Rao expects the faithful to serve and give back to the community, either by teaching in schools, helping perform duties around the church, or by tithing gold to help the church fulfill its mission. You must spend 1 additional TU after each Veluna or Verbobonc regional adventure or VIF metaregional adventure. Alternatively, you may pay 10% of gold earned (as circled on the Level of Play section on your Adventure Record).

11-25 **Priest:** You have been promoted in the Church and received greater authority over the spiritual flock of the Viscounty.

- ⚔ **Associated Skills:** Your bonus increases to +3.
- ⚔ **Class Abilities:** You may spend 1 Affiliation point to receive access to the Spontaneous Domain Casting ^{PH2} alternate class ability
- ⚔ **Divine Spellcasting:** This now includes 4th level Open divine spells.
- ⚔ **Dwelling:** Your dwelling is upgraded to a Residence (Grand House). This residence may be customized according to your preferences, but it must include a Chapel component.
- ⚔ **Influence:** You may now spend 1 Affiliation points to earn 2 standard Influence point with the Church of Rao. Additionally, you may spend 1 Affiliation point in lieu of paying Time Units for purposes of meeting the requirements for **Serving the Church**.
- ⚔ **Paladin Mount:** Paladins of Rao that reach 8th level may spend 1 Affiliation point to summon a griffon as a special mount. This mount leaves you if you leave the Church of Rao.

26+ **Canon:** You are vested with the authority of the Church itself and have been promoted to Canon. The Canon stands as an unwavering example of the faith and power of Rao in the Viscounty.

- ⚔ **Associated Skills:** Your bonus increases to +4.
- ⚔ **Divine Spellcasting:** This now includes 5th level Open divine spells.
- ⚔ **Dwelling:** Your dwelling is upgraded to a Residence [Manse]. This residence may be customized by you, but it must include a Chapel component.
- ⚔ **Ecclesiastical Access:** You are treated as a member of the Church of Saint Cuthbert for purposes of item access in the "Items Found During the Adventure" section of Verbobonc regional adventure records.
- ⚔ **Influence:** You may now spend 1 Affiliation point to earn 3 standard Influence points with the Church of Rao.



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