

Guidebook *for a* Modern Priestess

A full-page illustration of a woman with long, wavy blonde hair and blue eyes, wearing a white headscarf and a white robe. She is holding a silver chalice with two interlocking circles on it. The background is a large, stylized white flower on a blue background.

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1. What does it mean to be a priest/ess?

Along with the resurgence of interest in the female aspect of Deity, i.e.. The Goddess, The Divine Mother etc., has come a natural movement toward understanding what it means to have a direct connection with that divine source and to be in service of that energy.

Finding that connection and place of service can be called being a priest/ess of the Goddess. Whenever you see the word “priest/ess”, it is intended to be inclusive and non gender specific.

This, in itself, is a movement away from a caste of divine service that is kept separate and exclusively male or female. In many formalized religions, a priesthood stands as an intermediary between you and the divine. That is NOT what is being spoken of here.

Each of us is on a unique solo journey of spiritual evolution in which we are establishing our own direct connection with the divine.

Along the way on that path, you may be asked to share what you have garnered on the journey, to lift the lamp for other fellow journeyers, so that they might more easily find their own direct connection with the Divine as well.

This is a primary function of the archetype of the priest/ess.

2. What is an archetype?

An archetype is a large mythic container of consciousness that exists beyond culture, time, space or individuals. Archetypes are the structural, energetic form behind the manifested form in physical reality.

Archetypal energy heals, catalyzes and transforms at a vibrational level of consciousness that goes far beyond what the mind can cognize.

For example, the archetype of the Fool, the King, the Mother, the Priest/ess, the Magician, have existed in many cultures throughout time.

One of the primary functions archetypes serve, is to assist us in looking at our lives from a much larger, more mythic and spiritually expansive perspective, than our ordinary ego's day to day view of the self.

In virtually all cultures, there are about twenty to twenty three mythic, archetypal containers of divine consciousness. These archetypal containers, when looked at as a whole, provide a patterning of consciousness, a blueprint for spiritual evolution.

These archetypes can be seen in Tarot archetypes, Jungian archetypes, Mayan archetypes and many others. Jung defined archetypes as "form constants that exist in and define a field of consciousness that is beyond time, space or the individual." That is, archetypal forms remain constant as an energetic patterning of consciousness,

regardless of how the form varies from culture to culture or time to time.

These archetypal containers rise up from the collective unconscious, especially in the dream life of humans, making their presence known and felt as spiritual reminders that we are more than we seem in daily life.

One archetype that is rising at the present time, in human consciousness, is that of the Priest/ess.

3. What is a mythic, poetic, archetypal description of a Priest/ess?

A priest/ess can be looked at as:

Acting from deep devotion to tending the path, lifting the lamp, holding the mirror, pooling the silence, translating the divine, funneling the energetic flow, riding the current, hallowing the moon, unlocking the mystery, presencing beauty, being a savant of symbols, a mouth of the oracle, a container of the presence, a keeper of the flame, a bearer of the chalice, sanctity's sentinel, a strengthener of stillness, a catalyzer of coherence, a diviner of harmony, a stylus of the silence, a liaison of light, a celebrant of sound, a scribe of the ineffable, a resonant repository, a keeper of the keys, a cipher of the crescent, a decoder of dreams, a servant of Memnos, the Divine Feminine. Priest/ess.

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Along the way on that path, you may be asked to share what you have garnered on the journey, to lift the lamp for other fellow journeyers, so that they might more easily find their own direct connection with the Divine as well. This is a primary function of the archetype of the priest/ess.

5. What is a more practical description of the priest/ess archetype?

As an archetype, the Priest/ess can be looked at as “She Who Is Keeper of the Keys and Guardian of the Mysteries”. The Priest/ess is the feminine archetype of stillness, silence and centered presence.

From this female receptive place, s/he becomes the keeper of the keys and guardian of the female mysteries because only from the place of inner stillness can divine knowing actually flow. S/he is thus often depicted in a serene pose of inward balance and quiet knowing.

In her passion to enter more deeply into the Mystery, s/he becomes devoted to the spiritual path. Thus the way of the priest/ess is the way of devotion...devotion to the divine unfoldment of the soul lotus blossoming, in herself and all beings.

In this mythic journey, s/he acknowledges and empowers **through offering the lit lamp of her being, that others may see themselves and their journey with more clarity.**

Through intuition and feeling s/he is a guide into unseen realms and dimensions. S/he assists others in accessing the intelligence of their own intuition, their innate female receptivity and states of devotional focus in unified awareness, where confusion and doubt simply do not exist.

In these states, she can become a translator of abstract divine symbols into personal guidance, becoming an oracle or channel of the higher harmony. Through a primary focus of consciousness in stillness and silence, the power of divine presence is naturally accessed and conveyed.

In this way, the priest/ess is a keeper of the keys and guardian of the Mysteries.

6. What is a primary mythic function of the priest/ess archetype?

One of the primary functions of this archetype in the Divine Feminine is to create and maintain the sanctity and resonance of “the temple”. This temple can be her home, work place or whatever space she sanctifies with the power of divine presence.

Through her devotional focus on the expression of the divine within and without, the priest/ess becomes the living flame at the center of the temple. It is her presence within the temple that makes it sanctified and holy!

The priest/ess is a living embodiment of the immanent power of the eternal flame of love, power and wisdom.

Through awareness of this flame, s/he maintains a constant openness to the resonance of the divine.

7. What is resonance?

In order to understand the primary function of the priest/ess, it is necessary to understand resonance. Resonance is the quality of sounding again due to similar vibrational structure and frequency.

One tuning fork will begin to vibrate when another one near it is struck, due to the phenomenon of resonance. Two electronic fields with different patterns of electrical potentials will come into harmonic resonance within seconds of coming into contact in a natural tendency to establish a unified field.

Human energy fields also naturally move into resonance within a very short period of interaction. In resonant harmonics, information is the vehicle of energy passing between two agents.

As a sounding again, resonance is information! That is why feeling and sensing are so important in establishing resonance with the frequencies of the divine. To sense the resonance of incoming information, co-creates a resonant field.

If one tries to conceptualize experience before actually resonating with it, the field is often broken or lost. Simply stated, it is the primary function of the priest/ess in ceremony, to be an empty, static free “station” through which the frequencies of divine resonance may flow.

Thus it is the challenge of the priestess to give up mentally “knowing”, in favor of being an empty

repository through which the resonance of divine truth
flows in the moment!

8. How can a priest/ess establish and maintain such a coherent resonant field?

A resonant field is evoked through intent, presence and open focus. It is sustained through those gathered becoming fully present and empty sacred witness' to each others transformation.

A resonant field is created through a paradoxical position in consciousness of relaxed emptiness and simultaneously, a fiercely laser-like focus in the present moment. This state can be accessed most easily through guided visualization or meditation.

A priest/ess is actually simply a conduit, an empty matrix holding space for higher light and purpose to enter and do its work. To establish a resonant field requires a focus of consciousness in stillness. That is why the priest/ess is often depicted sitting serenely in a calming, blue energy field.

Stillness is the magnet that draws the iron filings of more dispersed or chaotic, individual, ego consciousness into a coherent pattern that will sustain a resonant field.

Conversely stray thoughts, stray emotions, stray movements, create an energetic “static” that disturbs the coherence and resonance of the field. Verbal responses from the position of ego mind create similar “static” in the resonance.

It is as if the truth of the essence flows naturally in a medium of empowered emptiness, that only emanates from the stillness and knowing of the heart. In such a resonant field, the access to the truth of essence is a natural by-product.

In a resonant field, it is as if truth “speaks” you, rather than you speaking truth. It is immediately discernible in a resonant field if one’s primary focus of consciousness is in the ego mind.

In a highly coherent, resonant field, mental responses sound brittle and halting, whereas, essence responses, naturally gently flow from the very source spring of self and literally have the “ring” of truth. That is, one can feel the vibration of truth that is being communicated through and beyond the words. The harmonic resonance of truth, that exists beyond words moves into the foreground and suddenly floods our awareness with direct knowing.

That is the gift of resonance.

9. Practically speaking, how can a priest/ess maintain harmonic resonance?

Resonance begins with harmonious order. This means, for the priest/ess, there is a focus of awareness on beauty.

S/he sees and arranges the most subtle combinations of light, shade, image, flower, texture, timing, sound. Her eye is tuned to the beauty channel, so everything is filtered through that lens.

S/he always asks, “How can I bring more beauty into this space, this encounter, this moment?” S/he knows that beauty naturally leads us to what is divine, so s/he joyfully entices us there.

One of the hallmarks of any “temple” is its beauty. The priest/ess knows that beauty is literally vibrational food and so offers it in love, to all who enter her temple. S/he knows that flowers and scent raise the frequency of any room and that candle light opens dimensional awareness and perception and so acts on that knowledge by providing these in her temple space.

On an equally important practical level the priest/ess maintains a clarity of resonance by organizing the space, vacuuming and emphasizing the harmonious patterns available within the space.

10. Why is the priest/ess associated with ceremony and magical practices?

Ceremony is another name for the conscious creation of a resonant field of energy. Ceremony is the open, spontaneous, intentional focus of energy into a pattern that serves evolutionary processes.

In ceremony, the priest/ess creates a matrix of sacred time and space through the use of music, scent, color, flowers, symbol, sound and ritual for the purpose of celebrating and evoking an interface with the archetypal energies that guide and support spiritual evolution.

S/he establishes resonance with the elemental forces that are involved with manifestation on the physical plane.

S/he evokes resonance with the power of the seasonal cycles and directions to lend their energy to the fulfillment of the ceremonial purpose whether that is healing, celebration, or manifestation.

S/he sings the songs of invocation, partnering the elements in co-creation, evoking the symbols which integrate consciousness that exist beyond the range of human language, gathering the flowers, setting the altars of consciousness that connect universes through symbolic resonance.

S/he blesses the sacred tools such as the chalice, that will be used in the magical work. Through her blessing,

anything that is being done is amplified in the vibration of the gratitude and love with which s/he maintains the ceremonial space.

Ceremony operates on the assumption that all things are connected and already fulfilled within the womb of the Divine Mother and so synchronicity and “apparent miracles” are a “stock in trade” of clear ceremonial focus. All cultures in all times have participated in ceremony for this reason.

Joseph Campbell defines myth as “ the secret opening through which the inexhaustible energies of the cosmos pour into human cultural manifestations.” Ceremonies open the field for direct, larger than life encounters with the archetypal energies out of which myth manifests!

Conscious celebrations and ceremonies evoke and open us to this mythic exchange of energies. Sensitivity to the most appropriate intuitive timing to offer these ceremonial processes is part of the priest/ess’ wisdom, that naturally senses and feels alignment with seasonal cycles and the powerful lunar tides within her own body.

11. What is a basic format for ceremony?

1. Have the ceremonial participants pass through at least two gates held by two priest/ess to bring participants into full presence.
2. Smudge with incense the space and participants.
3. Mark the participant's third eyes with oil and a statement of intent that will catalyze, stir feelings, open awareness.
4. Begin by establishing a resonant field with meditation, guided visualization or by your inspiration.
5. Invoke and establish resonance with the directions and elements
6. Light the candles together to set the intentions and say prayers.
7. Do a presencing ritual to bring people more fully into the present moment and set the unified intention for gathering. Some standard means are chanting, prayer, silence.
8. Start the body of work for the particular ceremony.
9. Share a libation or sacred sacrament.

10. Close the circle with a song or prayer. Offer the work that has been accomplished to the healing of the collective healing of the planet.
11. Offer a mudra of completion.
12. Release the energies gathered and disband without ego chatter. Silence supports the continued resonance of the space.

12. Why are priest/ess' said to be able to “evoke” or call subtle or etheric energies?

Evocation is the calling in and resonating with archetypal energies and unseen powers, energies and forces. It is one of the primary skills of the priest/ess to evoke resonance with the unseen worlds. To do this requires primarily emptiness of mind and being and a coherent energetic field.

Since resonance with the divine is our natural state, when we are willing to be empty and have created a field that supports resonance with the divine frequencies that are held in stillness, evocation is not mysterious, rather it is simply a by-product.

What may appear to be “magical” work is simply alignment with the harmonic structuring of divine order that is intrinsic to moving out of the limiting perceptual constrictions of the rational ego-mind into “not knowing”.

The trained priest/ess has consciously entered the Temple of “I am Not”.

13. What is the Temple of I am Not?

We have been trained from birth in western culture “to know” and understand the world almost solely with the rational mind.

The priest/ess is an archetype that reminds us that there are other ways to “know” that have nothing to do with cognitive understanding or knowledge.

To access this type of awareness, s/he learns to dwell in the temple of “I Am Not”. This is the fecund Void of the Mother, the place of emptiness, the place of not knowing.

That is to say, the priest/ess gives up the need to have a ready answer in her mind, in order to be available to the subtle wisdom of universal mind that can only be accessed in the moment, from the stillness of the Void. S/he becomes a divine tool of the Mystery, that the impressions of the divine might leave a signet in the soul of those who participate in her empty presence.

As the priest/ess sits in meditation with any querier, impressions may become intuitively available through the empty channel to the light that s/he has fine tuned in the Temple of I Am Not. Thus, a strong function s/he holds is communicating and translating those abstract symbols and impressions as an oracle of the stillness and silence.

14. Why is the priest/ess often associated with sound, singing and chant?

Vibration is the most primary substance of this universe. Sound is pure vibration.

The priest/ess knows that if you wish to change the form, pattern, continuity, experience or perception of anything in the material world, sound is the most simple and basic means to accomplish that.

Sound is a source of non-visible but palpably powerful vibration with which to move energy.

A priest/ess thus utilizes sound to transform perception, shift resonant frequencies, and support whatever energy is presently expressing.

Because sound directly impacts all of the subtle bodies, especially the emotional body, it can be utilized to lift a field into celebration, bring a field into coherent resonance or bring a specific feeling tone into a space, that will support divine purpose.

A priest/ess is an adept at knowing how to use sound to support the natural flow of the field in which s/he is working. Due to an understanding of harmonic order, the priest/ess knows the power of pure sound to establish harmonic resonance with other dimensions of reality.

Dimensional gating occurs through the simplicity of sound.

All things are connected within the vibration of the One. When a rock is dropped into a pool, waves go out infinitely, dimensionally speaking.

Just as there are subtle harmonic overtones created with any fundamental tone. Harmony is a part of universal law. Harmony accesses the highest resonance of information. Thus understanding the subtle workings of the harmonic resonances of sound is part of the Mystery that is held by the priest/ess.

15. What are the primary skills of the priest/ess?

The greatest skill of the priest/ess is her willingness to simply be fully present with others in her divine presence.

S/he has cultivated the ability to “be with” others, fully resonating with them, without needing to fix, change or advise.

She can simply be present in love and available to the divine light that flows through her that fulfills higher purpose, beyond the mind’s ability to cognize or understand. This strong sense of presence flows into many forms, but offers the most precious gift of nameless divine essence. This willingness to stay out of definition or exact “job description” as to what exactly is happening within the Mystery, is part of the subtle but potent power of the priest/ess.

Another skill of the priest/ess is acting as a reflective mirror, accurately reflecting from her own clear depths, that which s/he is perceiving. Through clearing her own perceptual mirrors, s/he becomes like a clear lake that is thus able to reflect the soul’s depths. A priest/ess thus has a life long commitment to inner work to clear any personal unclarity or emotional reactivity out of love, that she may be a more clear mirror for others to see themselves in a reflection of undistorted truth.

Another essential skill of the priest/ess is her ability to translate the frequencies of the divine through more

abstract, non-verbal means such as dance, song, art, sacred theater, mudra, mythic enactment, storytelling, poetry. S/he senses the need of the field and the perceptual channels that would most serve divine intent being fulfilled and offers her gift through that channel. In this, s/he is a feeling navigator.

Because of her gifts as a feeling empath (one who energetically becomes the other to sense where they are and where there may need to move), s/he feels where the energy and strongest current of feeling are in any situation that will support depth encounters between souls. With this knowledge s/he uses whatever creative form inspires her to gently guide the flow of energy toward that which will fulfill divine purpose.

S/he uses whatever abstract expressions to carry beings behind the symbolic act, to the light animating it, to the transmission of light that is inherent in the more abstract revelations of truth held in silence.

Establishing a direct connection with divine essence is a prerequisite skill for all priest/ess work. This can be accomplished through all forms of creativity, meditation, divination, gardening, poetry, art, drumming, acting, whatever brings one into a focused, centered alignment with divine essence.

To express creatively, no matter what form, is to enter into sacred relationship and connection with the divine! Thus a priest/ess is an experimenter with forms, sacred tools, ideas, creative inspirations of all kinds that allow her to discover through direct experience, ever deepening awareness within the Mystery.

16. Why is the priest/ess usually associated with the chalice, water and flow?

Water is the medium of transduction of the magnetic frequencies of the Mother.

The chalice is the sacred vessel in which She pours forth Her gifts in the waters of life. Thus together, the chalice and water form a sacred symbol for the fluid container of divine feminine intelligence.

Lunar wisdom directs the flow of universal life force that is the animating energy of this reality. Water is constantly moving, pooling, re-directing, changing states from solid to rarefied. Nothing in the Goddess is static.

Everything is in a constant state of evolution and flow.

Water symbolically embodies this spiritual truth.

The priest/ess is the conscious bearer of the chalice in her emotional body, womb, intuition and dream life. The priest/ess has devoted her life as a vessel, divine chalice and “water bearer” for the Goddess. Her center of gravity is deep within. Her point of reference is her inner spiritual life, rather than the outer forms or standards created by the culturally entrained ego/mind. Her dream life is equally as valid as her waking life. Because of this inward focus, a priest/ess often has an unusual memory.

S/he is associated with Memnos, the scroll of memory that extends beyond time. S/he thus assists others, when called on, to remember themselves as divine beings, to remember the gifts they have carried into this life from so many other expressions of their spirit.

On a practical level, a priest/ess is an adept with sensing the flow of energy in any space. Through this awareness, she can support the energy moving in the direction that it is already flowing or re-direct it when that serves divine purpose.

Being highly sensitized to energy flow, s/he is a sentinel, monitoring for sanctity that honors the clarity of intent being held in the space.

S/he observes the continuity and coherence of the field to see where the energy can be supported in being more aligned with essence and more fluid, to allow for maximal awareness to be brought to light.

S/he watches where the gift of spirit is being demonstrated, where the deepest feeling potential is moving in the flow, where the divine connection is being made and then supports the energetic flow that connects the lines between the dot to dot revelation of divine consciousness.

17. Why is the Priest/ess associated with the spiritual process called initiation?

Initiation is the focusing of energy in a pattern that serves evolutionary processes. Initiation is a portal to the direct experience and knowing of larger spiritual realities.

One of the functions of the priest/ess is to prepare initiates for initiation through presence and inner knowing. Throughout all times priest/ess' have been guides to these larger holograms of reality, offering access to a unified field of awareness that provides an unobstructed view of the essence self. This is accomplished through the priest/ess being an empty conduit for higher frequencies of resonance.

S/he vibrationally reflects who you presently are defining yourself to be with such clarity, that you perceive the deeper inherent possibilities of the evolving self.

S/he encourages you to expand the containers you may have yourself boxed up in, freeing them into the more mythic, archetypal containers of self by resonating with your essence rather than your ego. In this gift s/he offers you a direct experience of your divine presence.

S/he sees you as already perfect, not needing fixing or changing in any way.

S/he simply offers the transformative power of divine unconditional love, which acts as a natural catalyst to new growth rings of consciousness.

A priest/ess assists an initiate in coming into alignment with his or her innate divine power through accessing internal alignment with their own center of truth. S/he thus provides an initiatory gateway into lucid perception that catalyzes and awakens through direct experience.

18. Why is the priest/ess often depicted as a gateway or entry to the temple?

A priest/ess is literally a vibratory gateway with which anyone entering the temple resonates in order to gain entrance.

That is, practically speaking a priest/ess serves as a mirrored gate for people to look in, to see if they are prepared to enter into a zone of magnified power and divine presence.

Through her clear presence, anyone entering the temple can determine whether they are ready to leave their ego outside the gate, such that they can participate with their essence, which is a requisite of any initiatory temple.

S/he tests to see if someone entering the temple is clear about their intention for participation and if they are fully present without the distraction of fear, to enter into higher states of consciousness.

The priest/ess is trained to verbally or non verbally monitor for these considerations in sacred time and space. Depending on the resonance of ceremony, the priest/ess is prepared to ask someone's ego not to participate, if their presence will create incoherence or dissonance.

In a mystery school, this means one is escorted out of the temple until one is better prepared to enter.

On a ceremonial evening where maintenance of resonance may be less important to the sanctity and accessing capabilities, the standards may be less rigorous. Simply stated, if there is incoherence and disharmony in the field, the likelihood of accessing higher states of consciousness are minimal, due to not being able to establish resonance.

Distortions in any of the bodies, particularly emotionally charged people, act as frequency disrupters in sacred space. Likewise someone who is unwilling to move out of their small ego mind into a more receptive, intuitive state is not as likely to establish resonance due to mental static on their station, and if they are in your field, that may well affect your clarity as well.

The priest/ess knows that this is not about judgment, it is about discernment. When people move through temple “gates”, it is to establish resonance, not to keep people out. To ask people to go through gates, center and meditate before they enter the space to move out of distortions, ego concerns and distractions, supports the inner workings of ceremonial time and space. Starting with coherent resonance, the circle begins high and goes higher, otherwise one spends a lot of energy creating a coherent field which doesn’t leave time or energy for the actual work of ceremony.

19. Where does the modern day priest/ess find her temple?

At some other time in history this question would require a quest to find the appropriate temple of service.

The Mystery schools of initiation and the ancient wisdom held therein, which were maintained by the priest/ess' of all times, are becoming not so much a place, as an available frequency of information. This is due to the whole earth becoming an initiatory chamber due to the raised frequency and lowered magnetics that are now available on this planet.

Now, in this unparalleled time in human history, the temple is everywhere, everything is being re-sacralized, everyone is remembering themselves as a reflection of the one light. Thus the priestess' work is found everywhere.

A priest/ess is just as likely to be found in a business office alcove at lunch being present for someone in a crisis, as keeping a temple fire or altar lit.

A modern priest/ess knows that it is all equally holy work!

20. What are the primary symbols of the priest/ess?

The moon, blue crescent, chalice, seven pointed star, owl, keys, mirror, moonstone, crystal ball, water, sapphire blue, lunar tides, scrying (divination) bowls. Within these ancient symbols are held many keys to the mystery of the Divine Feminine.

If you are willing to simplify your consciousness and meditate, create and work with these symbols, you will open directly to becoming a decoder of the mysterium, a resonant capacitor for the divine, a priest/ess amplifying through inner harmony and stillness the language of light available for transmission, through pooling in silence, strengthening in stillness, flowing from center, an archetype of light becoming light.

21. Is there a sign or mudra which is a signifier of the priest/ess archetype?

Yes.

Among all Goddess temples there is a sign of recognition among priest/ess' which is symbolically offered as a mudra to gain entrance to these temples.

It is the cross in the circle which represents the universal flow of the divine feminine and balance within that flow.

It is offered by tracing the symbol of the solar cross, starting with the left hand open in the heart chakra, drawing down the right hand from straight out above the head, into the heart chakra, creating the vertical cross bar, then with the right hand, creating the bar of the cross in the center, continuing around the circle around the cross, finishing in the heart.

Complete the mudra by bowing to the divine. Completion of any process is signified in any ceremonial process with this mudra and the words, "It is done. It is done. It is done in the One."

And so this priest/ess primer is offered in the name of the Divine Mother Goddess.

And so it is done. It is done. It is done in the One.



About the Author

Ariel Spilsbury is an author, planetary midwife, and Priestess of the Goddess. She is passionate about participating in the

conscious evolution of this planet and all its inhabitants.

For over 40 years, Ariel has traveled the world sharing the wisdom of the Divine Feminine. She presently offers mentoring, spiritual counseling services, and various events and trainings with the intention of planetary awakening.

Her self-initiating teachings about the Mysteries of the Divine Feminine are accesible to all through her books: The Mayan Oracle, The Alchemy of Ecstasy, The 13 Moon Oracle, Finding Guidance from Within, and Gaia's New DreamCoat.

Learn more at HolographicGoddess.com