

The Order of Saint Cyprian

The Order of Saint Cyprian is a Roman Catholic religious order (Benedictine Rule) of both monks and nuns; what makes the Order unique is that membership is restricted to supernatural entities. This, in practice, means everyone from human magicians to actual demons. Members of the Order are segregated by sex; males go to a monastery in Ireland, and females go to an abbey (New Zealand).

Essentially, Cyprian was a pagan sorcerer who converted to Christianity when his spells would not work on the pious Justina. He and Justina were later martyred by the Roman Emperor Diocletian, and canonized by the Church at a later date. Saints Cyprian and Justina are no longer officially Catholic Saints; their origins and martyrdom were deemed not supported by history, which is why they were removed from the list of saints in 2001. This did not affect the Order, given that it has been a closely-held secret of the Church since the Eighth Century AD.

The most important thing to remember about the Order is that it is neither a magical prison for supernatural entities, nor a smokescreen for their activities. It is exactly what it purports to be: a contemplative Order for prayer and

seclusion. The monks and nuns there joined by free and conscious choice, and take the standard vows of chastity, poverty, and obedience. In modern times, the most severe punishment that can be made against a member of the Order is banishment, which admittedly does work rather well as a threat.

It must also be understood that while the Order recognizes the problems and needs of supernatural creatures, it will not commit mortal sins on its members' behalf. Vampires must sustain themselves on voluntary blood offerings that will not cause death and harm, lycanthropes must either keep control over their impulses or submit to iron cages during full moons, **no magic is permitted whatsoever**, and so on. The situation can be extremely tricky in the case of demons, given that virtually every square inch of a Catholic monastery or abbey can be harmful for them, but the few that have sought redemption via the Order accepted the pain with a certain stolid humility. It is said that every demon that joins the Order of Saint Cyprian eventually saw the Light; how much of that legend is true is up to the GM.

The primary purpose of the Order of Saint Cyprian is to provide access to limited supernatural resources. The Order's monks and nuns may not use magic, but they can

freely act as a reference on spells and rituals; and any member of the Order is likely to know quite a bit of esoteric lore on various topics. If you need a meteoric-iron dagger with strange runes identified and classified, the Order might have someone who knows all about it. Or least be able to send an email telling you which book to look it up in.

It's also not a bad place to stash a repentant supernatural villain, assuming that he, she, or it is both capable and willing to live in monastic seclusion. Which can lead to more adventures, down the line. After all, members of the Order are not perfect; and when one of them slips (or seems to have slipped), it's only natural to ask help from a group of problem solvers who already know what the Order is. Saves time explaining the situation, and all that.

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