

GDD - Puzzle Design

Iconostasis Puzzle:

Concept:

Serving as gateway to first game area. Intuitive and engaging, makes use of visual cues and straightforward logic. Player must feel rewarded and not frustrated. Sets a tone for the game introducing mysterious church's atmosphere.

Completion Time:

5-10 minutes.

Difficulty:

3/10.

Where:

Iconostasis.

Breakdown:

Goal:

Unlock a hidden mechanism in the iconostasis to access the prohibited part of the church.

Steps to solve (refer also to gameplay layout):

1. Arrival to the Scene:

- a. Player enters church.
- b. Discovery of 3 different scenes, the iconostasis and two choirs.

2. Initial Observation:

- a. The player examines the scenes, notices in the two choirs several icons depicting various saints and religious scenes.
- b. Similar but not equal scenes can be seen in the iconostasis.
- c. Each icon of the two choirs can be clicked for a closer view, some having pieces of lore.
- d. Icons of iconostasis can be clicked for closer view, they do **NOT** provide lore, instead have buttons with symbols.
- e. Door at the center of iconostasis locked, no door handle or anything related.



3. Discovering the Clue:

- a. Amongst the two choirs icons, a specific icon has a peculiar feature (blood/carved eyeballs/strange facial expression).
- b. This icon has a cipher (order of symbols).

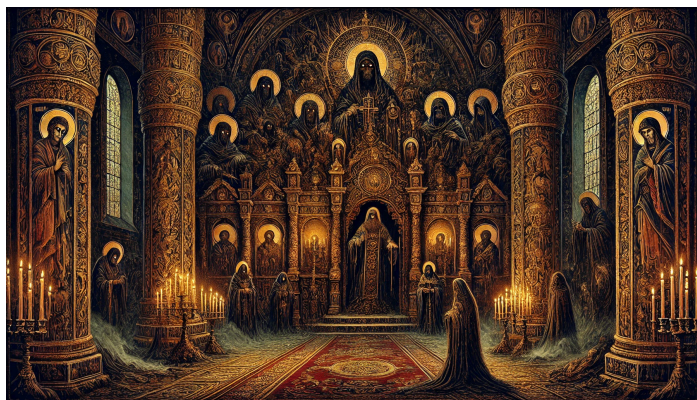
4. Interaction:

- a. Interact with the icons on iconostasis and press the corresponding button in the order of the cypher.



5. Unlock:

- a. Upon entering combination in correct sequence, an audio queue signals that a mechanism has been activated.
- b. Door at center becomes interactable (pushed) and leads player to new scene.



6. Failed Unlock:

- a. System checks if combination is correct only after full order is inserted
- b. Example: (if combination is A - B - C and player enters A - C, puzzle continues until final letter is inserted. Upon insertion of final letter, system checks if correct, if not, puzzle resets to start and increases noise meter (see below).

Bell Puzzle:

Concept:

Room with bells (attached on the wall or leaning on a big shelving) some of them are colored, the solution is in an item (a paper sheet) given by the Lost Monk, involving the use of the inventory. Builds fear and anxiety in the player because of the noise. Serves as a puzzle for the first ending (Theosis).

Completion Time:

8-10 minutes.

Difficulty:

7/10.

Where:

Saint's Room.

Breakdown:

Goal: Unlock a door by ringing the colored bells in the correct order.

Steps:

1. Interaction with Lost Monk:

- a. The player encounters him and interacts with him.
- b. The last dialogue sentence will suggest to check the item that he will give.
- c. The monk gives the paper sheet.

2. Arriving to the room:

- a. Room filled with different bells (some of them broken or damaged, others with blood splatters).
- b. Only the colored bells are clickable, each one of them has a different color.
- c. There are 8 colored bells: red, orange, yellow, green, blue, purple, black, white.
- d. The orange and the blue one are clickable but they are not part of the correct sequence.

3. Finding the solution:

- a. Open the inventory and select the paper sheet given by the monk.
- b. It contains a story/riddle with sentences that refers to colors (the same as the bells).
- c. The papers recites: "The forgotten congregation gathered under the eerie glow of the stained glass. The verdant-robed priest began the chants at the dusk, his shadow merging with the amethyst-clad acolyte who followed. Another figure in royal violet emerged, echoing the somber hymns. A ghostly alabaster nun floated silently by the altar, as the golden candle flickered in her presence. Darkness fell twice, whispering secrets to the night. But amidst the final chant, they failed to see the crimson dawn breaking through the shattered window, the first light that had been there from the very beginning".
- d. The correct sequence is: Red - Green - Purple - Purple - White - Yellow - Black - Black.

4. Solving the puzzle:

- a. Interact with the bells and ring the correct symphony.
- b. A sound effect that will suggest that the puzzle has been solved will play, followed by camera shake and the door that opens on its own.

5. Failed solving:

- a. If the max noise is reached the ilics will come to kill the player, game over.
- b. The right order counter will start when the Red bell is the first to be rang, when a wrong one is clicked a distorted sound will be played.

Missing Body Parts Puzzle:

Concept:

Serving as climatic entrance to the final scene/room. Makes use of inventory throughout the exploration to gather key items used to solve it.

Completion Time:

8-12 minutes.

Difficulty:

6/10.

Breakdown:

Goal:

Complete the mysterious ritual to gain access to final room.

Steps to solve (refer also to gameplay layout):

c. Exploration:

- i. By exploring the monastery. player will find different body parts scattered and hidden in the scenes, these can be interacted and picked up to be put in inventory.
- ii. Body parts are **eye, teeth, ear, foot** and **hand**
- iii. **Locations:**
 1. **Eye:** Corridor (section 2) (quite **HARD** to notice)
 2. **Hand:** Altar Room (clearly **EASY** to see, cannot be picked up before reading the report)
 3. **Ear:** Staircase (section 2) (quite **HARD** to notice)
 4. **Foot:** Sewer Room - **Puzzle gated**
 5. **Teeth:** Bones Room - **Puzzle gated**

d. Finding the Cypher:

- i. **Location:** Archive room (thematically consistent)
- ii. **Composition:** A detailed report of a failed ritual attempt in the depths of monastery. Point out how during the ritual many saints lost their limbs and other parts, many died and were buried right there.
- iii. **Details:**
 1. Apart from lore of the incident. list of victims such as:
 - a. Father Mikhail lost his hand (**hand**)
 - b. Father Alexis stopped seeing from an eye (**eye**)
 - c. Father Nikolas lost the ability to walk freely (**foot**)

2. To solve puzzle, player is required only **three** out of the five parts, these are both of the puzzle gated ones and the hand (the most unmissable one). So **Hand**, **Foot** and **Teeth**. The other two parts serve as decoys.

e. **Ritual Room:**

- i. Fairly empty room, just graves and big locked door with inscriptions (cannot be read)
- ii. On the floor placed 8 inscriptions with saint name that is buried underneath like picture.



f. **Solution:**

- i. Every grave is interactable
- ii. Place correct missing part on grave
- iii. Door lights up and opens, ritual completed and final room unlocked

g. **Failed Unlock:**

- i. Nothing happens if body parts are not placed on the correct grave

Sewers Puzzle:

Concept:

Bit more complex puzzle to reveal important object for missing body parts puzzle. Intent to not use any combination or ciphers, just object and scene interaction.

Completion Time:

7 - 12 min

Difficulty:

7/10.

Breakdown:

Goal:

Interact and make use of the various items hidden in the scene to open the rusty grate and reveal a crucial object to solve the body parts puzzle.

Puzzle elements:

- Knee-high murky water covers the floor
- Broken pipe coming out of the water and into the ceiling

- Statue of a saint/angel holding a lantern in corner of room
- Rusted grate into the wall (1m x 1m) needs a key to open
- Behind gate small bloody wooden box
- A hook coming out of the center of the ceiling

Steps to solve:

1. Room is dark, only light source comes from lantern that saint is holding.
2. Only interactable object is lantern, after pickup lantern in inventory.
3. Place lantern on ceiling's hook to light up the room.
4. Light uncovers a broken pipe.
5. Fix the pipe with the wrench found in the empty room
6. Pipe is aligned and fixed, water level lowers, revealing floor.
7. On statue base (before covered with water) small switch, upon interaction small drawer comes out with key.
8. Insert key in grate, can't open, too rusty and key doesn't move.
9. Use oil on grate lock and then key will be usable.
10. Open wooden bloody box to reveal amputated foot

Archive Room Puzzle:

Concept:

Hardest puzzle in the game, required to unlock a specific ending, use of separate ui.

Completion Time:

10 - 12 min

Difficulty:

9/10.

Breakdown:

Goal:

Decipher what's the right word to shout in order to know the truth and unlock the secret door.

Puzzle elements/scene description:

- Bookshelves with manuscripts and tomes.

- An ancient desk in center of room with large mysterious book open to a page on top gives major hint for solution.
- Seemingly no door or other passages noticeable apart from a sign on the wall with *"Shout the word of wisdom. Beware, for if you speak the wrong, it will come for you. Choose wisely"*
- Manuscripts have pieces of lore that ARE tied to the unlock of the secret door.

Steps to solve:

1. Player interacts with 6 specific books scattered around the room (5 on shelves and the one open on the desk)
2. Book contents:
 - a. **Book 1** (Desk Book): *"Reflect on the teachings, and the word will come to you. It is hidden in plain sight, within the layers of the texts"*.
 - b. **Book 2**: *"They claim to possess a secret Gnosis, a forbidden knowledge that reveals a primordial darkness and a divine spark trapped within it. A dangerous illusion born of pride and ignorance, a blasphemous concept."*
 - c. **Book 3**: *"In their writings they talk about a divine gift, accessible only through knowledge, only through Gnosis. But their doctrine is a perversion, a falsification of the truth."*
 - d. **Book 4**: *"Be wary of Gnosis, that's a false promise of liberation, a bottomless abyss. True wisdom does not come from enigmatic teachings, but from faith and devotion."*
 - e. **Book 5**: *"In their books they write about aeons and emanations, cosmic beings beyond mortal comprehension. A convoluted web of deceit designed to obscure the truth. At the heart of their heresy lies the pursuit of Gnosis, a forbidden fruit that promises salvation but delivers only damnation."*
 - f. **Book 6**: *"These sects are masters of deception, twisting the word to suit their own nefarious ends. They assert that mysterious teachings, called Gnosis, were offered by the Saviour himself, a key to unlock the divine. Beware their seductive promises of enlightenment."*
3. By interacting with the book on the desk (only after finding the note inside the Bones room), the player is prompted to try and shout a word that is input by keyboard. The input is **NOT** case sensitive. The word is **Gnosis**.
4. Upon insertion of correct word, a trap door opens.

Bone room puzzle:

Concept:

Easy-Medium level, set in a dark and quiet zone with some disturbing elements related to body-horror. Find 2 minor key elements (valid only for the Bone room) to solve the puzzle. Rewards the player with one of the three key items for the body parts puzzle.

Completion time:

6-8 minutes.

Difficulty level:

5/10.

Where:

Bone room.

Breakdown:

Goal:

Find the correct skull and collect the teeth from it.

Puzzle elements:

- Brush (can be found inside a Toolbox in the Bone Room).
- Different clickable skull chests and shelves.
- 2 Little stone statues.
- 2 Pressure plates.
- Teeth (puzzle reward)
- Ancient archive note.

Steps:

1. First approach to the room:

- a. Full view of the room with an altar at the center, intractable skull chests and shelves all around.

2. Interaction with the altar:

- a. The altar is always clickable. When it's clicked without first selecting the brush from the inventory the MC will speak and say something that suggests the use of the item (Example: "Maybe if I use something I can clean this dirty plane"). If it's clicked after selecting the brush the plane will be cleaned.
- b. On the cleaned altar 3 elements will appear: 2 pressure plates, clickable only if the player has collected the 2 little stone statues, and a small cabinet.



3. Finding the 2 statues:

- a. Interact with the clickable boxes and shelves to inspect them.
- b. (First option) When one of these is clicked a close up view of it is shown, 2 of these will contain the statues.

(Second option) If it doesn't contain anything an SFX (dust and bones related) will play and the MC will say something to suggest that he has found nothing, but if it contains a statue a rock related SFX will be played. Empty chests/shelves won't be clickable after the first interaction, the ones that contain the statues won't be clickable after collecting them.

4. Solve the puzzle:

- a. Select the statues from the inventory.
- b. Interact with the altar to get a closer view of it and place the statues on the pressure plates.
- c. The cabinet at the center will open and show a hand and a note near it.
- d. Interact with the skull to obtain the teeth.

Gnostic ending puzzle:

Concept:

Puzzle that leads to the second ending, accessible only if the secret room puzzle has been solved. Uses the same bells of the first ending [puzzle](#), but with a different sequence to decipher. Prepares the MC to the gnosis, where he has to leave his faith behind.

Completion time:

8-10 minutes.

Difficulty level:

6/10.

Where:

Saint's room.

Breakdown:

Goal:

Unlock the goods lift to achieve the 2nd ending.

Puzzle elements:

- Orthodox cross necklace.
- Paper sheet.
- Goods lift.
- Bells.

Steps:

1. Arriving to the room:

- a. The situation is the same as the Bells puzzle.

2. Finding the solution:

- a. Pick the necklace from the inventory and drag it outside.
- b. Release it to break it, inside of it there will be a paper sheet with a different story and a sequence to understand.

- c. The sheet will be automatically put inside of the inventory, it can be clicked anytime to check and read the story.
- d. The sheet recites: "The wind blew cold through the snowy white monastery, once an imposing bastion of faith and devotion. The **orange** walls, now crumbling and covered in greenish ivy, concealed among the shadows the last guardians of a dying faith. The Cobalt-robed monks walked slowly through the cloister, their hands clasped in prayer, though for some time now, their words had found no answer. Once they reached the golden altar, one of them, recognizable for its scarlet scar on his face, said: "Saviour, why have you forsaken us?" he whispered, head bowed and covered by the azure cowl, his face lined with the wrinkles of despair. There was no one left to comfort him, only the oppressive silence of those black rooms that had witnessed generations of monks dedicating their lives to the service of God".
- e. The correct sequence is: White - Orange - Green - Blue - Yellow - Red - Blue - Black.

3. Solving the puzzle:

- a. Interact with the bells and ring them in the correct order.
- b. A sound effect that will suggest that the puzzle has been solved will play, followed by a camera shake and the lift will unlock.
- c. The player can now interact with the lift and, when he clicks it, the 2nd ending will be triggered.
- d. The game over meter will get to the maximum level, with loud music and heartbeats, but without triggering the game over.

4. Failed solving:

- a. If the max noise is reached the ilics will come to kill the player, game over.
- b. The right order counter will start when the Red bell is the first to be rang, when a wrong one is clicked a distorted sound will be played.