



Justice in the Holy See

Culpam poena premit comes.

Horace

By population, Vatican City has the highest crime rate in the world — more than one crime per inhabitant per year. Most common, of course, are the thefts and pickpocketings perpetrated against tourists, and more serious crimes are much rarer. However, when a place is as small and as highly visible as the Holy See, there is a great deal of pressure for swift resolution to more major crimes.

The tribunal which resolves criminal matters has dictated that during the *Sede Vacante*, major crimes will be dealt with expeditiously, so the Swiss Guard, which handles the day-to-day policing, will need to stay on top of things. The crimes which fall into this category are:

Major Felonies

Murder

Conspiracy to commit murder

Terrorism

Lesser Felonies

Assault

Robbery

Grand Larceny

Bearing False Witness

Holding a book from the Archives past the due date

Libel

A Crime is Committed

The file on a crime is opened when it is reported to a member of the Swiss Guard. In the cases of assault and robbery, a statement must be sworn by the victim of the crime. Open criminal files should be listed (detailing the crime and the victim) at the Guard Station (13-5101). An NPC forensic team will be detailed to collect evidence from the crime scene; a victim of assault must come to the Guard Station for forensic evidence to be collected.

The victim of a crime may explicitly decline to press charges, under which circumstances the case is dropped.

A Suspect is Named

Within 48 hours of a crime being reported, one or more warrants must be issued. A warrant may be issued by any guard, and is specific to the particular crime; if one has not been issued by the end of the 48 hours, then the Captain of the Guard receives an official reprimand from the tribunal. Multiple warrants may be issued for the same crime; only one is required.

Warrants issued must be posted at the Guard Station and submitted to the GMs, and guards may get copies of open warrants from the Box. All guards are required to apprehend the target of a warrant, and bring them to the Guard Station. Civilians may make citizens' arrests upon anyone for whom there is an outstanding warrant. Excessive violence (i.e. the suspect is killed) will always result in a reprimand for all Guardsmen involved; if the death is not ruled by forensics to be self-defense, then the death will be treated by the tribunal as a murder. Excessive violence by civilians in a citizen's arrest will always be treated by the tribunal as murder.

The Prosecution Examines the Case

Once a suspect has been apprehended, they are held at the Guard Station, in a virtual cell. NPC forensic teams will make a determination whether there is sufficient evidence tying the suspect to the crime. This will take up to 24 hours. During this time period, law enforcement may speak to the suspect, and the suspect may designate one person to be their counsel, who may also speak to them. Only speaking may take place (no violence, no exchanging of items), and this may be done in person at the Guard Station or via the phone and email.

If the suspect can be tied to the crime via forensics, then in the case of a major felony, they will be imprisoned pending trial, or in the case of those with diplomatic immunity, their immunity will be revoked and they will be expelled from Vatican City.

In either case, the player leaves game. In the case of a minor felony, if the crime is a first offense, they will be held for the remainder of the 24 hours and then released on bail. In the case of a second offense, the crime is treated as a major felony and the player has to leave game.

If the forensic teams determine that the suspect was *not* at the crime scene, then the suspect is released immediately.

If the investigation begins more than two weeks after the crime was committed, the NPC forensics teams will not have a solid answer in game time, and the suspect is released pending a postgame trial.

In the case that the suspect is deemed prosecutable, then both the officer issuing the warrant and all officers participating in the arrest receive commendations. In the case that the suspect is deemed innocent, then the officer issuing the warrant is issued a reprimand.

Reprimands and commendations will be posted by the GMs at the Guard Station.

Up and Down the Chain of Command

The judicial tribunal rates an officer of the Guard numerically: number of commendations minus number of demerits.

If the rating of the Captain of the Guard falls to -2 or below, he is demoted and the officer with the highest rating is promoted to Captain.

If the rating of any officer falls to -4 or below, they are placed on suspended leave while their conduct is investigated, and they lose all police powers during this time.

The Captain of the Guard may, should he so choose, deputize civilians — a deputized civilian has police powers, save that they cannot become Captain.

The Captain of the Guard may also fire a deputized civilian at any time.

Any reprimands earned by a deputy *also* accrue to the Captain who has deputized them, until such time as they earn a commendation. At that point, the "borrowed" reprimands are cancelled.

The Case of Assault

In order to be guilty of Assault, the suspect has to have

- attacked the victim, and
- knocked them out.

The Case of Self-Defense

Forensics comparing a corpse and a suspect will determine if self-defense is a plausible cause of death. A death will be deemed self-defense if the deceased attacked first or simultaneously, but not otherwise.

However, the only circumstances in which self-defense will clear someone accused of murder is if they turn themselves in to the Guard Station within an hour of the crime, or *before* a warrant is issued for their arrest.

If a warrant has already been issued, and the suspect did not turn themselves in within an hour of the crime, then the case is treated as murder as far as prosecution in game goes; the suspect may well be found innocent at a later time, but they are still out of game.

The Case of False Witness

If an arrest warrant is issued based on a sworn statement given by the victim of the crime, and the suspect is found to be innocent, then the crime of false witness has taken place. This is treated as a minor felony, but is not confirmed by forensics, only by the sworn statement.