



## **Pagan Prisoner Advocate's Guide**

***How to Aid & Advocate for Pagan & Wiccan Inmates & Institutionalized Persons***

**Lady Passion (Dixie Deerman)**

Published by Coven Oldenwilde at Smashwords  
Copyright Lady Passion, 2016. All rights reserved.  
**Smashwords Edition 1.2, February 2016**

*Cover by \*Diuvei.*

*Frontispiece: "Pagans Behind the Iron Veil," original artwork by Cirnunnoz S. Cian,  
one of the many Pagan/Wiccan inmates we've aided for almost two decades and counting.*

Oldenwilde.org; Oldenworks.org  
ArtMagicalAcademy.org; Wiccans.org

\*\*\*\*\*

## ***CONTENTS***

***The Truth Behind the Wall***

***Why Incarcerated & Institutionalized Pagans Deserve Help***

***The Benefits of Advocating for Persecuted Pagans Behind Bars***

***How Institutions Differ***

***How to Begin***

***Inmate Religious Rights Entitlements***

***Ways & Means to Aid***

***Avoidable Pitfalls***

***Helpful Resources***

*About the Author*

*Other Books by the Author*

*T.V. & Radio Interviews and Articles*

\*\*\*\*\*

***The Truth Behind the Wall***

I'm not a wanton lawbreaker myself, but I admit that I generally disdain many legalized inequities in life — the wealthy corrupt who flout laws with impunity, the politically corrupt who suppress our struggling population by passing punitive laws. A pacifist Pagan, I am galled that my tax dollars fund wars, back fracking, and other corporate pollution pogroms, etc. And I practice civil disobedience when I feel strongly that a law or plan is wrong, such as cannabis use. These reasons likely explain my willingness to help Pagan inmates and institutionalized persons.

I began initially simply teaching magic and officiating spellwork rites for a group of men in a nearby medium-security prison who asked for my and \*Diuvei's help.

From the start I had no qualms about serving medium or even maximum-security convicts of either sex. No facility is off-limits to me, so I've helped inmates in Sing Sing, Folsom, and Otisville with as much care as those on Death Row or in a transitional women's prison in Connecticut.

As quickly as a closed penal system tends to breed, word spread like wildfire from convict to convict, jail to jail about my pro-prisoner stance, fearless manner, moving rituals, and ability to secure inmates the religious rights they were entitled to.

As inmates from all over the country wrote me uniformly detailing the same hundreds of perverse ways that prison personnel employ to persecute them, I learned of the reprehensible dark underbelly of the society I lived in.

Contrary to the prevailing assumption that inmates enjoy cable T.V. and tennis lessons — a kind of shadow country club life where they could get a free college degree, etc. — I discovered sad realities that forced me to add added many *other* services to aid them.

Because nothing could be farther from the truth: Many institutions are old and decrepit, and new ones are soul-crushingly sterile, so clinically devoid of character that they're tantamount to a coffin or sensory deprivation chamber. The term "prison gray" took on a whole new meaning to me.

I discovered that inmates were forced to work long hours daily, forced to man switchboards that took plane reservations for corporations that contract with states to use prison populations as unpaid labor. They worked dangerous prison laundry sweatboxes — longing to pick up roadside trash that exposed them to pesticides solely so they could see some sky. Their reward for enabling companies was earning only a few cents a month.

Inmates' food was deplorable — salt packed, fatty, processed beyond recognition. Powdered eggs, fatback for flavoring ... little wonder most showed obvious signs of water retention, alarming weight gain, heart stress, ruddy faces, and dietary lethargy. Heart attacks were common, strokes not far behind.

I found that the majority of the time, the inmates I served were barely literate, and had great difficulty understanding what they read or in expressing what they meant in writing.

Yet they were anything but stupid — they had a jailhouse lingo of their own, "knew the score," were street smart.

Some families treated incarceration as if it were practically a rite of passage, their members doing a hitch in turn almost by habit. Mountain families that only survive by selling pot or distilling moonshine; African Americans whose gang membership was inherited like an heirloom; second generation immigrants with customs different than our own; government-trained killers who failed to thrive after discharge from military service — everyone it seemed suffered some disadvantage or other that conspired to make them vulnerable prey to an uncompassionate, unhelpful system with a zero tolerance for the marginalized.

But I also found that convicts were more artistic, sensitive, and patient than stereotypes contend. They shared, traded, and pooled their resources to acquire their needs. And all deeply suppressed their anger over their circumstances, usually preferring to shrug and fall silent about relatives who'd abandoned them in their hour of despair.

And I learned how bizarrely *mean* prison personnel can be — a Pagan who dared sneak a salt packet from the commissary to use in spellwork so severely penalized you'd think it'd been a breach of national security.

Indeed, these were not the boogeymen that I'd been encouraged to grow up fearing — far from it. I'm proud to assure you that I've never been menaced or injured by a convict.

### ***Why Incarcerated & Institutionalized Pagans Deserve Help***

Current statistics show that 1 out of every 32 Americans is held by the justice system (such as in jail or juvenile hall), and 1 out of every 142 is incarcerated in prison.

There are many reasons for this shocking state of affairs:

- **Corruption** — Generally, corporations, governmental regimes, and institutions win, people lose. These crave power or seek by legal farce to stay in power. Either way, they want you to have none.

While some rights remain, they are increasingly more theoretical than provided — all rights considered suspect and pejoratively labeled “entitlements,” therefore, assumed legally assailable.

Companies write inclusive policies, and then proceed to violate them with impunity.

Worse, most employees or affected persons are not made aware of their rights: A reflection of their mutable nature, human and religious rights are not typically taught in school civics classes.

Many laws are passed, others resisted, based solely on for political expediency.

Yet truth is that almost to a man, most wealthy people are so not because of their genius or work ethic, but rather, because they inherited a fortune; by crawling over others to get to the top; by exploiting Earth's resources for short-sighted gain; or by profiting from the efforts of employees.

Nationalistic propaganda pushing people to continue to produce, to “contribute to society” is disingenuous at best, because truth is that they threw us off the farm into factories, and then promptly replaced us with robots.

Yet, the ones responsible continue to beat the outdated drumbeat of “inevitable progress,” a “hitch-yourself-up-by-your-own-bootstraps” mentality; and the glorification of money as being the sole determiner of a person's value.

Presidential wars are funded with your tax dollars — people have no say in how their money's spent or wasted.

Utility companies, mortgage underwriters, the speculative stock market are all encouraged to put the pain on people: Everyone has their hand out, wolves ever at the door.

- **Compliance** — Too many laws exist less to provide protection to citizens, than to control and repress them — basically to bury them in minutia to prevent positive change or outright revolution.

Such laws enable some, and disenfranchise others. New laws are constantly created, old ones amended, modified, too rarely rescinded.

Most of these are made based on a never identified “someone” who so violated common sense or decency that a new law is deemed necessary — all other non-stupid or non-mean people forced to pay for their supposed depravity.

Indeed, Americans are bid comply with a slough of ever-changing federal, state, and local laws, and city and county ordinances.

Many regulations are purposefully worded in such confusing, contradictory, and broad terminology that legal experts routinely contest their constitutionality in court.

Few folks can ever be certain exactly what these laws mean, or are able to anticipate the unexpected or unintended consequences these laws may exert in the future.

Therefore, at any given moment it’s likely that a person is unaware that they’re out of compliance with at least one rule or stricture.

In true Machiavellian fashion, however, while there are clearly too many laws to know about (much less understand), the onus of keeping track of them all is placed squarely on the shoulders of the individual: Judges do not allow ignorance as a valid legal defense.

Sadly this phenomenon is not a modern invention: Ancient Greeks bemoaned in print their suffering under a mountain of arbitrary and picayune laws as well.

Admiring Grecian ways two millennia removed, our “founding fathers” intentionally based their tenets on their precedent.

Yet, many believe that folks who freaked out over a tea tax would be utterly outraged by the monster they created.

- **Prisons are Lucrative Business** — As of 2003, the penal system was steadily growing at 8% a year. Privately owned for-profit prisons literally hold their charges hostage to make a buck.

- **Poverty** — “Greed is good,” “it takes money to make money,” and “time is money.” But it’s hard to make money when being poor is a full-time job of its own.

ABC News recently revealed that the only way to get ahead is to be lucky and win a lottery: It would take a person more than 28,000 years to earn what one winner accomplished by submitting a string of incredibly arbitrary numbers in the highest lottery amount offer thus far, in May, 2013. And at some point, 1 out of every 8 workers in the U. S. has been a (typically minimum wage-paid) McDonald’s fast food restaurant employee. (Statistic from Schlosser, Eric, *Fast Food Nation, The Dark Side of the All-American Meal*, Houghton Mifflin, 2000.)

Work has been “outsourced,” mechanized, and robotized — workers fired, laid off en masse, or forced to accept part-time status sans benefits in order to ensure company profitability. Only 1% of us are classified as wealthy. And long-time consumer watchdog Ralph Nader rights calls America’s minimum wage “miserly.” Explaining further, he added:

***“Had the federal minimum wage just kept pace with inflation since 1968, it would stand today at \$10.67 per hour, not \$7.25.”*** (Nader, Ralph, *America's Miserly Minimum Wage Needs an Upgrade*, The Wall Street Journal, April 15, 2013.)

Getting any aid from the very government that workers financially support by paying taxes is a time-consuming, bureaucratic nightmare because each agency has limited funding and an exceedingly narrow scope. Indeed, it's difficult for any ordinary person to qualify for any potentially helpful program, from food stamps, to Medicaid, to Disability: It requires continual recertification to do so — an effort few poor folk can afford to wage.

Easy to see then, that many citizens find themselves vulnerable to being incarcerated or institutionalized simply due to sheer desperation, their natural fear for themselves and their families met with aught but a cold demand that they “retool” in order to become relevant in this Age of Technology.

- **Mandatory Sentencing Guidelines** — Ironically, in recent decades politicians loath to seem “soft on crime” have passed draconian laws removing judges’ option of exercising discretion when it comes to sentencing someone — preventing people actually *experienced* in meting out justice from considering mitigating circumstances that could have contributed to the causing of crimes.

Instead, the trend has been to show “zero tolerance” for everything from violations of school dress codes, to wearing seat belts. A policy of “three strikes” you’re out (will do hard time) has been steadily replaced with stiff sentences automatically imposed.

- **Racism** — Of course, “zero tolerance” is not applied equally to all citizens: 2003 statistics showed that 60% of incarcerated people were minorities.

- **Persecution** — Because all the causative factors above conspire in tandem to make Pagans or Wiccans prone to desperation, once they find themselves having committed a mistake, their poverty is worsened by their assignment of cost-prohibitive legal fees to extricate themselves from jail and defend themselves against the charge.

True, *pro bono* free attorneys can be appointed on their behalf, but these are innately overwhelmed, their work oft driven more by their personal hope of rising in the ranks of the legal machine that grinds slowly by default, than empathetic or competent contact with their charges.

When the system fails Pagans, they find themselves going from the fire to the frying pan — a seemingly eternal excruciating burn.

Inmates have to go through a grueling “grievance process” that goes through the “chain of command” to the 10th degree before being accorded the right to sue for their rights on a federal level.

### ***The Benefits of Advocating for Persecuted Pagans Behind Bars***

It's the right thing to do. Why focus on acquiring personal wisdom and magical power if you do naught to use it by enabling others in need?

If or when you're caught up in the dragnet cause *du jour*, wouldn't you want someone on your side — and best yet, a well-trained clergyperson adept in knowing the score about what you've endured and what you're going through?

Advocating for Pagan/Wiccan inmates is worthwhile because:

- 1). **Pagan practices are targeted for penalization.**

*Recent Department of Justice statistics proved that 1 out of every 8 Americans is incarcerated for cannabis. Pagans believe that it's wrong to exterminate or criminalize such a helpful plant.*

**2). But for the grace of the Gods, it could happen to any of us.**

*America imprisons more of its citizens than any other developed country on the planet.*

**3). We've seen illegal rights denials on a shameful national scale.**

*Whenever an inmate or group seeks legal recourse, bigoted prison personnel often slap them with reprisals such as solitary confinement; seizure of religious items; and malicious transfer.*

**4). Inmates that seek aid from Pagans are oft ignored or rebuffed.**

*Forced into de facto monasticism, Pagan inmates live their religion at great personal risk — only to be rewarded with rejection by free Pagans who don't deign respond compassionately to their pleas.*

*Such neglect can sour inmates about the Path and make them prone to the manipulative ministrations of monotheists happy to fill the void.*

**5). Inmates we help know that spirituality prevents recidivism.**

*Whereas "jailhouse conversion" to Christianity or Islam yields dismal results, prisoners who embrace Pagan tenets don't become re-incarcerated.*

**6). The majority of inmates are well meaning and grateful for aid.**

*They mail us art, crafts, pictures, and heartfelt thanks for our efforts on their behalf.*

Alcoholics, drug abusers, and even Seekers have many options: Inmates don't. They're subject to any person with a magical claim who usually has zip to minimal experience dealing with prison personnel who aren't their, or their inmates, friends.

Best yet, the majority of inmates are well meaning and grateful for aid. They mail me art, crafts, pictures, and heartfelt thanks for my efforts on their behalf. (See examples of their beautiful Pagan art on: [oldenwilde.org](http://oldenwilde.org).)

What you do for one can translate into aid for all, as when I helped for years an Ohio Pagan inmate group to successfully sue for the religious rights of all Pagans and institutionalized persons, which resulted in the U.S. Supreme Court's RLUIPA ruling or, the Religious Land Use of Institutionalized Persons Act of 2005. (RLUIPA mandates that federally funded facilities "not impose a substantial burden on the religious exercise of a person residing in, or confined to, an institution" unless they're able to prove "a compelling governmental interest" and even then, must do so "by the least restrictive means.")

Indeed, giving guidance, hope, and aid to one transfers word-of-mouth throughout the penal system. For all the Pagan orgs and Covens out there, aiding Wiccan inmates or those in mental institutions remains the last frontier.

### ***How Institutions Differ***

No two prison facilities operate the same way because:

- **While each federal prison is legally supposed to *ostensibly* operate according to constitutional guarantees, in practice, they operate by an unwritten assumption that the superintendent acts**

**according to their whim.**

This innately invites corruption and unfair treatment of Wiccan inmates by any staff bigoted against Paganism.

- **Appallingly, privately owned for-profit prisons are not legally bound to abide by federally mandated, constitutional rights.**

In these facilities, rights of any kind are optional — especially ones that staff consider to be Pagan.

- **Female Pagan/Wiccan inmates generally encounter less persecution than their male counterparts. They enjoy more support and fight less among themselves than male convicts do.**

Prison personnel are generally kinder toward female convicts, and talk in terms of rehabilitation and redemption, whereas those around male inmates are prone to acting dismissively, robotically, or with blatant hostility.

As a consequence, men push harder to secure their religious rights, while women focus more on acquiring and using Craft study materials.

- **Pagans in lock-up drug rehab or mental institutions suffer persecution different than that encountered by convicts.**

Staff trained in the conventional medical model of dispensing psychiatric diagnoses often classify spiritual devotion under the pejorative label “religious ideation” — deemed a baseless, non-functional, or dangerous obsession regarding a spiritual belief or figure.

True, in my many years as a psychiatric R.N. I’ve treated many a Mary Magdalene, but it’s *also* true that *none* of the following beliefs automatically constitute insanity:

- **Feeling that you’re psychic**

- **Believing that many deities exist**

- **Feeling that you can commune with animals or Nature**

- **Believing in the existence of ghosts, spirits, other realms, alternative universes and similar**

Further, while erecting prisons has expanded exponentially, funding of America’s mental healthcare system has been atrociously gutted, leaving even the most direly affected who need and deserve care cycling so quickly in and out of mental facilities that it’s hard to affect positive change within them.

By the time a patient finds out about my services, their Medicaid, Medicare, or insurance benefits have often been exhausted, and staff ready to deem them capable of maintaining on an outpatient basis. In actuality, few are; dumped outside shelters already at max capacity, many end up homeless.

Because the mental care system operates with such dizzying swiftness, I usually help Pagans in mental institutions in ways different than I do incarcerated Pagans, such as:

- **Listening empathetically.**

I sympathize as they relate by phone the details of how they “lost it” and ended up “in the nut hut.”

- **Provide advice on medications or treatments.**

It’s not unusual for one facility to differ vastly from another in its psychiatric stance and way of operating. Some focus on modifying the person’s behavioral adaptations to life and choices, others favor pharmacological treatment.

Staff in the latter typically drop or change the patient's meds, the assumption being that they wouldn't be there if their meds were working properly.

However, the end result is that a patient's experience can be one predicated on the luck of the draw, where they happen to end up, rather than a truly standardized model of care.

Not only can they end up whacked out on too many legal chemicals, but whacked out because they're withdrawing from what they were forced to take for years previous.

So, I have them tell me what they were on; what they're being given, how many milligrams of each, in what way (by mouth, injection, or what?), and how often; and how they feel (any negative symptoms that are persisting or side effects they're having).

If I feel it's too much, too little, or that they even need a med they're *not* being allowed, I encourage them to discuss the possibility of changing things "on a trial basis" with the in-house physician they were assigned.

- **Provide spiritual solace.**

I encourage patients to pray, do wish magic, and appeal to the God/desses for courage, stability, health, insight, acceptance, self-esteem, self-forgiveness, happiness — whatever they seem to need in order to best move forward and recover.

### ***How to Begin***

No two individuals or Pagan/Wiccan inmate groups are the same, nor should they be treated in any way but uniquely.

Only mail inmates one initial "form letter" in response to their first query letter: Tailor all subsequent correspondence according to their education level and situation.

I purposefully print my first response to inmate query letters in 8-point Book Antiqua type to help minimize cost and to confound nosy prison personnel who may try to read it. (Never write an inmate anything you wouldn't want the whole world to see.)

Yet within this single page I relate my training and expertise; list what I provide; give rights and book info; summarize how inmates can get their rights met; and provide a list of magics that they can do *sans* spell ingredients or tools. Here 'tis:

### **Sample Initial Form Letter**

Merrymeet, [NAME]—[STATE ABBREVIATION]

//2016 C. E.

I've been the 3rd degree High Priestess of my 501(c)(3) religious nonprofit Coven Oldenwilde in Asheville, NC since 1994. My Coven is composed of Craft clergy who practice Gardnerian, Strega, and magic from sources worldwide. I've taught, counseled, and empowered inmates and institutionalized folk nationwide for 20+ years (map at: [http://www.oldenwilde.org/oldenwilde/gen\\_info/blk\\_rib/wiccans-in-prison.html#wiccan-prison-map](http://www.oldenwilde.org/oldenwilde/gen_info/blk_rib/wiccans-in-prison.html#wiccan-prison-map)).

**I know all your issues and therefore provide outside sponsorship and magical, religious, legal, and medical rights expertise.** I enabled **RLUIPA** (Religious Land Use by Institutionalized Persons ensuring rights unless they "pose a substantial burden" on staff); **Holt v. Hobbs** (allowing inmates to grow beard/hair based on religious belief); inmates to buy/use Tarot; and innumerable other rights. I'm oft filmed working magic by TV and radio companies: such as *CNN*, *BBC*, and *Extra!*, etc. [An



inexperienced *on-site* volunteer can actually *erode* rights, but if you want one, ask your Chap or free world folk to search the Witches of the World, Your Town, or Your State's pages on: [witchvox.com](http://witchvox.com), tho' many claims there are false or non-current.] Only donate loose stamps to help me aid others:

The **1st Amendment Free Exercise Clause of the U.S. Constitution** protects ... "sincerely held religious beliefs." Pagan/Wiccan is a legally recognized inmate religious designation nationwide. You've the right to change your designation upon request and to dispute being classified as a "gang" or or "Neo-Pagan". The **8th U.S. Constitutional Amendment** obligates prison officials to provide inmates with adequate medical care. Learn your medical, dental and mental healthcare rights at: <https://www.aclu.org/prisoners-rights/know-your-rights-medical-dental-and-mental-health-care-0> (2012, 69.75 KB .pdf doc opened with Adobe Reader computer program). The U.S. Supreme Court's 2005 **RLUIPA** ruling (Religious Land Use & Institutionalized Persons Act) mandates that federally funded facilities "not impose a substantial burden on the religious exercise of a person residing in, or confined to, an institution" unless they prove "a compelling governmental interest" and even then, must use "the least restrictive means." All about **RLUIPA** is at:

[http://oldenwilde.org/oldenwilde/activism/prisoners/wiccan\\_prison\\_rights.doc](http://oldenwilde.org/oldenwilde/activism/prisoners/wiccan_prison_rights.doc) The Federal 1993 **RFRA** (Religious Freedom Restoration Act) passed by Congress "to protect the free exercise of religion" [Public Law Number 103-141, 107 Statute, number 1488] works in conjunction with a 1996 Clinton executive order "to provide more security for sacred Native American religious rites." (Since Native Americans are Pagan, both these laws should apply to other Pagan/Wiccan paths as well.) However, The 2011 **PLRA** (Prison Litigation Reform Act) restricts inmates' ability to file a federal lawsuit. Learn how to file at: <https://www.aclu.org/prisoners-rights/know-your-rights-prison-litigation-reform-act> (open the 27.93 KB.pdf document with Adobe Reader). In **Holt v. Hobbs** on January 20th, 2015 the U.S. Supreme Court unanimously ruled that a Caucasian Arkansas Muslim inmate at Varner Supermax be allowed to grow a beard/hair due to religious beliefs.

- **Demand your rights** — Prisoners' rights: Learn them via: <https://www.aclu.org/prisoners-rights/know-your-rights-freedom-religion-november-2012> (open the 32.27 KB .pdf doc with Adobe Reader).

Civil rights: To allege violation/s, write: **U.S. Department of Justice, Civil Rights Division, Special Litigation Section**, PHB, 950 Pennsylvania Avenue NW, Washington, D.C. 20530 and **ACLU National Prison Project** 125 Broad Street, 18th Floor, New York NY 10004, or phone 212-549-2500.

Religious rights: Are generally minimal in jails and for-profit facilities; vary wildly by state; and are strongest in federally funded facilities. BoP religious policies are listed in **TRM T5360.01** (Technical Reference Manual, last updated in 3/27/2002), oft used in tandem with the **RBP P5360.09** (Religious Beliefs and Practices program statement). Demand copies of both.

- **Rely on our inexpensive illustrated paperback *The Goodly Spellbook: Olde Spells For Modern Problems*** ISBN# 978-1-4549-1392-4 — which inmates nationwide use. Obtain via: Azure-Green, 1(800)326-0804 16 Bell Rd. P.O. Box 48 Middlefield, Massachusetts 01243-0048; Sterling Publishing Co., Inc., 1(800)367-9692) 1166 Avenue of the Americas, 17th Floor, NY, NY 10036; or [walmart.com](http://walmart.com), [amazon.com](http://amazon.com), and [barnesandnoble.com](http://barnesandnoble.com), etc.

- **Hold Pagan services** — Use *The Goodly Spellbook* as your guide. Strive to act united, confident, and resolute: But should one or more inmates infiltrate and try to dominate, divert, disrupt, or foment group discord, don't debate; simply turn your back and maintain your focus until they leave.

- **Absorb our free materials**: — such as my free *Pagan Prisoner Advocate's Guide* that details the 8 annual Pagan Sabbats and other traditional practices that should be allowed, etc., at: [oldenwilde.org](http://oldenwilde.org). Have your Chap or free world support download, print, and get this to you. For more aid, get my

inexpensive, illustrated eBooks **Simply Savory: Magical & Medieval Recipes**; **Ask-A-Priestess: Wise Answers From a Real Witch**, and audio tutorial CD **Hypnotic Trance Induction** at: oldenworks.org.

- **Band together** — Minimize persecution through “safety in numbers”: Work with *all* Pagan inmates regardless of Path if possible. Share outside circle space, communal religious feasts, ordered ritual items, and class-action lawsuits if necessary, etc.
- **Show Witchy wit** — If you lack magical items, pool resources or *make* by mixing toilet paper roll & paper dust with soap shavings and water into a crude *papiér maché* paste, then shape them, windowsill dry them, and decorate them. These can’t hurt anyone.
- **Embody Pagan pride** — Resist repression by documenting a *pattern* of denial or rights violations: What occurred, when, where, why, and who did it (staff members’ names and titles, etc.), the problems’ duration, and ways you tried to prevent or resolve it.
- **Sue** — Hold staff responsible for rights violations: List them in suits by name & title as co-Defendants. *The squeaky wheel gets the grease*. Daily or weekly have by *each* willing fellow Pagan *deluge* staff with grievances for *each* infraction. Request smart, non-safety risk rights; support your claims by citing Pagan tradition: For example, if you want to grow hair long, quote “My hair is holy. I grow it long for the God.” — Euripides, *The Bacchanae*), or rationales I provide in **The Goodly**. Similarly, petition your state’s DoC **Religious Rights Review Committee** (or equivalent name) for what you want added or corrected in its religious allowances list for Pagan/Wiccan inmates. Explain the traditional magical bases of/rationales for your requests my book and website materials supply; show how your requests “pose no security risk”; and prove how *not* allowing them violates RLUIPA and poses suit peril to the state. Before you file, proofread for merit, factual accuracy, concision, and proper spelling, grammar, and structure. Keep copies. (I don’t return inmate material.)

Resist current trends: 1). Pagans being forced to designate as “Neo-Pagan”: The The Olde Religion isn’t ‘new’; we perpetuate ancient ways. 2). Chaplains are using 1). to coerce Odinists to thwart Pagan services. Solution: Rectify the fallacy of 1). via your **RRRC**. Rationale: Prisons don’t force Jews, Catholics, Xtians, and Muslims to worship together; neither should they all Pagans if one group (oft Odinists) acts aggressively contrary to Craft principles and impedes others Pagans spiritual growth.

I’m not a pen pal, and don’t refer folk or mail material other than responses, nor answer inmate email, but can answer pre-paid calls. ***I can only answer inmates who always include an SASE — a self-addressed, stamped envelope with their address & inmate number and my return address*** **UPPER LEFT**. Share my sponsorship letter/contact info with anyone, but ensure they include an SASE if they mail me a query letter.

Courageously wage change: The Goddess of justice wields a sword of strength to aid you —

Queen Lady Passion, High Priestess, Coven Oldenwilde, Asheville, NC

wiccans.org

oldenwilde.org

oldenworks.org

READ **The Goodly Spellbook: Olde Spells For Modern Problems** Paperback ISBN# 978-1-4549-1392-4 Nook eBook ISBN# 978-1-4027-8150-6

SEE OUR EXPLOITS & APPEARANCES, HEAR OUR INTERVIEWS:  
<http://oldenwilde.org/consult-lady-passion/index.html>

DONATE TO OUR RELIGIOUS NONPROFIT: [https://www.paypal.com/cgi-bin/I havebscr?cmd=\\_s-xclick&hosted\\_button\\_id=5P69BBTQFCHD2](https://www.paypal.com/cgi-bin/I%20havebscr?cmd=_s-xclick&hosted_button_id=5P69BBTQFCHD2)

\*\*\*

Compose your own query-response letter detailing whatever you feel is important for the inmate(s) to know about yourself and the services you're willing and able to provide.

As a volunteer for Pagan/Wiccan inmates, you will probably end up helping those who practice magic of different timelines or pantheons than you do. In American prisons Norse (Odinism/Asatru), Celtic, and eclectic are the most common paths.

Teach them what you will of the magical tradition you follow. However, always retain the right not to serve any inmate that makes your gut lurch or who offends your sensibilities.

For example, many prisoners have learned to practice Odinism in a racist and monotheist way, espousing white supremacy and worshiping only the male God Odin. I point out to them that true Paganism looks beyond surface differences of skin color and cultural background to the deeper spiritual beliefs and practices all Pagans share – the most important of which is polytheism. If they are not at the minimum giving equal worship to a Goddess such as Frigga, then their spirituality is imbalanced and monotheist. Most Odinist prisoners tell me afterward that this proved to be a simple but powerful realization that fundamentally changed not only their spiritual practice, but also their outlook on life – helping them be more peaceful both within and without, for example. (In the larger community, many Norse-inspired Pagans prefer the term “Asatru”, meaning “true to the Gods” – plural.)

### ***Inmate Religious Rights Entitlements***

Across the board, monotheist and Native American convicts are accorded broad, lenient religious rights — Pagans and Wiccans are not.

“God pods” and unabashedly Christian prison programs are well funded and can grant inmates special privileges, such as early release. Such incentives are enticing to many inmates willing to recant or repudiate their Pagan faith.

While Pagans and Wiccans are *legally* entitled to the same rights as inmates of other faiths, in actuality they are rarely treated fairly compared to inmates who espouse other faiths. This is due to bigotry and ignorance that Wiccans are as Pagan as Native Americans are.

You may have to *repeatedly* educate prison staff as well as inmates about the rights Pagans and Wiccans should be entitled to.

Each state produces a list of rights and religious items allowed Christian, Muslim, Jewish, Catholic, Native American, Odinist, and Pagan/Wiccan inmates. (I have even worked with Voudon inmates in several facilities.) Have your inmates mail you a copy of this, and if they aren't operating by one, have them request it from their chaplain or services coordinator (they are bound by duty and law to provide it upon request).

The primary rights that I've seen allowed or have demanded from prisons are these:

- **Right to equal service.**

Inmates should be treated with equal care by their chaplain or service coordinator. Since there are currently no Wiccan “chaplains,” prisoners should also be allowed to seek outside clergy sponsorship, counsel, aid, and teaching from Pagans of their choice.

Almost all chaplains are monotheists hostile toward, or ignorant about, polytheists. Staff who show favoritism toward other faith groups to the exclusion of Pagans or Wiccans must be challenged.

- **Right to dignity.**

Bigotry can be insidious: Often as not it may even be not that the inmates you serve don't get their religious rights, but that at every turn staff and/or the religious supervisor is begrudging about having to give them — as if Pagans and Wiccans believe in strange things, are second class citizens, so to speak.

Rights are dispensed in conflicting or inconsistent ways, flippantly and shoddily. For example, a male inmate in Otisville prison phoned me as I was writing this, angry about a persistent problem getting proper cake for the Cakes and Wine ceremony; it's often stale and has no "use by" date to prevent accidental food poisoning.

"It's always something," he said, describing staff attitude. I asked if he and his crew had participated in sensitivity training for staff, and he replied "Yes, twice, to no avail."

- **Right to privacy.**

Most inmate services are monitored by the chaplain or staff; sometimes this is done less to ensure safety than because they are intrigued by Witchcraft practices.

However, if you're Wiccan clergy and go to a prison to teach or lead a ritual, staff need not be present for this, and if you aid inmates consistently, in time staff usually end up trusting you enough that they stop insisting on "supervising" you. ("Wiccan clergy" is usually defined as a Third degree Gardnerian Witch or equivalent in another Tradition, although someone Elevated to Second degree can also count as clergy, and even a First degree Initiate should feel free to help institutionalized persons if they desire.)

- **Right to legal redress of grievances.**

Inmates must follow facility chain-of-command and its grievance procedure; once they've exhausted all internal attempts at remedy, they're allowed to file an individual or class action lawsuit in order to get their needs met.

Prisoners also have the right to request that an investigation be launched into patterns of religious rights violations.

- **Right to appeal for *more* rights.**

Inmates should be able to try to negotiate for even more rights with their warden, chaplain or services coordinator, or superintendent.

- **Right to congregate.**

This may be restricted in maximum-security prisons and for those on Death Row.

Pagans prefer an hour of indoor study time (reading Craft books, discussing religious needs, planning upcoming Sabbat rites, etc.), and an outdoor hour in which to circle and practice spellwork, etc.

If you can get this for them, great — but at a minimum, they could get by alternating between the two every other week, but should be allowed to circle outdoors for the eight annual Sabbats. (Sabbat dates are listed in *The Goodly Spellbook* and at: [oldenwilde.org](http://oldenwilde.org).)

However, inmates should not be forced to work with other inmates who consistently disrupt their services or rituals.

- **Right to circle outdoors.**

Pagans worship nature, so they should be allowed to be in it.

Pagan Native American inmates usually have an outdoor circling site that Wiccans can use at times when the former are not using it.

- **Right to liturgy.**

Pagans and Wiccans should be allowed access to magical reading material, be it in book, periodical, correspondence courses, CD, or DVD form.

- **Right to religious ceremony.**

Pagans and Wiccans should be allowed 1 ounce of wine and cake, bread, or cookies, etc. per ritual in order to observe the Cakes & Wine ceremony after spellwork.

This is a right on par with Catholic inmates are allowed sacramental wine, or Christian inmates who participate in prison communion ceremonies.

If you absolutely *cannot* get the inmates the right to wine, try to get them grape juice.

- **Right to wear a religious symbol.**

Pagan prisoners should be allowed to wear the traditional silver upright pentagram necklace.

Resist staff attempts to deny inmates this sacred spiritual symbol because they claim it is “a gang symbol.” *The Goodly Spellbook* provides illustrated information regarding the multiple traditional meanings of the pentagram and its use by Pagans for eons that you can use to educate staff in order to secure inmates this right.

- **Right to religious paraphernalia.**

**Candles** (votives — in the four Elemental colors white or yellow, red, blue, and green or black). If you can’t get them these, suggest that they use battery-operated tea-light type “candles.”

**Candleholders**

**Incense** (often, sage bundle)

**Censer** (can put dirt or sand in a votive holder to serve as a container to burn incense in)

**Matches or lighter**

**Tarot** (one deck per inmate)

**Fetish bag** (that often contains a feather and a few small stones, or wooden runes)

**Essential oils** (to use to anoint foreheads when admitting fellow inmates to circle, or to use as a spell ingredient)

**Personal Book of Shadows** (often, a spiral notebook that each keeps in order to track their group and individual spellwork results; to compose Pagan poetry in; or to take notes regarding magic read about)

**Cup or chalice** (some facilities allow this magical tool and representation of the Element Water)

**Athamé** (few facilities allow this magical tool and representation of the Element Fire; inmates can substitute finger gestures, the Ace of Swords Tarot card, or one cut out of cardboard)

**Paten** (some facilities allow this magical tool and representation of the Element Earth; it’s a flat wooden round about five inches in radius put beneath the Cakes plate to bless them, or spellwork

items put atop in order to charge them with energy)

**Wand** (some facilities allow this magical tool and representation of the Element Air; if not, have your inmates substitute a pencil)

**Box, bin, or cubby** (a place to keep religious items, usually in the chaplain's office. The virtue of a box is that it can double as a ritual altar)

**Altar cloth** (often, a rectangular silk or satin cloth with or without an emblem appliqué used to drape an altar; many of a standard size are available online)

Other items may be capriciously allowed or denied on a per-facility basis.

### ***Ways & Means to Aid***

Pagan or Wiccan advocates can provide limited or broad-based services for inmates.

Convicts' top three requests are: Relief from persecution; Craft reading materials; and remote teaching. If you can't afford to ship reading materials, at least provide recommendations of goodly titles and contact info for how inmates can acquire them. You don't have to restrict your recommendations to those that involve the group's particular path. (See and print out a Recommended Reading List at: [oldenwilde.org](http://oldenwilde.org).)

The trouble with providing reading materials is that many states severely limit which magical tomes they allow inmates to read (no nude pictures allowed); the ones they do allow usually don't remain of use in the prison library because inmates often abscond with them when they're released; and because chaplains exercise great discretion about what they allow or deny inmates under their auspices, bigoted ones tend to read and throw them out, never allowing inmates access to books on magic.

The following is a list of services that I provide inmates, but you could provide only one or a few of these as you wish.

#### **• Advocacy**

I act as a liaison between inmates and prison officials and investigative agencies such as the ACLU or Justice Department. I convey the inmates' complaints and desires, and negotiate how to quickly meet their needs.

#### **• Counseling**

I guide inmates through the demoralizing prison experience and their transition to release, and even keep in contact with them until they stabilize in the outside world.

Much of this consists of empowering convicts, and encouraging prudent restraint and bold action by turns. I empathize when they're depressed, and praise their personal growth.

#### **• Legal advice**

I help them successfully navigate the grievance and lawsuit process. I vet their legal submissions to ensure that their requests for rights are reasonable; are based on magical tradition and/or legal precedent; are clearly worded; and are grammatically phrased. And I provide contact info for agencies and watchdog organizations that inmates can also work with in tandem with me in order to secure their religious rights.

#### **• Spiritual guidance**

I answer inmates' magical questions, no matter how shallow or obscure. I explain Pagan and Wiccan

cosmology and what religious rights they deserve. I am a repository for confessions of past misdeeds, guilty feelings, and future dreams of accomplishments.

I confront unwise choices that inmates make, and encourage them to deepen in their magical practices.

- **Sponsorship**

Most penal institutions demand that Pagan or Wiccan inmates have an “in house” clergy sponsor. Local Craft clergy willing to teach or circle inside a prison are rare, so I serve untold numbers of individual convicts and groups from afar.

- **Study materials**

Although I can’t usually afford to outright provide magical reading or other media, I recommend that they read and study *The Goodly Spellbook: Olde Spells For Modern Problems*, and have their chaplain or friends or relatives on the outside download, print out, and mail them tons of free materials posted on the websites: [oldenwilde.org](http://oldenwilde.org) and [oldenworks.org](http://oldenworks.org)

- **Referrals**

I give inmates contact info for how they can try to find local clergy to work with in addition to me. (A list of folks who claim to be Pagan or Wiccan is on: [witchvox.com](http://witchvox.com). Click on their Witches of the World page, then the page of the state where the inmate is incarcerated.)

- **Teaching**

I provide information about how inmates can work effective magic behind bars; in secret; in public; with or without tools and spell ingredients; and how to form and maintain a study group or practicing prison Coven.

For example, I've found that certain divination methods have proven popular with inmates because they are easy to practice in daily prison life and require minimal-to-zip materials. Here is the list I often provide:

**Arachnomancy** = Fortune-telling by the appearance/action of a spider. Sleek-haired? Smooth sailing. Rough-haired? Hard times. Appears in morning? Grief will soon go. Noonish? Grief'll take time to lessen. Evening or nite? Beware getting stuck in grief. Appears in the South? Treachery. From the North? Be secretive. In the East? May conscience guide you. In the West? Express emotion. And so forth...

**Arithromancy** = Omens gained by adding or subtracting clock numbers.

**Entomomancy** = Knowing the future by an insect's appearance or action.

**Gyromancy** = Fortune-telling by spinning a coin or top, etc.

**Lecanomancy** = Scrying the future by gazing at sink water.

**Metagnomy** = Insight gained while in a trance state.

**Myomancy** = Knowing the future by the color and/or movement of a mouse.

**Oneiromancy** = Foresight from dream.

**Stichomancy** = Insight by random words in books.

Occasionally, an inmate will write back asking for elaboration about one of these. For instance, here's how I responded to such a request for more information about Arachnomancy:

*Regarding Arachnomancy, or fortune-telling by the appearance/action of a spider: Letting a spider*

*coexist undisturbed with you (say, in your cell or unit) is lucky. In this way, it will reciprocate the favor by warning you of things to come. Daddy Longlegs spiders are particularly lucky and downright smart.*

*Spiders live longer than you think, and will return to sites where they feel safe if you let them. Black Widow spiders aren't superior to say, a common, gray Wolf Spider simply because their hourglass marking is striking to look at — shock value is not important; being able to work well with a spider is.*

*Like all magic, the divination method of Arachnomancy is based on the Magical Art of Correspondences, or natural “no-brainer” meanings of things based on traditional observations of how things work.*

*For instance, if you were to catch sight of an arachnid that looks sleek, you'd know that whatever question you asked or thing you were thinking about when you saw it will work out smoothly; and oppositely, if it looked hairy or rough, you'd be forewarned of sharp/difficult times ahead.*

*If it appears in the morning, something you're grieving about will soon abate; if at noon (solar zenith), your grief'll take time to lessen; and if in the evening or night, you'd know to beware getting stuck in grief.*

*By the same token, if it appears in the hot South direction, watch out for conflict; in the North, be secretive; in the East, let conscience guide you about the matter; and if in the West direction, it's okay to feel or express your emotions regarding the matter.*

*Similarly, color and type of spider matter: Gray = the matter's unsettled; work magic about it so things may go in your favor. Black = Goodly for getting an increase in rank, such as Trustee, or a better facility job, or parole. Brown = Goodly for practicing magic to increase your competence, etc.*

*Is it a “jumper,” a “runner,” fat, tiny, moves and acts with intelligence, or is common or unusual to appear in your facility? How spiders look, act, when, and from what direction they appear, if they bite or don't — everything about them matters when you're trying to figure out what they magically portend for you.*

*If they spin a web, scry it by staring intently at it to see if it contains a pattern that contains a message or resembles something you recognize which has meaning regarding a problem, concern, or topic you're thinking about. For instance, you might see an English or Runic letter in it; initials; a face; a magical symbol, etc.*

*Directly cultivate a spider to act for you like a magical familiar or, mascot/pet that helps you work magic. Give it a magical name, and have everyone work together to keep it alive or consult it for omens. Leave flies in their web, or close to them, etc.*

*Worship or pray to their patron Goddess Arachne — She who spins the web of everyone's life. Or, worship The Norns — 3 Goddesses who in turn spin, weave, and cut the thread of everyone's life. Or do both.*

*Draw and make an 8-legged spider your personal magical symbol or Coven/group logo.*

*These and many more correspondences are easily explained, and option ideas are given in The Goodly Spellbook: Olde Spells For Modern Problems. It's crucial to master these, as they are the key to why and how any kind of effective magic works.*

### ***Avoidable Pitfalls***

Sugarcoating reality would be an insult to the thousands of inmates I have served for almost two



decades. I hate to break your bubble if you have one, but the truth is that in many ways The Burning Times are not over: More than any country, ours, America — land of the free and home of the brave — makes such a huge proportion of our kind suffer to follow the Olde Ways that they could fill the ocean.

That said, it's better for inmates to have no Pagan sponsor than a bad one. Truth is that every year a few well-meaning Pagans step up to help inmates near them — only to fall into traps that prison personnel purposefully set for them. As a consequence, they actually end up setting back the religious rights of the very inmates they sought to aid in the first place.

This is because few are traditionally trained, much less are experienced clergy. Indeed, most are rather naïve in believing that prison personnel mean them and their charges well. Therefore, it comes as a surprising disappointment to them when they realize that in fact, the opposite is true.

Pretty much across the board, prison owners, superintendents, wardens, block bosses, and monotheist volunteers do not mean you or inmates well, for these be in the biz for profit, paycheck, political stepping-stone, or puerile motive. Nor are nurses and chaplains immune to meting out punitive pain to a largely powerless Pagan population: They, too, can be bigoted, withholding, and downright spiteful.

Ah... the tales I could tell that would curl your hair — what confidences break to make my point to you, sight unseen... Suffice it to say that there are a million ways prison personnel can marginalize, ignore, resist, and entrap Pagan volunteers?

Their first volley is in making the process of qualifying as a “volunteer” arduous and revolting. A background check necessitating invasive paperwork is usually required, and the “discretion” allowed prison personnel enables them to delay your confirmation for what seems like eons — a typical tactic designed to extend the process so long that you give up the process from the get-go.

But say you persist past this first test. Then you must often attend one or more volunteer training sessions each year that can last hours long. These usually consist of additional paperwork, tedious lectures, and patronizing films designed to erode your motivation and morale by inserting suspicion about all inmates who supposedly invariably lie and manipulate anyone who tries to help them. (Ironically, the last such session I attended was delivered by a female prison official subsequently convicted of dispensing favors to inmates in exchange for sex.)

They will tell you not to touch or hug inmates. (I care not; I give quick, chaste hugs when admitting my inmates into circle or bidding them bye.)

They will say that inmates fudge and fib about their charges and sentences. (I care not; I don't ask why they're in, I only care what they're doing to spiritually deepen themselves.)

In other words, from day one they try to negate your respect for inmates as being persons innately deserving of care. Those not wise enough to see this as propaganda often opt out of the process at this point.

But say you're the tenacious type capable of flashing a thin smile and refusing to be dissuaded. Just know that prison personnel may take your fortitude as a personal challenge. They're patient, too — have all the time in the world to size you up, gauge your weaknesses.

The bottom line is that they don't trust *you* anymore than those they're paid to confine. The gatekeepers may try to embroil you in a blatant power struggle.

You'll usually be under the nominal or *understood* auspices of a chaplain or services coordinator. You'll have to get their approval to schedule a teaching or circling hour. (I write hour because you won't be able to accomplish anything substantial with any less time.) This can be problematic, because

they are usually passive-aggressive, willfully bigoted, and even openly *hostile* to Paganism.

To show their disdain they may demand that you come at an inconvenient time; may try to severely restrict your face-time with inmates; or make you circle in the common dining room in front of the entire prison population. I've done the latter many times with aplomb: If you bring it with grace, not only will participants feel empowered, but all witnesses touched by your sincerity and unflappability.

Chaplains and services coordinators often feign beatific smiles at your appearance, and then talk smack about you in your absence. They are not above lying that you said or did something that you're innocent of. In short, they seek to consistently undercut you.

Though you may visit weekly, they may make you sign in and search your spell ingredients every time. Prison personnel may make you wait awhile before they announce Wiccan Services, but to be blunt, this is usually a transparent ploy to enable their selves to salaciously stare at your Witch garb.

Prison personnel may even conduct demeaning strip-searches of inmates on their way to meet you (something they'd never do to inmates of other faiths).

So say you persist, lodge initial complaints via standard chain-of-command. Prison personnel may respond by taking overt measures designed to make you feel distinctly unwelcome.

They might fail to post a notice of Pagan Services times, so that when you arrive few inmates appear, for instance. In this way prison personnel feign you're unpopular. Don't fall for this or similar facility ploys. Just know that many needful victories are hard won.

Strive to deal with prison personnel to the minimum degree required, and mainly only when you need prevent them from impeding you or the inmates you sponsor. Most are petty despots easily bested. Prove your mettle and you'll eventually earn a private place to meet your inmates and other allowances. (See "The Bliss of Besting Bigots" by Lady Passion, article online at: [oldenwilde.org](http://oldenwilde.org), and [witchvox.com](http://witchvox.com).)

Focus on empowering your inmates. In quick fashion help them prioritize their demands and push for positive change. Guide their spiritual growth.

I'm lucky to be able to offer the inmates I serve the ability to acquire a book that I co-authored, to use as a study guide. Because *The Goodly Spellbook: Olde Spells For Modern Problems* provides historical documentation of Witches' traditional customs, spell ingredients, tools, Sabbat times, and divination skills, etc., they have immediate rationale for demanding their religious rights in facilities and lawsuits.

As the inmates grow in strength under your tutelage, prison personnel usually grow uneasy. They're used to being able to bust a convict down a grade level of privilege or throw them in the hole without objection from a watching Witch. They prefer cowering convicts to resolute ones whom they know could initiate a lawsuit against them for their bigoted behavior.

Be sharp at this juncture: Anticipate active sabotage, such as a chaplain recruiting some eager zealot to infiltrate the Pagan/Wiccan inmate group. These are encouraged to spy and report back to them, to disrupt meetings and foment discord amongst group members. They accuse, argue, divert Sabbat plans, and wreak general upheaval.

Prepare your group for such a possibility. If they experience such antics from their number, they should firmly ask them to opt out. But the inevitable frustration that the zealot will feel for having failed to produce the desired result for their idol chaplain may provoke them desperation — telling lurid lies such as that the group threatened to curse them.

Prison personnel relish such scandalous accusations because they consider them validation of the negative preconceptions they have about Witches.

Be irate with officials in defense of your inmates, because baseless allegations can be the impetus for prison personnel to mete out reprisals such as singling them out for frequent cell searches, switching their work duties to harsh manual labor, throwing them in solitary, or transferring all the group members to other penal systems.

These difficulties can be exponentially worsened if you try to aid inmates in a private, for-profit prison, because these facilities are not legally bound to provide inmates the religious rights enshrined in the constitution, federal, and state law. (Also on [oldenwilde.org](http://oldenwilde.org) and [witchvox.com](http://witchvox.com): a recounting of how I forced Virginia DoC to allow inmates to acquire and use Tarot cards.) I sponsor convicts in these facilities anyway; I take all comers regardless of where they're at or what they're in for.

Be determined and don't tolerate, prison personnel's sadistic maneuvers. Never let 'em see ya' sweat, and if they engage you in a staring contest, refuse to blink.

When it comes to the penal system, persistence pays: If you arrive punctually, act professionally, and advocate tenaciously, you can win prison personnel's respect.

Regardless, document each and every religious rights infraction you see or hear about from inmates. Let nothing slide. In compiling a slough of infractions you are proving that a *pattern of repression* exists that courts and others pay attention to more than a slight here and there.

Remember the reason why the inmates you sponsor sought your help in the first place — usually because they've been treated unfairly by the very system that dares hold *them* to certain standards.

Research applicable laws in your inmates' favor; they often have more rights than they're informed about or that you even know exist.

Whenever you feel that their cause is just, contact anyone or any agency on their behalf that could conceivably be in a position to investigate, expose, or stop the facilities' repressive tactics, be they local or on a state or federal level, or even reporters, etc. (For options, see the section *Helpful Resources* below.)

Never be afraid to appeal to any agency, no matter how lofty or removed you may assume they are, be they folks at the U.S. Department of Justice; the director of the state's Department of Corrections (DoC); a prison superintendent; a bigoted chaplain; or a block warden infamous for their recalcitrant cruelty.

Push for your inmates to get the same or similar rights accorded monotheists and Pagan Native Americans by the particular *Religious Guidelines for Prisoners* that each state's DoC drafts.

Each state's Department of Corrections has a Religious Rights Review Committee or equivalent body that meets a minimum of bi-annually to appraise prisoners' religious rights.

Federal, state, and local prison facilities are duty-bound to provide inmates the contact information for this board upon request, and inmates may submit requests to this body for increases in their religious rights at any time.

It's fine to get rights in this or that prison, but preferable to tackle such issues on a statewide level so that all Pagan or Wiccan inmates can benefit from such progress.

Keep in mind that there is power in numbers. Sure, you can do much to help an individual Pagan inmate, but it's just always easier to attack intractable, institutionalized bigotry when multiple

persecuted Pagans are willing to sign on to a class action lawsuit and see it through to conclusion.

Remember that bureaucrats are human just as you are, and that most are not degreed in criminology or religious studies. Educate them about Paganism to the degree you feel comfortable or that seems as if it might suit your purposes, but not so much that you feel grilled to divulge Mysteries or Craft secrets.

When it comes to waging the battle to win your inmates the religious rights they deserve, be on the *offensive* rather than the defensive.

If legal in your state, secretly record all conversations with prison personnel; if it's not legal, ask to tape them "for future reference": If they refuse, take copious notes. (Use a small, inexpensive digital recorder or consider getting a FlashCord® online, which is discreetly tiny —the size of a thumb-drive — and capable of recording 25 hours at a time without batteries. Best yet, you can save the data on your computer and play it back at will. Acquire at: [GetFlashCord.com](http://GetFlashCord.com).)

Some bureaucrats are political appointees only trying to do the minimum, therefore have a vested interest in wanting to avoid accusations of impropriety.

If you sense that a prison official doesn't want their superior to know about their repressive tactics, use it as a weapon against them: Threaten to go over their head or expose them to media scrutiny, etc., and follow through with your plan.

### ***Helpful Resources***

All of the following can be easily found or contacted by searching online:

#### **American Civil Liberties Union**

Contact the particular headquarters branch in the state where the inmate(s) are incarcerated.

*Prisoners' Assistance Directory* (updated every few years)

#### **Circle Sanctuary**

*Guide to Pagan Resources* (updated annually)

#### **Corrections Connection**

A website that posts links to each state's prison inmate locator, as well as other helpful information

#### **Department of Corrections**

Contact the DoC in the state where the inmate(s) are incarcerated

#### **Federal Bureau of Prisons**

#### **Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA)**

#### **Religious Rights Review Committee**

Contact the body in the state where the inmate(s) are incarcerated

#### **U.S Department of Justice**

*Legal Resource Guide*

## ***About the Author***



Lady Passion (Dixie Deerman) is an experienced seer, counselor, and registered nurse. Third degree clergy legally empowered to “marry and bury”, she’s been High Priestess of the 501(c)(3) religious nonprofit Coven Oldenwilde since 1994.

A gifted, renowned, confidential clairvoyant with a worldwide clientele, Lady Passion often appears in the media, such as Extra!, BBC/London radio, and national magazines such as *Witches & Pagans*, and *Oracle 20/20* (view, hear, and read at: <http://www.oldenwilde.org>).

Lady Passion co-authored *The Goodly Spellbook: Olde Spells For Modern Problems* (Italian translation *Il Libro Degli Incantesemi: Antiche Formule Magiche Per Risolvere Problemi Attuali*), which is cited in numerous books by authors such Marian Singer, Margot Adler, Helen Berger, D.J. Conway, and Christopher Penczak.

Her work helping Pagan inmates nationwide secure their religious rights since 1995 appears in *Drawing Down the Moon*, the ACLU’s Prisoner’s Assistance Directory (part of U. S. Justice Department’s Prison Project), and Circle Sanctuary’s annual *Guide to Pagan Resources*.

Lady Passion has conducted a popular free Samhain ritual in Asheville, NC for decades. Her hobbies include designing magical jewelry and spiritual eco-activism.

She lives in a 3-story Covenstead in the Blue Ridge Mountains, and may be reached at: [oldenwilde@oldenwilde.org](mailto:oldenwilde@oldenwilde.org)

## ***Other Books by the Author***

*Ask-A-Priestess: Magic Answers & Spells From a Real Witch*, Lady Passion, Smashwords.com, 2009

*Hypnotic Trance Induction*, Lady Passion, oldenworks.org, 2011

*Simply Savory: Magical & Medieval Recipes*, Lady Passion, 2010, Smashwords.com

*The Goodly Spellbook: Olde Spells For Modern Problems*, Lady Passion & \*Diuvei, Sterling Publishing/New York, 2005

Italian translation: *Il Libro Degli Incantesemi: Antiche Formule Magiche Per Risolvere Problemi Attuali*, Lady Passion & \*Diuvei, Gruppo Editoriale, Armenia/Milan, 2006

## ***T.V. & Radio Interviews and Articles***

Hear and read on: [www.oldenwilde.org](http://www.oldenwilde.org)

\*\*\*\*\*