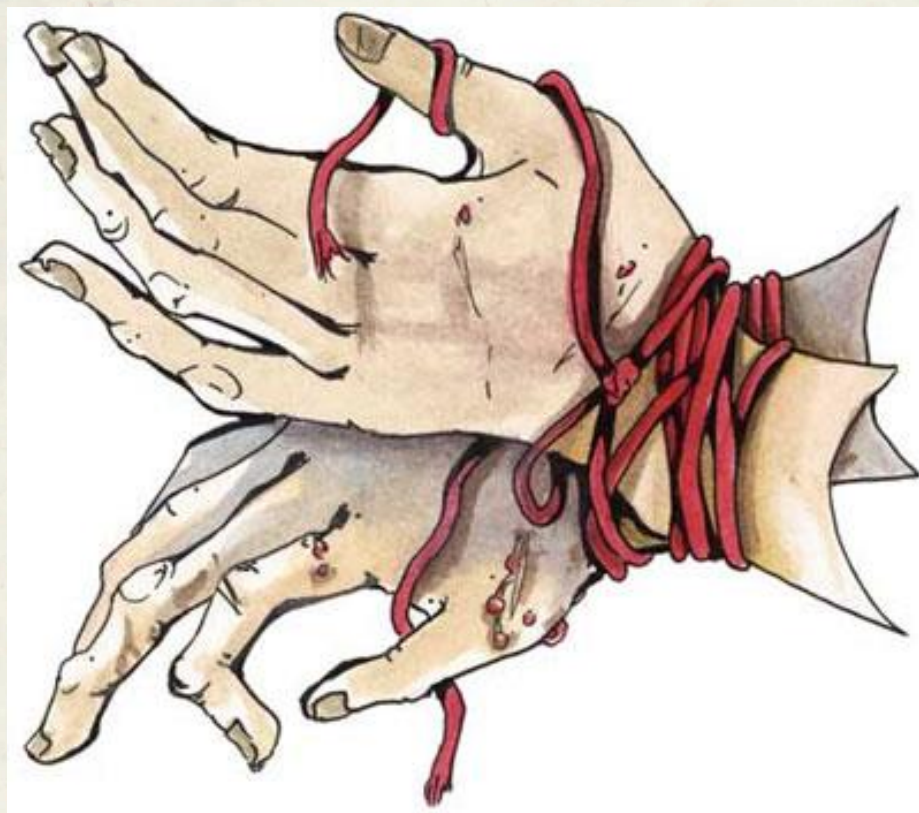


# FORGOTTEN REALMS

## Sacred Sisters of the Crying God



By George Krashos

*This work is dedicated to Brian Cortijo and Erik Scott de Bie for their friendship, generosity and selfless devotion toward the members of Candlekeep.*

*Special thanks goes to Ed Greenwood, Eric Boyd and Steven Schend who constantly inspire me to play in the sandbox that is the Forgotten Realms.*

## Sacred Sisters of the Crying God

*Where do the weak, the wronged or the sick flock, if not to the veneration of those members of the faith who have transcended? The bond the faithful feel with those who were once mortal, tempers and hones their worship, and sets out a path of service to Ilmater that kindles hope of receiving his divine regard. They hear of the resilience of St Aralthar "the Unbroken" and find solace. They read of the deeds of St Faeran and take courage. They listen to the teachings of St Daranna and receive wisdom. The deeds of his saints bind the Broken God's worshippers closer to him and bring greater glory to his faith.*

Thontoros the Learned, Sage of the Just Gods  
*Tales of the Blessed*  
Year of the Grimoire (1324 DR)

### Saints in the Realms

Saints are rare things in the Realms. They are mortals who through dedicated service to a deity, or sacrificing their life in the deity's name and to further the cause(s) of a deity, are remembered and revered at the command of that deity. The god informs his or her priesthood that a particular mortal is now "blessed" through various means including manifestations and dream visions.

Priests reverence a saint by collecting his or her "relics" and keeping them secure at temples or shrines as foci for prayer. These relics include bones and body parts (hair and nails) and even extend to items directly used or worn by the saint, like a staff or shoes or robe. Prayers are devised specific to saints, holy times of the year for the saying of special prayers to the saint are set (such as the birthday of the saint, if known, or the anniversary of the saint's martyrdom, if applicable), and ways of calling upon the saint for aid are crafted (and approved by the deity or that deity's divine servitors).

Saints are sometimes deemed to be patrons of or special to a profession, process or task (from quests through laying down the keel of a boat being built to shoeing a horse or healing), a place (which will be a small locale; there are saints of neighbourhoods, but not cities as a whole, and certainly not realms), or of a formal group (such as a sect or guild or coster or order of knighthood).

Saints are always dead mortals, never living, and the few cases of saints who have risen as undead have caused much religious debate and unease.

Most deities in the Realms do not have saints, and don't want to — because of the inherent challenge to the supreme authority of the deity, and the secular dangers of having a sect or order of knighthood doing things righteously in the name of a saint that are contrary to the aims, will, and effectiveness of the deity and established church hierarchy of that deity. This doesn't stop occasional living individuals from using the title of "saint" either for themselves or for some dead people that they claim to do things in the name of, or under the guidance of. On many such occasions, the deity will do nothing but watch for a time, to see what happens, before ordering the offending individual eliminated or denounced, disgraced, and thwarted.

Notable exceptions to this deific attitude to saints are the faiths of Ilmater, Loviatar, Lurue, Sharess, and the entire gnome and halfling pantheons (although most faiths have divine servitors, who may or may not be called saints, who are the patrons of particular abbeys—most often because the abbey was founded on a site important to a deed of the deity, or of an event in the mortal life of a deity before ascension—or orders of monks; such "Venerables", to use the term employed in the churches of Chauntea, Selûne, Silvanus, Sune, Tempus, and Tymora are more known to priests than to lay worshippers). Among the priesthoods of Loviatar, Lurue, and Sharess, knowledge of the saints are Mysteries of the faith, to be divulged to priests upon finishing their novitiate, and lay worshippers as they progress in reverence (give more service to the faith, in terms of acts, unfolding years of veneration, and tithes or offerings). This leaves Ilmater as the sole faith in which saints are as a matter of course open public figures.

### Venerating a Saint

In a Forgotten Realms campaign, DMs using the optional feats rule from the Players Handbook (p.165) can allow a cleric character to venerate a saint associated with her deity by allowing them to

select the Patron Saint feat featured below and receive the corresponding benefits associated with doing so. The Patron Saint feat can be taken at any time when a character is allowed to take a feat, beginning at 4th level, and provides the following benefits:

### NEW FEAT: PATRON SAINT

*Prerequisite: Ability to cast cleric spells*

You have dedicated yourself to a saint of your deity, gaining the following benefits:

- Increase your Wisdom score by 1, to a maximum of 20.
- You can select another domain related to your patron saint, which you can choose to use in lieu of the divine domain associated with your deity that you selected at 1st level. You can choose to access the domain spells and benefits gained from 2nd level onwards of either your deity's domain or your patron saint's domain when you finish a long rest (as applicable to your level).

Any benefits obtained at 1st level when you selected your initial domain remain unchanged.

The Patron Saint feat can be taken multiple times, allowing veneration of a different saint of the faith and providing access to the divine domain associated with that particular "blessed".

### The Blessed of Ilmater

The Church of the Broken God is renowned for its veneration of saints of the faith, who are known to worshippers as the "Blessed of Ilmater". The ranks of these special servitors of the god number well over fifty and are divided on regional lines, with particular saints venerated in localised areas with little overlap. So even though the saints of Ilmater that are venerated in the realm of Tethyr are known to the clergy of Ilmater in nearby Calimshan, worship of saints in Calimshan is confined to the saints particular to that region. Traditionally this is so because the veneration of saints in the Ilmatari

faith has involved the establishment of abbies, monasteries and shrines devoted to a particular saint, usually at a location important to that individual in his or her mortal life.

In the Realms, the lands of Calimshan, Damara, Impiltur and Tethyr contain the largest concentrations of saints of the Ilmatari faith, while other areas have a far lesser number. There are only eight monasteries devoted to saints of the Crying God throughout the North, and the Inner Sea lands contain only a handful each in the Moonsea and Dragon Coast regions.

### DOMAINS OF THE SAINTS

Below is a list of saints, alternative domains and the regions associated with them that a DM might allow in a campaign if a player is permitted to take the Patron Saint feat:

St Corin	Tethyr	Life
St Dyonasis	Damara	Trickery*
St Faelar	Calimshan	Nature
St Noradnar	Calimshan	War
St Ostus	Tethyr	Knowledge

\*: Note that scholars and lorekeepers of the Realms have often confused the precocious St Dyonasis of the Veil with another trickster deity found on other worlds and planes of existence. The Church of Ilmater has sought to correct these lapses in scholarship, but has experienced only varying degrees of success in that regard.

DMs should feel free to associate the domains contained within the Players Handbook with other, existing saints of Ilmater or create new saints in different locales to accommodate the needs of their campaign.

### The Sacred Sisters

The Church of Ilmater within the kingdom of Impiltur venerates a collection of saints that is unique in the Realms. It is unique for the fact that it is wholly made up of females, and this group is collectively referred to as the "Sacred Sisters" by the Ilmatari faithful. Numbering eight "blessed" of the faith, the Sacred Sisters serve as a focus for worship of the Crying God in the lands of the Forgotten Kingdom and provide an important

“touchstone” of faith for lay worshippers who do not have access to a temple or shrine of Ilmater.

To this end many Ilmatari worshippers make pilgrimages to the various religious sites associated with the Sacred Sisters that are scattered throughout Impiltur. These include such places as the seaside Monastery of the Fire Lily south of Sarshel dedicated to St. Persaadon, the Cloister of the White Poppy devoted to St. Andonia “the Fearless” on the outskirts of Lyrabar and the Abbey of the Purple Crocus in the foothills of the Earthspur Mountains where St. Caerlintra lived and worked during her lifetime.

In addition to the three Sacred Sisters of the Crying God noted above, details on a further three saints of Ilmater venerated in Impiltur are provided below. The remaining two Sacred Sisters are left open for DMs to tailor to their individual campaigns.

### St. Irimae the Required

**Symbol:** A silver manacle on a black field

**Center of Worship:** Monastery of the Black Rose

**Domain:** Vengeance

Religious scholars disagree to this day as to who this “blessed” was in her mortal life, for she was found by paladins of the Triad Crusade, tortured and maimed, in the ruins of the village of Herbelin, southwest of Lyrabar in the first skirmishes of the Fiend Wars. Brought back from the brink of death by healing magic, the clergy of the Triad could not restore her tongue or her left eye or prevent her from trailing at the rear of their army as they marched east and brought their demonic enemies to battle.

Irimae had taken up one of the iron shackles that had restrained her in the aftermath of her rescue and with stony mien and soundless fury was soon in the thick of the fighting, bludgeoning her way through the fiendish hordes. Admiring her courage and ferocity, the Ilmatari paladins Olren Lamathar and Forstil “Brightblade” Morthil became her everpresent companions and guardians, together forming a deadly trio on the battlefield.

Irimae is known to have fallen in the Battle of the Citadel in 731 DR alongside her paladin companions, but not before her ferocious assault on the demon army ranks saw her personally slay Tharnas “the Lord of Skulls”, a cambion son of Orcus, as well as over three score ghouls, ghosts and minor demons. Chroniclers record how in the thick of battle, Irimae began to glow with a bright,

white aura and her blows emitted bolts of deadly lightning that flayed and felled the fiends that assailed her. Having driven a wedge into the demonic horde, Irimae held her shackle aloft and uttered a guttural scream before exploding in a blast of blinding light that disintegrated more than twoscore demons into a whirlwind of black ash, which the sage Wendren of Arrabar poetically described as the “falling petals of an ebon rose” in his book *Bloody Tears: A Study of Sacrifice and Martyrdom*.

In the aftermath of her fall, the clergy of Ilmater received dream visions from their deity announcing to all that their faith had welcomed a new “blessed” and naming her Irimae for all to worship henceforth. The priest Malantar collected her relics on the battlefield and she became the first of the “Sacred Sisters”.

#### NEW ARTIFACT: BLOODY SHACKLE OF IRIMAE

*Weapon (flail), artifact (requires attunement)*

When St Irimae was exalted to the ranks of the “blessed”, the most notable and famous of her surviving relics was the shackle that she had wielded in battle against the Scaled Horde alongside the paladins and holy warriors of the Triad Crusade.

The shackle was kept at the Sanctum of Malantar, a now destroyed temple to Ilmater that stood northwest of present-day Sarshel and which was razed by the hobgoblin hordes in 1095 DR. The shackle was lost at that time and has not been seen in the lands of Impiltur since. Reports from as far afield as the towns of Proskur and the backlands of Chondath appear to indicate that the shackle still exists in unknown hands, but the faithful of the Crying God have thus far failed to retrieve this precious artifact.

More recently, the priest Ardragus “the Scarred Seer” of the Sacellum of Suffering in Mussum advised the senior priests of his temple that he had seen a vision of the shackle being wielded and profaned by an unknown human. Accordingly, the church of Ilmater has sponsored at least two adventuring bands in the last season to search for the shackle, in an

attempt to obtain this lost treasure of the faith.

The *Bloody Shackle of Irimae* is a magic weapon that does damage as a flail and grants a +2 bonus to attack and damage rolls made with it. The shackle also functions as a silver weapon and grants advantage on attack rolls against fiends and saving throws against their spells and special abilities.

**Random Properties:** The Bloody Shackle of Irimae has the following random properties:

- 2 minor beneficial properties
- 1 major beneficial property
- 1 minor detrimental property

**Irimae's Dismissal.** When the shackle scores a critical hit on a fiend it is forced back to its plane of origin and can't return to your current plane for 24 hours by any means short of a *wish* spell.

**Spells.** While the shackle is on your person, you can use an action to cast one of the following spells (save DC 18) from it: *destructive wave* (radiant damage only), *dispel evil*, or *chain lightning*. Once you use the shackle to cast a spell, you can't cast that spell again from it until the next dawn.

**Bloodfire.** While the shackle is on your person, whenever a creature hits you with a melee attack, your wounds erupt with flame that damage the attacker causing it to take 2d8 fire damage.

**Destroying the Shackle.** Destroying the *Bloody Shackle of Irimae* requires that it be taken to the dead realm of Thanatos in the Abyss and struck with the *Wand of Orcus*. It is known that the demon prince Orcus hungers to destroy this relic of the Ilmatari faith in revenge for the deeds of St Irimae.

What relics of St Irimae remain are now housed at the Monastery of the Black Rose in the foothills of the Earthfast Mountains. Clergy, pilgrims and followers of Ilmater who attend on St Irimae are known to pray for assistance in righting wrongs and bringing evil to justice.

### St. Kylendra the Afflicted

**Symbol:** A blue eye with a red tear at its left corner on a white field

**Center of Worship:** Sanctuary of the White Aster

**Domain:** Suffering

Kylendra of Marl was a travelling healer and minor priestess of Ilmater who wandered the back roads and trails of the lands of the Easting Reach for over four decades in the 800s DR, guided by the hand of the One Who Endures. She came to the lands of Impiltur in the reign of King Beldred II and feeling the weight of her years, retired to a small farm on the eastern fringes of the Grey Forest and settled there. From her humble hut, Kylendra dispensed cures and homespun remedies to the surrounding villages, and the residents of the region came to call her "Mother Kylendra" for her kindness and restorative skills.

After 877 DR, the kingdom of Impiltur was wracked by a series of plagues that decimated the population, confirming that the realm had come under the special regard of the Mistress of Disease. Kylendra did what she could to stem the tide of death and desolation and succeeded in working miraculous cures, saving many lives. Her skill and devotion to the healing arts brought her to the attention of a hidden cell of Talonar priests and acolytes known as the Russet Circle, hidden in the depths of the Grey Forest, who were the perpetrators of the plagues unleashed on the Forgotten Kingdom. In the Year of the Shining Shield (889 DR) the clergy of Talona came seeking Kylendra to sacrifice her to their dread deity. In her desperation, she fled into the woodlands, the Talontar snapping at her heels like hounds on a scent.

After a night and a day the Talontar captured the aged and infirm Kylendra and took her to their hidden lair. Led by Venomlord Tragath Ormdûl (a term of address since fallen out of favour in the Church of Talona) the priests and followers of Talona sought to ritually torture Kylendra and summon an avatar of their dread mistress so as to crush Impiltur and the surrounding lands in a Tide of Pestilence. The ritual required the victim to be shattered in mind and body and seek the sweet release of death in Talona's name.

Despite a tenday of torture and punishment, Kylendra refused to yield, enduring the ravages visited upon her with stoicism and unflinching strength. At the same time, Kylendra's disappearance had come to the attention of the Impilturian Crown and armsmen led by a young

Lord Lantigar Deepstar came looking for her and discovered the Russet Circle, putting them to the sword. Kylendra of Marl breathed her last the day, satisfied that she had served her god faithfully and endured the trials he had visited upon her. For her devotion and strength of faith, Ilmater raised her to the ranks of his "blessed" as a paragon of the central tenets of his faith.

The skull and three finger bones of St Kylendra are kept at the Sanctuary of the White Aster, built at the site of the hut she lived in over many years. Priests of the faith maintain that drinking holy water from the skull of St Kylendra purges all poisons and diseases from the imbiber and many worshippers of the Crying God come to this Sanctuary for healing.

### St. Shaleen the Unyielding

**Symbol:** A broken black harp on a red field  
**Center of Worship:** Orbest of the Blackharp  
**Domain:** Discipline

Shaleen was born a poor shepherd girl along the banks of the River Dunthelar in the village of Rebroar's Hollow during the Kingless Years, some fifty winters after the fall of the Elethlim Dynasty. Her father Arblaur was a local herder, stolid and humourless while her mother Melintra was rotund and ruddy-cheeked, and possessed of a fine singing voice.

In the Year of Swordforging (977 DR), Arblaur found a wondrous item, a beautiful silver harp, along the river shore. Seeing no apparent owner and thinking it must be jetsam from some flatboat merchant vessel, the pragmatic Arblaur took the harp home to his wife, thinking correctly that it would be a welcome gift to the music-loving Melintra. The harp entranced Melintra, and she played it constantly even neglecting her chores and other activities. The formerly hardworking Arblaur stayed home also, asking his wife to play the beautiful harp that he had found for her.

In the days that followed, Melintra began to make the rounds of Rebroar's Hollow, clutching her silver harp to her breast, and playing for her friends and neighbours. The death of "Old" Dorbrul, one of the village elders, soon after was not considered untoward and Melintra harped at his burial, her fellow villagers standing around as if entranced. The next to pass was the infant daughter of a neighbour who Melintra had visited and played for only the day before, and as the days passed the death toll in Rebroar's Hollow began to mount.

Shaleen was greatly disturbed by the deaths of so many friends and acquaintances but was even more concerned at the seeming disinterest of her fellow villagers to what was occurring. Returning home with her flock, she was shocked to see her hitherto youthful parents literally aging before her eyes and neither eating or drinking but wanting only to listen to Melintra's harping. Within a week all the villagers could do was gather in the village center, mesmerised by Melintra's playing and falling into a deathlike sleep from which fewer and fewer could be roused.

Shaleen deduced that the harp was the cause of the evil that had descended on Rebroar's Hollow. In desperation she managed to snatch the harp from her mother's grasp and avoid the grabs and buffeting of the roused villagers to smash it against the ground, breaking it in twain. The shattered remnants turned as black as coal and from them arose an ebon mist that swirled around Shaleen, chilling her bones but otherwise leaving her unharmed. A shrill voice, malignant and menacing, thrust itself into her mind, naming itself Tzava and threatening her with torments unending if she did not submit to it. Fearful but uncowed, Shaleen defied the fiend and to her relief the entity dissipated in a swirl of fetid air.

#### HOLY PLACES OF WORSHIP

The lands of the Easting Reach and the neighbouring Bloodstone Lands use terms that originated in the Inner Sea for describing holy places of worship to the various deities of the Realms.

The term sanctul (plural: sanctar) is used for any temple complex of size or note while the term orbest refers to a shrine to a deity, with or without priests or attendants of the faith. The term maerl refers to a holy site or place or power, left untouched for pilgrims to visit and worship in the open.

The bravery and strength of will exhibited by Shaleen brought her to the attention of the clergy of the Crying God and in adulthood she became a priestess of Ilmater. It is known that she pursued the entity known as Tzava and destroyed it utterly and then devoted her remaining days to rooting out demons of possession and bolstering the strength

and will of the faithful to defy such insidious threats. When Shaleen died in 1058 DR, she was exalted to the ranks of the "blessed" by Ilmater and her relics collected and displayed at the shrine built in her memory, north of Hlammach. Clergy and other devotees of Ilmater often bring individuals suspected of being possessed to the Orbest of the Blackharp, believing correctly that it has the power to purge such foul influences.

## Divine Domains

Presented here are three new divine domains that DMs can introduce into their campaign either by means of the Patron Saint feat or as domains associated with a particular deity and accessible in their own right at 1st level.

Outside the Church of Ilmater, the domains presented here have broad application to the many deities of the Forgotten Realms setting. DMs can use the divine domains set out below as alternatives to the domains presented in the Players Handbook. Obvious examples include allowing the Vengeance domain to clerics of the deity Hoar, or the Suffering domain to clerics of the deity Loviatar.

### DISCIPLINE DOMAIN

The Broken God has seen many of his faithful succumb to the subtle torment of possession and mental domination. He grants the strength to his followers to combat this insidious evil and eradicate those who perpetrate such vile sorceries.

#### DISCIPLINE DOMAIN SPELLS

Cleric Level	Spells
1st	<i>sanctuary, wrathful smite</i>
3rd	<i>calm emotions, detect thoughts</i>
5th	<i>feign death, magic circle</i>
7th	<i>banishment, freedom of movement</i>
9th	<i>dispel evil, telekinesis</i>

### THIRD EYE

Starting after you choose this domain at 1st level, you can use your action to touch a willing creature other than yourself to give it advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks. This blessing lasts for 1 hour or until you use this feature again.

### CHANNEL DIVINITY: DISPOSSESS

Starting at 2nd level, you can use your Channel Divinity to focus the powers of the mind and resist possession and enchantment. As an action, you present your holy symbol and end the charmed

condition on any creature within 30 feet of you.

### CHANNEL DIVINITY: SHIELD OF INSIGHT

Starting at 6th level, when you are hit by an attack, you can use your Channel Divinity and your reaction to deflect or avoid the strike. You gain resistance to nonmagical damage and advantage on saving throws, including against the attack that damaged you, until the start of your next turn.

### POTENT SPELLCASTING

Starting at 8th level, you add your Wisdom modifier to the damage you deal with any cleric cantrip.

### IRON WILL

Starting at 17th level, you gain resistance to psychic damage and advantage on saving throws against divination and enchantment spells.

### SUFFERING DOMAIN

The Suffering domain focuses on the power of endurance and the ability to withstand pain and ill effects. Ilmater also imparts the ability to make others suffer so that they might gain insight into their transgressions and gain awareness regarding how their actions affect others.

#### SUFFERING DOMAIN SPELLS

Cleric Level	Spells
1st	<i>false life, ray of sickness</i>
3rd	<i>aid, ray of enfeeblement</i>
5th	<i>aura of vitality, bestow curse</i>
7th	<i>blight, stonewall</i>
9th	<i>contagion, greater restoration</i>

### BONUS PROFICIENCY

When you choose this domain at 1st level, you gain proficiency on Constitution saving throws.

### FORTIFY

Also at 1st level, you can use your action to touch a willing creature other than yourself to give it resistance to bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing damage from nonmagical weapons for 1 minute. You are able to use this feature a number of times equal to half of your Wisdom modifier (rounded up and a minimum of once). You regain all expended uses when you finish a long rest.

### CHANNEL DIVINITY: EASE SUFFERING

Starting at 2nd level, you can use your Channel

Divinity to restore the health or senses of the afflicted. As an action, you present your holy symbol and end either one disease or one condition that afflicts any creatures within 30 feet of you. The condition affected can be either blinded, deafened, paralyzed or poisoned.

### HEALING BOON

At 6th level, the healing spells you cast on yourself heal others. When you cast a spell of 1st level or higher that restores hit points to you, choose any creatures within 30 feet of you to regain hit points equal to the spell's level.

### DIVINE STRIKE

Starting at 8th level, you gain the ability to infuse your weapon strikes with divine energy. Once on each of your turns when you hit a creature with a weapon attack, you can cause that attack to wrack the target with pain, causing it to roll a d4 and subtract the number rolled from its next attack roll or saving throw. When you reach 14th level, the target is affected for its next two attack rolls or saving throws.

### UNBROKEN

At 17th level, you gain immunity to effects that cause you to become incapacitated.

### VENGEANCE DOMAIN

The Crying God recognises that alleviating suffering means not only protecting the weak and the vulnerable but also punishing those who cruelly inflict suffering on others. The faithful rely on orders such as the Holy Warriors of Suffering to be proactive in this regard and they have become a feared and respected arm of the church.

#### VENGEANCE DOMAIN SPELLS

Cleric Level	Spells
1st	<i>compelled duel, longstrider</i>
3rd	<i>hold person, pass without trace</i>
5th	<i>fear, speak with dead</i>
7th	<i>embattlement, fireshield</i>
9th	<i>destructive wave, scrying</i>

### BONUS CANTRIP

When you choose this domain at 1st level, you gain the *true strike* cantrip if you didn't already know it.

### MARK OF JUSTICE

Also at 1st level, you gain the ability to magically

mark an enemy. Any attack roll you make against an affected creature has advantage for 1 minute. You can use this feature a number of times equal to your Wisdom modifier (a minimum of once). You regain all expended uses when you finish a long rest.

### CHANNEL DIVINITY: RETALIATORY STRIKE

Starting at 2nd level, you can use your Channel Divinity to strike at a foe that assails you. When a creature misses you with a melee attack, using your Channel Divinity you can use your reaction to make a melee weapon attack against the creature. If you hit you add +10 to the attack's damage roll.

### SHARED WRATH

At 6th level, when you take damage from a weapon attack, you can use your reaction to grant advantage to a creature within 30 feet of you on its next weapon attack.

### DIVINE STRIKE

Starting at 8th level, you gain the ability to infuse your weapon strikes with poison – a gift from your deity. Once on each of your turns when you hit a creature with a weapon attack, you can cause the attack to deal an extra 1d8 poison damage to the target. When you reach 14th level, the extra damage increases to 2d8.

### IMPLACABLE FOE

At 17th level, you can choose to gain advantage on weapon and spell attacks against a type of enemy that has damaged you since your last long rest. Your enemy can be selected from aberrations, beasts, celestials, constructs, dragons, elementals, fey, fiends, giants, humanoids, monstrosities, oozes, plants, or undead. Only one type of enemy can be selected and remains selected until you have finished a long rest. After a long rest you gain no advantage on weapon and spell attacks until a new enemy damages you and is selected.

#### NEW SPELL

##### EMBATTLEMENT

*4th-level abjuration*

**Casting Time:** 1 action

**Range:** 30 feet

**Components:** V, S



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

Choose a willing creature that you can see within range. Until the spell ends, all attack rolls against this creature have disadvantage.