



# CLERIC

## DEFENDERS OF THE MOTHER

Aranthaen Sub-Class

## CLERIC – DEFENDERS OF THE MOTHER SUBCLASS

© 2025 Aranthaes.com - All rights reserved.

**All original text, worldbuilding, characters, locations, adventures, mechanics, design, and artwork contained in this document are the exclusive intellectual property of Aranthaes.com and may not be redistributed, copied, or adapted without explicit written permission.**

This work includes material derived from the **System Reference Document 5.1 (“SRD 5.1”)** by Wizards of the Coast LLC, available at: <https://dnd.wizards.com/resources/systems-reference-document>

The SRD 5.1 is licensed under the **Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License** (CC-BY 4.0) available at: <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/legalcode>

**Only those sections of this document copied or adapted from SRD 5.1 fall under CC-BY 4.0.**

All original encounters, story elements, stat blocks, plotlines, setting lore, named characters, geography, items, symbols, and artwork created for Aranthaes remain fully copyrighted.

Aranthaes.com is **not affiliated with, endorsed by, or sponsored by** Wizards of the Coast LLC. “Dungeons & Dragons™” and all related terms are trademarks of Wizards of the Coast LLC and are used without permission.

This is a fan-created, third-party compatible resource designed for use with **Dungeons & Dragons™ 5th Edition**. It is not an official product.

## Cleric Subclass: Defenders of the Mother

---

### Subclass Overview

Clerics of the Defenders of the Mother are chosen for their reliability. They are entrusted with duties that demand steadiness, discipline, and unwavering follow-through.

In Aranthaes, the Mother's doctrine is understood as a stabilising force - not merely a spiritual ideal, but a practical necessity in a city built on wealth, faith and politics. The Defenders exist to ensure that this doctrine is applied consistently, even when doing so is uncomfortable, unpopular, or requires force.

Where other clerics minister to belief, the Defenders minister to **outcome**.

A Defender cleric is trained to act decisively in moments of crisis: to impose order where fear spreads, to distribute aid where chaos threatens famine, and to enforce sacred law where civil authority falters.

Their magic **reflects this mandate**. It is firm, directive, and unmistakably authoritative - blessings that compel steadiness, wards that do not yield, and divine power that reinforces obedience as much as hope.

Central to their role is the understanding that goodness, left unchecked, can fracture. Mercy without structure breeds resentment. Charity without oversight invites exploitation. Faith without discipline risks collapse.

*The Defenders exist to prevent these failures, even at the cost of appearing harsh or unyielding.*

Within the order, clerics are assigned practical responsibilities that anchor doctrine to daily life. Some ensure doctrine is followed. Some oversee temples and sanctified spaces. Others are charged with maintaining supply lines, food distribution, and emergency relief - ensuring that the Mother's generosity reaches those who need it most, managing scarcity before desperation turns to unrest.

To the public, Defenders of the Mother are figures of reassurance in times of shortage or danger: calm organisers, healers, and coordinators who arrive when things begin to fall apart. To those who work alongside them, they are known for strict adherence to procedure, limited tolerance for dissent, and an unshakable belief that order must come before comfort.

For players, this subclass offers the chance to embody a cleric whose power lies not in inspiration, but in **authority**.

You are less a wandering shepherd of souls and more an agent of a powerful institution that believes the Mother's will *must* be enacted - for the good of the many, whether the many understand it or not...



## Lore & Origins

---

The Defenders of the Mother were founded not to confront evil directly, but to ensure that it rarely needed to be confronted at all.

As Lady Bune's faith took hold across Aranthaes, the Church discovered that **structured generosity** and visible order achieved what force often could not. Hunger receded. Unrest softened. Faith became associated not with sacrifice, but with provision.

The city stabilised - and the Church resolved to keep it that way.

The earliest Defenders were appointed to oversee public rites, distribute offerings, and maintain calm during periods of scarcity or celebration. Their presence reassured the population and reinforced a simple truth: **the Mother provided**, and the Mother's servants ensured fairness.

Over time, this practical role formalised into an organised body of clerics, veterans, and devout citizens trusted to act in the Church's name.

From their inception, the Church maintained a careful division of responsibility. The Defenders were tasked with **visibility, order, and continuity** - not secrecy, elimination, or moral compromise. When matters arose that threatened the Church's stability but could not be resolved openly, responsibility passed quietly to **other hands**.

This separation allowed the Defenders to remain what the city needed them to be: approachable, reliable, and largely untainted by rumour. Their clerics enforce doctrine through correction and presence, not terror. They guard temples and processions, not shadowed corridors. They distribute food, coin, and stipends, ensuring the Mother's generosity is both seen and felt.

*Internally, clerics are taught that this division is necessary.*

A system built on trust cannot afford visible cruelty. Those who join the Defenders are therefore selected for restraint, discipline, and emotional control - individuals capable of maintaining order without escalating conflict. When a situation requires harsher intervention, it is *referred*, not resolved directly.

This does not mean Defenders are naïve.

Most understand, at least in abstract terms, that others act beyond their remit to protect the Church and the city. Some choose not to ask questions. Others justify the arrangement as a moral economy: visible goodness sustained by unseen sacrifice.

A few quietly struggle with the knowledge that their clean hands are possible only because others bear the stain.

For a cleric of the Defenders, this origin shapes everything. You are neither a blunt instrument of divine justice, nor a secret blade in the dark.

You are part of a **public face of order**, entrusted with keeping Aranthaes fed, faithful, and calm.

## Role in Aranthaes

---

The Defenders of the Mother are among the most visible and widely respected institutions in Aranthaes. Comprised primarily of devout citizens, members of the clergy, trained clerics, and military veterans, they serve Lady Bune openly and proudly under the overall command of the cleric **Rilith Jol'gonas**.

To most citizens, the Defenders are the living embodiment of the **Mother's generosity**.

They are present at religious ceremonies to maintain order, oversee the fair conduct of rites, and ensure that worship remains accessible and safe. They organise and distribute charitable aid, making certain that the Mother's bounty reaches all eligible believers - food for the hungry, coin for the faithful, and long-term stipends for those brought fully into the fold.

In times of hardship, it is often the Defenders who arrive first, restoring stability through calm authority and well-practised logistics.

Their duties extend beyond charity alone. The Defenders are tasked with **gently enforcing** religious laws and customs throughout the city, reminding citizens of doctrine when it is forgotten and intervening when practices drift too far from accepted norms. This enforcement is typically subtle and corrective rather than punitive, reinforcing the Church's image as a stabilising and benevolent force.

Internally, the Defenders are organised into three specialist divisions, each focused on a distinct aspect of the Mother's work: maintaining doctrine, safeguarding sacred spaces, and distributing offerings and aid. Their combined efforts ensure that faith in Aranthaes is fully **operational**.

Beyond the city walls, the Defenders also act as ambassadors of the Church. They undertake missions to neighbouring towns and distant settlements, spreading Lady Bune's teachings and extending the Church's charitable network. Conversion is framed not as coercion, but as opportunity - a promise of belonging, protection, and lifelong material provision under the Mother's care.

As a result, the Defenders of the Mother are generally loved by the population. They are seen as a positive force for good: approachable, generous, and unfailingly present.

The poor know them as providers of food and coin. The wealthy know them as collectors and redistributors of offerings. All are reminded, gently but consistently, that the Mother sees and provides generously for those who remain within her grace.

For a player character, this means that a Defender cleric is rarely viewed with suspicion. You are welcomed, trusted, and often deferred to - a beloved public servant of a system that works.

*Only over time does the deeper weight of that responsibility become apparent.*



## Subclass Features - Defenders of the Mother

All Defenders of the Mother share a common mandate: to maintain order, stability, and provision in service to Lady Bune. However, clerics are trained and deployed according to one of **three specialist units** within the Defenders.

At 1st level, when you choose this subclass, you must also choose which unit you are primarily attached to. This choice reflects your training, responsibilities, and approach to service.

Your unit grants additional features at 1st, 6th, and 17th level.

You may roleplay reassignment later with DM approval, but the Church must ratify your move.

### Shared Feature (All Defenders)

---

#### 1st Level - Authority of Office

Your affiliation with the Defenders of the Mother carries recognised authority.

- You gain proficiency in **Insight** or **Persuasion** (your choice).
- When you present a holy symbol of the Mother, you have advantage on Charisma checks made to command cooperation from devout citizens or Church-aligned organisations, provided your request aligns with doctrine.

This represents institutional trust, not personal charm.

**The following sections cover each of the three units:**

## Doctrine Enforcement Unit

---

### *Correction, Compliance, and Quiet Pressure*

Clerics assigned to Doctrine Enforcement are not interrogators or torturers - those tasks are handled elsewhere. Instead, they specialise in **preventing deviation before it becomes dangerous**.

They persuade, observe, document, and correct.

### 1st Level - Gentle Correction

You gain proficiency in **Deception** or **Investigation**.

In addition, when you cast a cleric spell that targets a creature's mind (such as charm, command, or suggestion), you may choose to suppress any obvious magical effects. The target remains unaware that magic influenced the interaction unless it succeeds on an Intelligence (Arcana) check against your spell save DC.

This is doctrine enforced quietly.

### 6th Level - Eyes of Orthodoxy

You have advantage on Wisdom (Insight) checks to detect lies, omissions, or ideological deception.

Additionally, once per long rest, when a creature you can see fails a saving throw against one of your spells, you may choose to learn one of the following about it (DM's discretion):

- its strongest conviction
- a belief it doubts
- or a secret it is actively concealing

Knowledge is the first correction.

### 17th Level - Irresistible Doctrine

When you cast a spell that would charm, restrain, or compel a creature, that creature has disadvantage on its first saving throw against the spell.

If the creature succeeds on a later save, it does not realise it was magically influenced.

The Mother's law is not shouted. It is *accepted*.

## Temple Security Unit

---

### *Protection, Deterrence, and Sacred Force*

Temple Security clerics are the visible shield of the Church. They stand watch, repel threats, and defend sanctified spaces with disciplined violence when required.

They are not crusaders. They are wardens.

## 1st Level - Sanctified Guard

You gain proficiency with **martial weapons** and **heavy armor**.

When you are within 10 feet of a consecrated site, relic, or allied creature you are protecting, you gain a +1 bonus to AC.

This bonus represents vigilance, not fanaticism.

## 6th Level - Hold the Line

When a creature you can see within 5 feet of you targets an ally with an attack, you may use your reaction to impose disadvantage on that attack.

If the attack misses, you may move up to half your speed without provoking opportunity attacks.

Temple ground is not surrendered.

## 17th Level - Unyielding Custodian

While you are conscious, allies within 10 feet of you gain advantage on saving throws against being frightened or forcibly moved.

Additionally, once per long rest, when you would be reduced to 0 hit points, you are instead reduced to 1 hit point and immediately regain hit points equal to your cleric level.

The temple does not fall.

## Carriers of the Basket

---

### *Provision, Charity, and Visible Goodness*

Clerics of the Basket are the face of the Mother's generosity. They heal, feed, and give - openly and abundantly. Many **voluntarily forgo weapons**, believing that their protection lies in faith, community, and visibility.

## 1st Level - Hands of Plenty

When you restore hit points to a creature other than yourself, you may also:

- remove one level of exhaustion, **or**
- grant temporary hit points equal to your Wisdom modifier

You may use this feature a number of times equal to your proficiency bonus per long rest.



## 6th Level - The Mother Provides

When you cast a spell that restores hit points, any excess healing may be transferred to another creature you can see within 30 feet.

No healing is wasted.

## 17th Level - Walking Sanctuary

You emanate an aura of reassurance and provision in a 20-foot radius.

Friendly creatures in the area:

- have advantage on death saving throws
- cannot be frightened
- automatically stabilise if reduced to 0 hit points

This aura ends if you wield a weapon or make a weapon attack.

The Basket does not strike but sustains.



## Roleplay Hooks - Defenders of the Mother

---

Clerics of the Defenders of the Mother do not serve in abstraction, but **systems, expectations, and people who rely on consistency**. You can use the following prompts to shape your character's relationship with faith, authority, and the limits of goodness.

### Choosing Your Unit

- Why were you assigned to your unit - aptitude, temperament, or necessity?
- Did you request this role, or was it decided for you?
- How do you feel about the other units? Respect, unease, envy, relief?

### Faith and Authority

- Do you believe Lady Bune's goodness must be managed, or trusted?
- Is obedience a virtue in itself, or merely a tool?
- Have you ever enforced a rule you personally disagreed with?

### Public Trust

- How do you react when citizens thank you for help you did not personally provide?
- What do you do when generosity is abused?
- Have you ever withheld aid - and justified it as necessary?

### Moral Boundaries

- Where do you draw the line between correction and coercion?
- Do you believe the Church's darker work is truly separate from yours?
- If asked to step aside so others could act, would you do so willingly?

### Private Doubts

- Which of your unit's duties troubles you the most?
- Do you believe the system would survive without you?
- If the Mother's will conflicted with the Church's interpretation, whom would you follow?



## Why DMs Should Allow This Subclass

---

The Defenders of the Mother are designed to offer a **fundamentally different cleric experience** without introducing mechanical complexity or new spell systems.

This subclass does not add custom spells, alternate resources, or novel action economies. Instead, it changes **how cleric abilities are applied** by tying them to institutional authority, unit specialisation, and role-based decision-making. Each unit within the Defenders fulfils a clear function that maps naturally onto existing cleric mechanics, making the subclass intuitive to run and easy to balance.

For DMs, this subclass provides:

- a ready-made religious institution with internal diversity
- clerics who feel meaningfully different from one another
- strong story hooks without alignment enforcement
- clear justification for non-paladin martial clerics
- a way to explore “goodness with structure” without villainising the Church

Because the Defenders are broadly loved and trusted, this subclass integrates smoothly into most parties and settings. Conflict arises not from overt cruelty, but from **questions of authority, responsibility, and restraint** - themes that can enrich roleplay without derailing play.

In short, the Defenders of the Mother give cleric players **identity, purpose, and consequence**.