

Bounden To The See Of Rome

Religion in *Blood Royale* By Paul Cockburn & Jervis Johnson

*We are so much bounden to the See of Rome that we cannot do too much honour to it...For we received from that See our Crown Imperial.*¹

Henry VIII, King of England 1491-1547

Now that you've played your first two or three games of *Blood Royale* and realised what a doddle it is, we thought we would add a few more ideas, just to give the game a few little extras. So, courtesy of Paul, 'Aren't History Books Expensive' Cockburn and Jervis, 'You Can't Expect Me To Write Rules About That' Johnson, here are some rules for adding the Church, the Papacy. and a lot more scope to your game...

The Medieval Papacy

Long before they started kissing airport tarmac, Popes were noted for a very different attitude towards the countries of the world. They thought they ruled them. Kings and Emperors were in charge of taxes and armies and cities, but the Church was the word of God, and the Pope was the spokesman. Therefore much of the history of relations between the Church and the secular states of Europe was fraught with difficulty.

The theory that Kings held their thrones only with the blessing of the Papacy took off from about the 8th Century, and solidified in the 12th. By the time of Innocent III (1198-1216), the Papacy was in head-on collision with the Holy Roman Empire (Germany). By the 1300s, successive Popes had convinced themselves that they had the final authority on just about anything, and meddled constantly in the affairs of sovereign powers.

Against this, medieval monarchs struggled to impose their own authority. The arguments raged over church lands, tithes, the appointment of bishops and the Pope's demand that only those monarchs blessed by the Apostolic See ruled with the authority of God. In some countries this was tantamount to undermining the King's ability to rule.

On the other side of the coin, the Papacy had great weaknesses of its own. Its independence was threatened by the lack of a secure territorial base, and by its need for loyal monarchs prepared to fight crusades. Spain and France both dominated the Papacy for long periods of time. Also, if the Church fell into disunity, the way was open for the foundation of anti-popes, who set up rival organisations, often duplicating all the functions of the original. The internecine strife this caused left the Church powerless to intervene.

For a game like *Blood Royale*, the full complexities of the medieval Church cannot be detailed. But it is possible to cause players the right kind of anxiety by introducing a few simple rules that duplicate some of the actions of the Church. And so...

¹ An alternate source for the quote is *The Life of Sir Thomas More, Part III* (by More's son-in-law, William Roper, first published circa 1556). More is defending himself from accusations of treason: « [...] Nay (quoth his Grace) that it shall not, we are so much bounden unto the See of Rome, that we cannot do too much honour unto it. [...] ». The full text can be found at <http://www.krecker.com/tmore.html>

Rules For Religion in Blood Royale

Setting Up

At the start of the game, one player should make up a character sheet for a 'Pope' character born in 1250. The Pope is not controlled by any player at the start of the game. In addition, each player receives a 'Cardinal' character (assumed to be the Uncle of the King) born in 1365, with Strength and Charisma scores of 0 and a Constitution of + 2. See below for rules on Cardinals.

The players will need to prepare a deck of *Vote Cards* for use if a *Conclave* is held. Use an ordinary pick of playing cards and sort out 3 'fives', 2 'tens' and one ace from the deck, representing 5, 10, and 15 point Votes respectively.

1 . The Clergy

When a male character reaches the age of 15, the controlling player may decide to have him join the clergy. Older characters may also join the clergy, as long as they are not married. This should be recorded by writing a C next to the Prince number space on the character sheet.

Characters who have joined the clergy may not marry, and do not receive a Prince piece when they reach the age of 20 (if they already have a Prince piece, it should be removed from the board). Any titles they may have are retained and the character still modifies rebellion rolls, taxation, and so on for the Province that goes with the title.

Neither the King, his eldest son or his son's eldest son may join the clergy. A character in the clergy may not become king and must be passed over. There is no penalty for passing over a character in this way. Any character, as long as he is not the Pope, may renounce the clergy and return to being a 'normal' character at any time. Characters who have renounced the clergy may rejoin later.

i. Bishops

A male character in the clergy may be made into a Bishop during the Marriages part of the Dynastic Sequence. The player controlling the character pays 30 crowns to the Papal Treasury to make the character into a Bishop, and can then record the fact in the Titles space on the character sheet.

In the taxation part of the Interphase, each Bishop receives 5 crowns (plus or minus the character's Charisma) which may be added to the controlling player's treasury.

ii. Cardinals

To become a Cardinal, a character must already be a Bishop and must be at least 30 years old. Cardinals are appointed by the Pope in the Marriage part of the Dynastic Sequence. If the pope is controlled by a player, that player decides which eligible characters become Cardinals. If the Pope is not controlled by a player, use the following procedure to find out if a character becomes a Cardinal:

1. All the players should record which of their characters they nominate to become a Cardinal. This information should be written on a piece of scrap paper and revealed simultaneously.
2. Players must roll two six-sided dice for each character they have nominated, and need a 10 or greater to succeed. This dice roll can be modified by +1 or -1 by each Bishop who was not nominated that turn, and by each Cardinal. Any player can influence the dice roll, but for each character whose influence is used they must pay 5 crowns to the Papal Treasury before the dice are rolled.
3. If the player succeeds with the dice roll, the nominated character becomes a Cardinal, which should be recorded on the title space of the character sheet.

In the taxation part of the Interphase, each Cardinal receives 5 crowns (plus or minus the character's Charisma) which may be added to the controlling player's treasury.

2. The See of Rome

i. The Papal Treasury

Money given to the Papal Treasury should be recorded on a piece of scrap paper. The total is not secret, and any player may look at it at any time. In addition to money received from the players for Bishops and Cardinals, the Pope receives 2 crowns from *every* Province on the board during the Taxation part of the Interphase (unless the player controlling the Province decides to keep the money for himself; see 4. *Heresy!*).

After taxes have been collected, one player should roll a six-sided die and multiply the score by 10. This total is then subtracted from the Papal Treasury (to a minimum of 0) to represent the expenses incurred in running the Papacy (those missionaries cost money, you know!).

ii. The Pope

The Pope is treated just like any other character, except he may not marry or be given titles. The Papacy never controls any territory, and may never trade. When the Pope dies, a *Conclave* must be held to elect the new Pope, which may result in the Pope being a character controlled by one of the players. Such Popes are known as *Controlled Popes*.

Controlled Popes obey all of the rules that apply to normal Popes. In addition, they must renounce any and all titles they hold. A player who has a Controlled Pope can do any of the following in the Marriages part of the Dynastic Sequence:

- The Controlled Pope may decide which eligible characters become Cardinals.
- A Controlled Pope can refuse to ratify a coronation. Until the new monarch pays 50 crowns to the Papal Treasury, he suffers a -1 penalty to his Charisma.
- A Controlled Pope can refuse to ratify a marriage if one of the characters getting married has been married before. The marriage cannot take place (and the marriage contract will not come into effect) until the marriage is ratified.
- A Controlled Pope can allow characters with the same Dynastic name to marry, with the exception that children may not marry either of their parents, grandchildren may not marry their grandparents, and brothers and sisters may not marry each other². Both characters in such a marriage suffer a -1 modifier to their Charisma, and any children they may have suffer a -1 modifier to their Constitution.

Ignore the Crusade event card while there is a Controlled Pope. Instead, the Controlled Pope may call a Crusade as and when he wishes. If a Controlled Pope calls a Crusade, he may not call another for at least 10 years. The Crusade works in exactly the same way as the Crusade on the Event Card.

² Put another way, characters may marry if their genealogical distance is at least three. Genealogical distance is measured by counting the number of descent lines needed to reach one from the other.

iii. The Conclave

When a Pope dies, a Conclave must be held immediately to elect the new Pope. Use the following procedure:

1. Each player may nominate *one* Cardinal character he controls who is at least 40 years old to be the new Pope. In addition a 'non-player' Cardinal character sheet should be drawn up, rolling characteristics as normal. This character will be 45 years old.
2. The players may bid for either the 10 or 15 vote cards. Each player should record which card he is bidding for (either 10 or 15) and how much he is bidding on a piece of scrap paper. Reveal the choices simultaneously. Players may only make one bid each, but do not have to bid if they do not want to. The player who bids the most for the 15 vote card receives it, and the two players who bid the most for the 10 vote cards receive one each. In the case of a tie, roll a die to see who gets the card. Any cards which were not bid for and the three 5 vote cards are arranged in a stack, with the highest value card on the top and the lowest value card on the bottom.
3. The players must now decide the order of popularity of the nominated candidates. Roll a six-sided die for each candidate and add his Charisma. The character with the highest score is the most popular candidate, the character with the second highest score the second most popular and so on. In the case of a tie, decide randomly which character is more popular.
4. Each player who bought a vote card must now allocate it to a character. Each player also receives one vote for each Cardinal he controls who has *not* been nominated. The choices should be recorded on a piece of scrap paper, and revealed simultaneously. Any vote cards which were not bought should be dealt out, one per candidate, in the order of popularity. If any cards are left over once all characters have received one card, deal a second card to each character, starting with the most popular, and so on until there are no vote cards left.
5. Count up the Votes each character has received. If one character has over 50% of the total votes, he has won and is elected Pope. If not go to 6.
6. The character with the least number of votes must drop out. In the case of a tie, decide randomly which character drops out. Any 'bought' vote cards allocated to a character who drops out should be re-allocated by the player who bought them, as can any votes from players' Cardinals. Any other vote cards should be distributed to the most popular remaining candidates, as in 4. Return to 5.

3. Get Thee to a Nunnery

i. The Nunnery

Players controlling female characters who are not married and never have been, must despatch them to a nunnery when they reach the age of 35. At the end of the Marriages part of the Dynastic Sequence, any such characters are sent to the nunnery, and the controlling player must pay 50 crowns the Papal Treasury.

All rules that apply to male characters in the clergy also apply to female characters in a nunnery, except that female characters may never become Bishops or Cardinals.

ii. Mother Superiors

A female character in a nunnery who is at least 40 years old may be made into a Mother Superior during the Marriages part of the Dynastic Sequence. The player controlling the character pays 20 crowns to the Papal Treasury to make the character into a Mother Superior, and can then record the fact in the Titles space on the character sheet.

In the taxation part of the Interphase, each Mother Superior receives 5 crowns (plus or minus the character's Charisma) which may be added to the controlling player's treasury.

4. Heresy!

i. Taxation

Any player may decide to keep the church's taxes for a Province they control for the Crown. The instant they do so they will be declared Heretic by the Pope (even a Controlled Pope). All characters in a Dynasty belonging to the heretical player suffer a -1 modifier to their Charisma. In addition, the Pope must *fund* any non-heretical player who fights at least one round of combat with the heretical player and does not *retreat*, by paying them 5 crowns from the Papal Treasury per Army counter that took part in the combat.

As soon as a player repays to the Papal Treasury all the Church taxes he has taken, he stops being a heretic.³

ii. Schism

At any time during the game, two players may jointly declare a schism and set up an anti-pope. The anti-pope may be any Cardinal character controlled by either of the players. There may only ever be one anti-pope at any one time.⁴

As soon as a schism is declared, all players must *back* either the Pope or anti-pope. A player with a Controlled Pope must back him, and the players who started the schism must back the anti-pope. All other players have a free choice. During a schism, characters from a dynasty backing one side cannot marry characters from a dynasty backing the other. Players may not decide to 'change sides' during the schism.

As long as the schism lasts there are, in effect, two papacies running side by side. All the rules above still apply for the Pope and the anti-pope, with the following amendments:

1.i Bishops. Players backing the anti-pope pay the 30 crowns to the anti-pope's treasury.

1. ii Cardinals. Players backing the anti-pope have Cardinals appointed by him, and pay any money for so doing to his treasury (see below).

2. i Papal Treasury. The anti-pope has his own Papal Treasury. The Pope and anti-pope receive Church taxes only from Provinces controlled by players who are backing them. In addition, both Popes only receive 1 crown per province instead of 2. A separate papacy expenses roll should be made for each.

2. ii The Pope. The Pope & anti-pope may only affect characters controlled by players who are backing them. Neither Pope may call a crusade.

2. iii The Conclave. If either Pope dies, a conclave is held but only those players backing the deceased may take part.

3. i The Nunnery. Players backing the anti-pope pay the 50 crowns to the anti-pope's treasury.

3. ii Mother Superiors. Players backing the anti-pope pay the 20 crowns to the anti-pope's treasury.

4. i Taxation. Players who withhold church taxes only receive 1 crown per province. The Pope or anti-pope will only fund attacks by players who are backing them.

³ It would be more correct to speak of the character being *excommunicated* rather than branded a heretic.

⁴ Not historically accurate. Between 1409 and 1415 there were three Popes: Gregory XII (in Rome), Benedict XIII (in Avignon) and Alexander V (1409-1410) / John XXIII (1410-1415) (both also in Rome). See for example

<http://www.netSPACE.net.au/~rod/trivial/pope.htm>.

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The schism will not end until a Controlled Pope or anti-pope concedes defeat and declares the schism over. The treasury of the defeated pope or anti-pope is lost, and all the clergy belonging to players that backed him become 'normal' characters. In addition, each player who backed the defeated Pope or anti-pope must pay 50 crowns to the Papal Treasury of the winning side of the schism. Play then returns to normal.

Paul Cockburn & Jervis Johnson