

THE ROMAN ASCENDANCY

“Were it not for the intervention of the Angels, we would be forced to walk in shadow instead of choosing to walk in the light.”

- Prete Giovanni lanuzzi, Order of Gabriel

History

Historical Overview

La Frattura

Italy was, for a very long time, a patchwork nation. Never since our Great Rebirth did we have a gloriously unified nation. First came the Schism, ripping apart the seat of Papal power and making us all enemies in the eyes of Europe. For a time it seemed we had things well in hand. Regardless of the opinions of our neighboring countries we continued to flourish. Of course, history is always doomed to repeat itself and the Second Great Schism, a heated battle against rival Papal seats in Rome itself, tore our nation apart. Powerful families sought to exert their influence and purchase seats of power alongside the Pope. Yet, those devoted to the church sought to keep the Papal seat free of mundane influence. Then, in a bold move, the noble families of Italy sought to install a new Pope, one that would bend to their will. We fought, brother against brother, and were blinded to the threats from outside our borders. It should not have been a surprise when that *bastardo*, Napoleon came and took advantage of our weakness in the year 1800. The French sought to carve us up in their avarice. We were too scattered, too confused, and in the end we were broken. Soon enough other nations followed Napoleon's lead and we found ourselves unable to stand on our broken legs. Our land, our culture, and ourselves were all parceled out between different nations. It seemed that all of Europe had marched on our borders prepared to claim their own piece of land. France, Germany, and even Great Britain had their hands at our throat, bickering between themselves as to who would emerge victorious. The corpse was not even cold.

But the people of Italy were not content to just roll over and let the vultures swarm upon them. Though defeated, we were proud. During the years of our fracture some stepped up from out of the shadows, long lost Orders who clung to tenets and beliefs far more arcane and ancient than any of us could hope to understand. Though they seemed antiquated, they were to become our salvation. While some of them, like *L'Ordine di San Michele Defenter*, worked publically recruiting those with able bodies to fight, others remained hidden; bringing information and supplies to the needy during the dark days of our sundering. The people embraced the Holy Orders as the vehicle of their salvation.

Skirmishes began. They were small at first and spearheaded by *L'Ordine di San Michele Defenter* and a secondary Order known as *I Canonici Regulares Sanctissimae Crucis a Stella Rubea*. Fierce warriors, they devoted themselves to rooting out all foreign influence in our beloved country. They worked tirelessly alongside the other Orders to drive out the interlopers, and after a long struggle in 1843 we emerged victorious.

La Riunificazione

How would we now organize ourselves? Once more our own nation, we fell back on old habits: The Pope. A member of *I Fratelli dell'Istruzione Cristiana*, now known as the Order of Gabriel, stepped up. Naturally there were some who did not agree with this decision. *L'Ordine di San Michele Defenter* believed Italy needed a man of action in power, someone who would actively protect the interests of their newly reformed country. Despite the dissent, in 1846 Pope Gregory XIV came to power. He was a natural choice to lead our country forward. His contributions during the Reunification War were key in winning several important battles, and he was well liked by all. We thought we would finally recapture our nationalistic sense of self that we had lost. Rallying around the new Pope, we became The Holy Nation of the Vatican.

We could have never foreseen the darkness that lay ahead of us all. Gregory's lust for knowledge and power took us all by surprise. He allied with select members of the Orders and the few wealthy and powerful aristocratic families left in Italy to install himself as an absolute theocrat. With the purse strings of the Nation in hand, Gregory subjugated the masses. He controlled the flow of trade goods, food, and even information to the people, distorting their connection to their land. Every week there were new edicts to follow, new tithes to pay, and the people fell into despair. Rumors abounded of Gregory's corruption. We were scared and without guidance. Those who dared to go against papal law were excommunicated and sent to Sicily, now a penal colony, and there were those among the Orders who claimed to see him consorting with dark forces from his gilded throne.

Eventually the Pope closed our borders to all outsiders and forbade any Italian citizen to travel outside of the country. Italy became a prison. Our brothers and sisters in the holy orders saw death and destruction not only in Italy, but also in the world beyond. Places we once swore to protect were being torn apart by England and America in their search for land and power. Under pain of excommunication *L'Ordine di San Michele Defenter* and *I Canonici Regulares Sanctissimae Crucis a Stella Rubea* led clandestine missions to these places, drove back the fighting and helped the people we swore to protect so long ago. They were able to gain a foothold in Tripoli, driving back the fighting and providing aid for those ravaged by the colonial forces. Many excommunicated Italians sent to Sicily sought better lives elsewhere and the Orders helped to send them across the ocean to America, a place of hope and freedom.

It would not take long for the Pope to become discover the actions of the Orders at home and abroad, and in 1854 he sought to put an end to all resistance in one fell swoop. Squads of Papal soldiers swept through the streets of Italy, rounding up any known allies of the Orders. The flagrant and unlawful arrest of the leaders of the holy orders was the straw that broke the camel's back. The next month the Orders, now unified under the same purpose, stormed the papal palace and took the country back once and for all. As for Gregory, he cowardly threw himself from the highest turret of the palace and, through his disgraceful suicide, all but corroborated his involvement with the forces of evil.

Il Giorno dell'Annuncio

In the years that followed, another great shuffle took place. We placed our faith in the Orders to lead and guide us as they had time and time again. No longer hidden, they worked tirelessly to repair the damage done by the false Pope, and for nearly 11 years Italy flourished once again. Peace reigned, and a second Renaissance occurred: once again people were producing art, sailing the waters of the Mediterranean, and creating a new Italy. We threw off our old identity; one tainted with oppression and darkness, and embraced a new name, a name symbolic of the strength of our nation: Rome.

Prior to the Orders taking over we lived under a draconian regime. Even the slightest infraction was met with the penalty of excommunication. The penal colony of Sicily was overfull of dissidents, criminals, and the lowest classes of people. Italy was ruled by greed and those who held all the money made all the rules under the Papal state. Families that had endured from the Renaissance flourished in the corruption. Of course, this was all before the Orders and the Angels.

After the ousting of the Pope, the Orders of Michael and Uriel joined forces to remove those families still loyal to him. Under the Orders, some semblance of normalcy returned to everyday life. Rome, with their aid, focused on rebuilding what had been lost. Wealth was no longer a mark of success. Manual labor, once thought the purview of the unwashed masses became prized. There still remained a stark divide between those who had and those who had not, but the Orders quickly tried to mend this divide.

It was during one of the national celebrations in 1865, a week long affair where we gave thanks to the Orders and celebrated the founding of our glorious Rome when it happened. From out of nowhere, clouds rolled in and the world turned to primal darkness. The earth shook and cracked and the roar was deafening. Fire heaved from the fissures and it was a Hell on earth. Panic gripped the streets of Rome as people sought to hold their loved ones close one last time. We knew this was the end times, a purging and retribution for all the evil that had been done on Roman soil. And as suddenly as it happened, the world stood still and quiet. Shafts of blinding light pierced the darkened sky, and the world exploded with pure

white light. And then, they were there. The Angels came in hosts and proclaimed unto us the new order. They were here to save us and gift us with their power. The world was new and we were blessed. And as quickly as they came, they were gone. All had witnessed their presence and were heartened.

They endowed us with their grace, the ability to perform miracles, so that we could do their work here on earth. Under their guidance we reorganized under both the Orders and the historically significant (and previously purged) families of Italy. Rome rallied under yet another new name, a name signifying our faith and strength: The Roman Ascendancy. But, of course, there are still those antiquated Romans who insist on calling us The Holy Order of the Vatican, as if they could reclaim that title from the dark days. Some beliefs never die.

La Grande Espansione

The Angels told us to look outward, and we did. We found that other places had been spared on the Day of Reckoning. Soon contact was made, and a treaty of exploration signed. It was all so new for us: other peoples and their ways. We would forge ahead, led by the Council and the Orders to this new world and to spread the word of salvation to all.

Major Events

1575: The first Great Schism occurs. Italy becomes hated in the eyes of Catholic Europe.

1776: The first rumblings of establishing a new, secondary Pope begins among the noble families of Italy primarily pushed by the Borgias.

1785: Open conflict begins as Papal propaganda spreads throughout the country. Broad-sides appear touting the righteousness of a new Papal candidate Callixtus IV.

1787: The second Great Schism officially begins.

1789: Napoleon begins his invasion of Italy.

1792: Napoleon's forces have already taken Piedmont, Milan, and Parma. Venice stands as the last Northern territory and is being held by the Sforza family.

1795: English soldiers land in Tuscany, quickly conquering it.

1796: The English begin their march from Tuscany taking Florence, Bologna, and Ferrara on their way to Venice.

1798: With France pushing on its western border and the English arriving to the south Venice falls and the Sforza family flees, along with many refugees to Umbria in order to bolster Rome.

1799: Germany arrives to the south taking Calabria and Naples.

1801-1839: Years of occupation under foreign rule.

1840: Skirmishes began, first to the south. Systematically the Order of Michael and the Order of Uriel begin taking back both Naples and Calabria in a brutal series of guerilla skirmishes.

1841: News of assassinations spread throughout the northern territories. Leaders are being killed and no culprits are found.

1843: All foreign influence is driven out of Italy by the Orders.

1846: Pope Gregory XIV comes to power and The Holy Nation of the Vatican is formed.

1854: Public leaders of the Orders are arrested. Later that same year the allied forces of the Orders oust Gregory and he commits suicide.

1854-1864: Rebuilding and reunification under the Orders. The state of Rome is instituted.

1865: Proclamation Day or The Day of Ascension.

Notable Leadership/Governance

After the Proclamation Day Rome radically shifted its governance. Rome would not be guided by the Orders alone; the people of Rome were also given a say. As such five important families in Rome came to power. Four were proclaimed by the Angels and a fifth was voted on by the people. The Orders would work alongside these families to rule the newly formed Roman Ascendency. The families would rotate influence every five years when new ruling families would be proclaimed and a new fifth family would be elected.

The current families are as follows*:

The Medici Family: A prominent mercantile family well versed in economics and trade agreements. Their knowledge is sure to be important in a newly expanded world.

Current notable names: Giovanni and Ana Garzia Medici (together in charge of overseeing the national treasury and forging trade agreements in the new world) and their children Giulio, Francesco, Antonio, Pietro, and Caterina.

The Colonna Family: Known for producing some of the finest poets and scholars Italy has ever seen. It's known that Vittoria Colonna VII is writing a first-hand account of *Il Giorno dell'Annuncio*.

Current notable names: Stefano and Margaret (author of many books and poems about the coming of the Angels) Colonna and their child Vittoria VII (poet).

The Borgia Family: An infamous family that suffered greatly in the family purges. That being said, they are still shrewd political strategists whose contributions during the Treaty of Cardiff were key.

Current notable names: Isabel Borgia (husband deceased, she was the chosen delegate from the Ascendancy to the treaty) and her children Rodrigo, Catalina, and Maria.

The Sforza Family: A finer family of military strategists cannot be found in Italy. They have been charged to oversee the expansion west into America.

Current notable names: Cosimo (non-order liaison to the military) and Bianca Maria Sforza and their children Mauro, Lucia Allegra, Ippolita, and Ludovico III.

The Este Family: Elected by the people, the Este family is well known for their outreach to the poor. Historically, they petitioned Pope Gregory many times to provide relief for the poor.

Current notable names: Fulgenzio and Adriana Este and their children Adolfo, Donatella, Concetta, and Ofelia.

*Note, players may not start as a member of a ruling family.



Map

On the Proclamation Day the landscape of Italy was forever altered. The Alps have fallen into the sea, leaving Italy an island nation. Out of the sea rose a land mass connecting Calabria (the tip of the boot) to Sicily and Sardinia was swallowed by the Tyrrhenian Sea. The months after the Proclamation did not require many changes in the way Romans lived. They still focus on cultivating the land around them and turning to the sea for their meat. Strangely since the event, the waters around the island have teemed with marine life; widely thought to be a gift from the Angels.

Roma - In the center of the island lies the seat of the Orders and Council in the Roman Ascendancy. Much of the city has sprawled out into the surrounding countryside, and many of the Guilds make their home here, most notably the Performers, Merchants, and Historians guilds. Roma is a bustling port city, but unlike most ports in other countries, Roma is spectacularly clean and orderly. Many merchants call Roma home.

Taranto - On the heel of the boot lies the port home of the Sisters of the Sea and site of many shipwrights in the Ascendancy. Many of the former “prisoners” and “exiles” from Sicily have found their way here to seek a new life.

Palermo - This region is to exploration as Roma is to merchants. People keen on adventure and sifting through ruins long lost seek out Palermo as their base of operations. Many buildings, books, and artifacts were forgotten on Sicily during the dark reign of Gregory XIV and the men and women who flock there seek evidence of an age gone by. The Order of the Light has erected a few libraries in Palermo of extant documents from before the time of the Angels.

Genova and Milano - Much of this area was devastated on Proclamation Day when the Alps sheared off from the land. Rebuilding efforts are still taking place, and while the population is sparse, a growing cadre of Artisans are beginning to create wondrous works of art with the rubble left behind as a testament to the Roman spirit.

Venezia - While it avoided rocky destruction like much of the north, Venezia suffered awful floods. Its once wonderful canals and beautiful architecture were destroyed and only small islands of land remain. Out of the destruction The Shrouds have found a secluded home to carry out their care of the dead.

Culture

Everyday Life

When the Angelic Proclamation was made society changed drastically. The once rigidly stratified class system collapsed under the influence of the Angels. Gone was the emphasis placed on material wealth. If you could contribute to the betterment of society through manual labor, the arts, or any other way, you were valuable. While some of the powerful merchant families still existed, they became just another facet of society. It was decreed that women would be afforded an equal place in society befitting their status and skills. And, in fact many women rose to prominence as heads of families and high ranking members in the Angelic Orders. As such the people of Rome have a strong sense of equality and justice for all, regardless of their social class.

The people of Rome are industrious and hopeful, with certain quirks pertaining to the specific order they follow, if any at all (see the Angelic Orders section for more information). A Roman appreciates fine craftsmanship, whether it is a work of art, architecture, or metallurgy. Whatever your profession, there is a great emphasis placed upon education. Romans,

from childhood, are put through a rigorous educational process. They are taught history, literature, mathematics, the arts, and usually the beginning of a trade. The Order of Gabriel keeps a close eye on the students' progress, and those that show particular promise are recruited to learn the mysteries of a specific order. Those that are not specifically recruited by an order usually try to live within the tenants of one, as if they had been. Each order has their own beliefs that govern everyday life and the occupational choices of its followers.

When it comes to foreigners, Romans are polite but can be fiercely judgmental of those outside of the fold. Romans see themselves as being saved, and believe that the other nations are only alive at the sufferance of the Angels. But with this belief comes the notion that everyone is worthy of salvation and deserves the chance to do penance.

And, of course, some things never die. The people of Rome are fiercely passionate about all they do. From their devotion to the Angelic Orders to their jobs, Romans are incredibly proud. They are not afraid to stand up for what they believe in and are not shy about letting their voices be heard. They cling to superstitions that have been alive for centuries and hold a great reverence for history and antiquity.

Superstitions/Social Mores

A pious lot, the Romans have their own set of superstitions that govern life. While many of these are not life and death, they are observed for fear of attracting unwanted attention of negative spirits or Streghe.

Bread is a staple of all life, and as such it has its own rules for eating. Never place a loaf face down, this invites bad luck. Never leave a knife stuck in a loaf of bread, doing so will invite backstabbing.

Never place your hat directly down on a bed or table. Only Curates of Uriel place them there when they are going to deliver last rites. A lay person doing so invites death.

The Number 17 is unlucky. The 1 looks like a hanged man and the 7 a gallows.

Never pour out liquid, especially wine, with your left hand. If you do the person who is drinking will become ill.

Always look people in the eye when you are toasting and clinking glasses. If you don't, you're inviting the evil eye.

It is customary when someone dies to place their favorite objects with them. This keeps them from coming back to retrieve them.

Always bring something to a gathering, celebration, or someone's home in gratitude. If you do, your generosity will be repaid tenfold.

Carrying a rabbit's foot or *cornicello* (horn) will ward off bad luck.

Never sleep with your feet towards the doorway. It resembles a coffin facing the door of the church, and will invite an early death.

If you spill salt, toss a pinch over your shoulder to blind the evil spirits.

If you are in danger of incurring bad luck, *tocca ferro* (tap iron) or a good-luck charm.

If your ear itches, someone is gossiping about you.

Recreation

Family is the most important thing to the people of the Roman Ascendancy. During times of recreation people gather with family, either blood related or adopted, over meals to forge stronger familial bonds. After the meal games are enjoyed. People of the Roman Ascendancy take games very seriously, and have a tendency to be quite competitive which means these pastimes can become quite boisterous. Romans enjoy games like Bocce, Game of the Goose, and card games like Briscola and Tressette.

Holidays

Each Order has feast days in celebration of Proclamation Day. Generally they are celebrated with sharing food, stories, and hospitality, but each order has some of their own observances specific to their tenants.

The Feast of Michael: Held in the Summer. The followers of Michael celebrate with a martial tournament in the afternoon that all attend, and a celebration of the victors later in the evening.

The Feast of Gabriel: Held in the Fall. The followers of Gabriel gather around a bonfire to share stories about the past year and talk about what the coming year holds.

The Feast of Raphael: Held in the Spring. The followers of Raphael celebrate with a grand feast that usually carries on to the early hours of the morning. Dancing, music, and games of skill are all a part of the celebration.

The Feast of Uriel: Held in the Winter. Unlike the others, the followers of Uriel celebrate with introspection and commemoration of friends and family that have passed on.

Religion

Religion in the Roman Ascendancy is relegated to being a part of, or following the tenets of a specific Angelic Order

The Order of Michael - Formerly *L'Ordine di San Michele Defenter*. Are the defenders of the faith. Staunch fighters, they defend the faithful and root out any evil that seeks to take hold of their brethren. In 1220, Pope Honorius III placed the Order of Michael within the Templars to act as an internal police force. While they were a part of the Templars for centuries,



Order of Michael



Order of Gabriel



Order of Raphael



Order of Uriel

they remained completely independent of the organizations goals and tactics. It was the Order of Michael who brought the corruption of the Templars to light and after a lengthy trial forced them to disband in 1312. Historically the followers of Michael are known for their adherence to objective justice and their militancy when it comes to seeking out evil from within the organizations they are tasked with protecting. Typically their members are soldiers, men of law, or judges. The current leader of the Order is Grand Master Knight Chiara D'alleppo.

The Order of Gabriel - Formerly *I Fratelli dell'Istruzione Cristiana*. They are the teachers and historians, tasked with keeping the stories of the time before the Angels alive and educating the new generations. The Order was hit the hardest during the Dark Times. Pope Gregory, a former member, knew all too well the dangers that unchecked knowledge possessed. The flow of information between them and the outside world was heavily regulated, and was sometimes completely infiltrated by propaganda. Many high ranking members were either jailed or killed by the Pope. After the Proclamation they strove to rebuild their ranks and attain some of their former glory. Members of the Order become teachers, writers, historians, storytellers, and politicians. The current leader of the Order is Nunzio Zanone.

The Order of Raphael - Formerly The Order of Hospitaliers or *I Canonici Regulares Sanctissimae Crucis a Stella Rubea*. They are the healers and helpers of the Angelic Orders. The altruistic nature of this order often found them in direct opposition to the Pope. As such much of their activity during the Dark Times remained abroad. The Order of Raphael, as a somewhat militaristic order in their own right, works closely with the Order of Michael. As a result of their efforts the rebuilding of Roman society was well orchestrated. The Order of Raphael is one of the most consistently active and forward thinking of all the Orders, and many high ranking members attended the Treaty negotiations and signing. Followers of Raphael become doctors, architects, and missionaries. The current leader of the Order is Vincenzo Ottaviani.

The Order of Uriel - This is the order of Angels that works in the shadows, the spies and sometimes assassins. Not much is known about the founding of this Order, but rumor has it that it is as old as the church itself. They work somewhat symbiotically with the other Orders, assisting their dealings from within the shadows. During the Dark Times their leader was ousted and was one of the first arrested. As such they have grown much more clandestine. Out of all the Orders, they are the most selective about direct membership. Members of the Order are primarily spies. The current leader of the Order is Imelda Ferretti.

Factions

Government

The Ascendancy is run by a council made up of notable families within the Ascendancy that helped profoundly in the rebuilding effort and delegates from the Angelic Orders. Order delegates are chosen by vote within the Order and serve a six month term. Currently all the chosen families are into their third year of rule and are expected to change in two years time. At that time it is foretold that a second proclamation will come from the Angels declaring a new four families to rule and a fifth will be voted into power. The council has close ties to the

people and hold public forums every month for the gentry to air their grievances. Motions and laws are passed by popular vote among the council and disputes between council members are usually handled as quietly as possible to avoid unnecessary public upset.

Military

The military is governed by the Order of Michael with support by the Orders of Raphael and Uriel. Infantry is primarily comprised of followers of Michael broken up into units under the leadership of commanders.

Ranks are as follows (from lowest to highest)

Squire - The lowest order in the military, they are tasked with assisting those above them in menial tasks while proving their worth to the company in which they serve.

Confanonier - Officers in charge of overseeing the Squires in their training and development.

Sergeant - First proper military rank. They serve as support units to knights.

Knight - The backbone of any military unit. Skilled combatants that proved their worth on the field and as a result they are given a retinue of Sergeants and Squires to command.

Under-Marshal - A rank above knights. They are in charge of the mundane, yet quite important, duties of keeping a company functioning such as the requisition of equipment and the deployment of soldiers. He or she also carries the central banner into battle in order to keep the company organized.

Marshal - Part of the upper chain of command. A marshal is in charge of a complete company of Knights and everything under them.

Turcopolier - Third in command. Usually in charge of multiple Marshals, supporting them in the administrative duties of running an army.

Seneschal - Right hand of the Master and Commander. Adviser in military strategy and the movement of troops on a grand scale.

Master and Commander - Second in command. Field commander of multiple Marshals for a given geographic area.

Grand Master Knight - First in command. In charge of all aspect of the military across all units. An elected position from within the military orders.

Traditional hand to hand combat with melee weapons is favored over the use of firearms as utilizing firearms with both armor and shield is a cumbersome way to fight. Also, because of the Proclamation firearms and gunpowder are hard to come by and expensive to make in the Ascendancy. The military uses tactics and stratagem that harken back to the days of Ancient Rome, with a predilection for line and phalanx combat. Supporting the main branch of the

military are the Orders of Raphael and Uriel. The Order of Raphael provides medical support in the field, setting up mobile hospitals and assisting in the repair of weapons and armor. Covertly, the Order of Uriel carries intel and provides measured strikes behind enemy lines to bolster the Roman military tactics.

Social

Traditional social ordering has collapsed under the influence of the Angels. Prior to the Day of Ascension wealth equaled power. Rich mercantile families ruled the country from behind the seat of power, exerting influence with the proper application of money and connections. Now social power is connected to ones ability to contribute to the betterment of society. A wealthy merchant is no better than an honest farmer who supplies grain for the daily bread, or the baker who makes the bread. No matter your gender, vocation, or wealth if you contribute, you are valued.

Thus society has reformed the Guild system so popular in their past. Guilds serve to organize people around specific trades, and ensure all who contribute reap the benefits. Every job in the Ascendancy falls under the purview of one of the Guilds Some examples of the more popular Guilds in the Roman Ascendancy are:

The Masons Guild - Architects and Stoneworkers.

The Mariners Guild - Sefarers and Shipwrights.

The Performers Guild - Dancers, singers, Commedia performers, actors, and playwrights.

The Cartographers Guild - Mapmakers and explorers.

The Chirurgeons Guild - Doctors and healers.

The Historians Guild - Record keepers.

The Artisans Guild - Metalsmiths, clayworkers, leatherworkers, blacksmiths, and the like.

The Merchants Guild - Those who sell and buy good and brokers of trade routes.

Other

There also exist factions within the Roman Ascendancy that are tied to the Angelic Orders, either directly or by loose ties.

The Order of the Light - These followers of Gabriel have decided to sequester themselves in the few archives that remain and delve the secrets of the past in order to explain our ascension as a nation. They were the only group to publically support the readoption of the title "Holy Nation of the Vatican." Not much is directly known about them, but it is rumored that they have been collecting first hand accounts of Ascension Day for an archival project on the number of Angels seen during the Proclamation.

The Sisters of the Sea - An all female contingent of followers of Michael. They have committed themselves to naval protection and exploration. The closest thing to marines the Ascendancy have, they work closely with the Medici family and the Merchants Guild to ensure the sea trade routes remain free of obstruction.

The Shrouds - This group has taken it upon themselves to care for the bodies (and to them souls) of the deceased. Not much is known about them, but they are thought to be followers of Raphael who have eschewed the care of earthly bodies.

L'Arlecchino - Masked and mysterious. Not much is known about them, but their members show up at times of great strife. If they act, it is not known. It is widely believed among the Orders that they don't actually exist and are the figment or creation of a few creative minds in the Performers Guild.

Views on Other Nations

The United Kingdom - "They had so much promise, but their reliance on new, bigger, and better technology has led them astray. There is a chance that they can be allowed back into the fold, but first they would have to forsake their dependence and endless need to substitute divinity with contraptions. I somehow don't think that is like to happen anytime soon."

-Alessandra DelVecchio, Commander, Order of Raphael

The United States of America - "This new land holds much promise. I sincerely hope we can gain a strong foothold there and expand the glorious word of the Angels. And, let us not forget our brothers and sisters who fled the tyrannical Gregory and sought freedom on American shores. We will reclaim them and teach them, so that they may flourish in the light of the Angels." - *Cesare Adami, Order of Michael*

People of Lhasa - "They had their chance, and they drove us out for one who claims some sort of divine rite. There is only one divine authority, and it is not theirs." *Vincenzo Grillo, Sailor in service to The Medici Family*

People of the Land - "Savages. But, they seem to have some sort of spiritual connection which allows them to do things similar to us. I wonder if the Angels are speaking to them as they speak to us and they are just mistaking it for the rocks and trees speaking to them. They are, however, not an overly large threat to our project, and may even prove to be helpful in the years to come." - *Prete Marco Tessoro, Order of Gabriel*

Fortress Laramie - "It saddens me that they would completely turn their backs on their homeland in order to gain some semblance of normalcy. But, by the grace of the Angels, they have survived, and their survival has a reason. They will be welcomed back into the fold with open arms. If, and only if, they can give up their ties to their adopted land." - *Maria Righi, General, Order of Michael*

Crime and Punishment

Horse Thieving: To steal a horse or a herd from its rightful owner. (Reparation, Penance)

Rustling: To steal a herd of cattle from its rightful owner. (Reparation, Imprisonment)

Buffalo Hunting: To hunt wild buffalo without owner. (Not a crime)

Murder: To end the life of another person, regardless of circumstance (Excommunication)

Attempted Murder: Like Murder, but without success. (Imprisonment, 1 year excommunication)

Bank Robbery: To rob resources or funds from an established bank. (Imprisonment, Penance)

Train Robbery: To rob resources or funds from an active train. (Imprisonment, Penance)

Theft of an Official: To rob resources or funds from someone who holds an official position of office, such as a sheriff, marshal or mayor. (Imprisonment, Reparation)

Grand Larceny: The theft of resources or funds in excess of \$100.00, not counting horses or cattle. (Imprisonment to be determined by the severity of the theft)

Theft: The theft of resources or funds under \$100.00, not counting horses or cattle. (Reparation of money stolen and Penance)

Drunk in Public: Displays of egregious behavior while drunk. (Penance, Monetary fine)

Public Lewdness: Appearance that promotes lewd behavior or otherwise considered indecent (Penance, Monetary Fine)

Disorderly Conduct: Behavior that causes a ruckus, such as rough-housing, bar fights and the like. (Penance)

Carrying a Weapon in a No-Weapon Zone: Being armed in an area marked as a "No-Weapon Zone" by the authorities. (Confiscation and Fine)

Destruction of Artifacts: Destruction of any artifact or historical object that may be significant to the history of Rome. (Excommunication)

Consorting with spirits: Consorting with any outside forces. Consorting constitutes making bargains with or helping the cause of evil spirits. (Ruling dependent on the severity of the crime as overseen by The Order of Michael)

A note on Penance: The focus of Roman justice is on penance and reformation, thus many crimes have this as a component of punishment. The penance is determined by the highest ranking member of an Order currently in the area. Commonly it takes the form of community service as determined by the needs of the town.

A note on Excommunication: Excommunication is the punishment for only the most grievous of crimes when penance is not an option. You are completely cut off from all of the Orders and society and as such you no longer have access to using Angelic power.

Clothing

These social changes have also prompted changes in dress and deportment among the people of Rome. With the emphasis on production and the betterment of society, clothing has become purely a function of covering. Not having access to foreign trade routes for years caused a shortage of sumptuous materials for the manufacturing of luxury garments. Thus clothing is usually homespun and simple befitting the wearer's job function. The typical peasant garb is a simple belted tunic with loose or fitted pants for men, and tunics or simple corsets with pants or skirts for women. Despite their simple construction, Romans love color in their garments. The bolder, the better. Ostentatious ornamentation, however, is seen as unnecessary by most. But many Romans can appreciate a finely crafted garment or accessory.