

## A Guide to Designing Your Own Religion

### **vocabulary list:**

ritual – a religious or solemn ceremony consisting of a series of actions

pigskin – an informal name for an American football

scripture – a religion's sacred writings, such as the bible or quran

tenet – a principle or belief, especially one of the main principles of a religion or philosophy

adherent – someone who follows or supports a particular religion, party, person, or set of ideas

bar & grill – a place where grilled food and alcoholic drinks are served to customers

commiserate – express or feel sympathy or pity; sympathize

forbidden – absolutely not allowed; banned

annual – occurring once every year

macro – large-scale

deceased – a polite expression for the recently dead

dearly departed – an idiomatic expression used referring to a loved one who has passed away

**Name:** This is the name of your religion.

**Example** – The Way of Nachos, sometimes called The Way.

**Holidays:** These should be celebrations of the religion's important events. They may have many varying **rituals** and reasons.

**Example** – The chief holiday is the **Pigskin** Feast, which is held in early autumn to celebrate the return of cool weather and the start of the American football season. Friends and family gather to watch the first football game of the year, drink lots of beer, and (of course) eat nachos!

**Organization:** This point addresses how the religion's followers are organized. There may be a strict hierarchy, as in the case of Catholicism. In other cases there may be minimal hierarchy, such as in the case of Santería. Another possibility is that the religion is fractured where there are many different groups that all worship the same religion, but they have different approaches or conflicts over portions of **scripture**, such as Christianity having many different branches.

**Example** – The Way of Nachos isn't organized at all, resulting in many regional differences and beliefs. The main **tenet** is that "nachos are love, nachos are life." Beyond that core tenet, there are many interpretations, and even the Pigskin Feast has many variations.

**Worship places:** The religion needs to have a place to worship, places for the religious leaders and some followers to live and work and other buildings and structures to make their presence known. These may take the form of simple churches, ornate basilicas, mosques, or temples, hidden monasteries, roadside shrines or prominent statues.

**Example** – There are no churches or shrines for The Way, but people tend to gather and worship at an **adherent's** house. Sometimes, if no house is suitable, they will gather to worship at a local **bar & grill**.

**Worship services:** How and when and where do the followers gather for worship? Do they meet at a church once a week? Do they have to perform a private prayer several times a day? Are the services centered around a sacrifice or singing or dutiful recitation of some sacred scriptures?

**Example** – Once or twice a month, usually (but not always) on a Friday or Saturday night, followers gather at someone's house or a bar & grill. They consume nachos and beer, talk about what's good in their lives, **commiserate** if any worshipper is going through a tough time, and enjoy the company.

**Obligations:** What must the religion's followers and especially its leaders do? There may be some regular, daily requirements such as reading a scripture each day or never eating a **forbidden** food.

There may be less frequent requirements such as performing service to others one day each week or month or one week each year. There may be **annual** obligations such as fasting for a period of time in recognition or sacrifice of some religious event or undergoing some missionary service. Missionary service may also be required for an extended period of time at one point during a person's lifetime. Visiting a sacred place is another possible once-in-a-lifetime obligation.

Example – Followers of The Way do not actually have any particular obligations beyond enjoying nachos with beer at least twice a month. Some followers volunteer to perform craft beer missionary work, teaching the masses about the joys of craft beer compared to **macro** beer, but this isn't required.

**Rituals:** Birth, Marriage, and Death are often marked by religious ceremonies. What are these ceremonies like in the religion you are creating?

Example - Birth and marriage aren't celebrated in a particular fashion by those who follow the Way of Nachos. Funerals, however, are an important ceremony. The **deceased's** friends and family gather at a funeral party, where they look at photos / video clips from the **dearly departed's** life, while eating nachos and drinking beers. Of course grief is tolerated, but the goal of this party is to celebrate their life and so it is meant to be a joyful, happy occasion full of laughter and fond memories.

### The Way of Nachos

The Way of Nachos isn't organized at all, resulting in many regional differences and beliefs. The main tenet is that "nachos are love, nachos are life." Beyond that core tenet, there are many interpretations, and even the Pigskin Feast has many variations.

The chief holiday is the Pigskin Feast, which is held in early autumn to celebrate the return of cool weather and the start of the American football season. Friends and family gather to watch the first football game of the year, drink lots of beer, and (of course) eat nachos!

There are no churches or shrines for The Way, but people tend to gather and worship at an adherent's house. Sometimes, if no house is suitable, they will gather to worship at a local bar & grill.

Once or twice a month, usually (but not always) on a Friday or Saturday night, followers gather at someone's house or a bar & grill. They consume nachos and beer, talk about what's good in their lives, commiserate if any worshipper is going through a tough time, and enjoy the company.

Birth and marriage aren't celebrated in a particular fashion by those who follow the Way of Nachos. Funerals, however, are an important ceremony. The deceased's friends and family gather at a funeral party, where they look at photos / video clips from the dearly departed's life, while eating nachos and drinking beers. Of course grief is tolerated, but the goal of this party is to celebrate their life and so it is meant to be a joyful, happy occasion full of laughter and fond memories.

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