LITURGICAL PRONUNCIATION OF LATIN

The following rules are based on the actual pronunciation of Latin by the Clergy of the Province of Rome, and therefore are absolutely reliable notwithstanding any opinion to the contrary.

The "life" of the Roman-Latin pronunciation lies on the VOWELS. Each vowel has a different but never-changing sound:

A—always open as in Father.

E—as in Red but more resonant, more like a in Fare (never with a second sound as in May).

I and Y—as ee in Feet (never as i in Tin).

O—as in For (never as in Go).

U—as oo in Moon (never with a second sound as in Issue).

DIPHTHONGS:

AE and OE—as the above vowel E, except in words with the "diaeresis" as Israël, Noë, etc., where both vowels are pronounced.

AU—as ou in House. In singing, the first vowel is sustained for the entire length of the note; the second vowel is pronounced rapidly just before passing to the next syllable (a-utem, la-udem). The same rule holds for EU in the word Éuge (é-uge).

EI, EO, EU and OU are not diphthongs but "dissyllables"; therefore are to be pronounced as two separate vowels. The same rule holds for UI (cu-i, hu-ic) except when preceded by q (qui, qui-dam).

CONSONANTS:

G—before e, i, y, ae, oe, as ch in Church; in all other cases is like K.

G—before e, i, y, ae, oe is soft as in Gentle; in all other cases is hard as in Govern.

H—is mute, except in the words Mihi and Nihil where it is pronounced like K (mi-ki, nikil).

J—as y in Yes (Jesus: Ye-sus).

R—is pronounced by jarring the tongue against the palate (or-bis, car-nis).

X—as ks: Lux, luks; Rex, reks; Dixit, di-ksit; Erēxit, e-re-ksit; Dēxteram, dēks-te-ram; etc.

Z—as dz (not ds): Nāzareth, Nā-dzareth.

EX (alone) is pronounced eks. If ex is the beginning of a word: when combined with a Vowel, is pronounced egs (Exāudi, egs-hu-di; Exēmplum, e-gsēm-plum; Exēvit, e-gs-i-vit; etc.) when combined with a Consonant, is pronounced eks: Excēlsis, eks-chēlsis (not ek-shē-sis); Exspēcto, eks-pē-cto; Extra, eks-tra; etc.

TI—when followed by a Vowel is like tsi (Ētiām, ē-tsi-am; Patiēntia, pa-tiēn-tsi-a; Pōntio, Pōn-tsi-o); except when the ti is preceded by s (Hōstia, ōs-ti-a; Hōstium, ōs-ti-um): in this and all other cases is pronounced as ordinary t (Pettitionem, peti-ti-tn-ē-nem).

TH—as simple t because h is mute: Cathōlicam, Ca-tō-li-cam.

CH—always as k: Chorus, ko-rus; Chērubim, kē-ru-bim.

GN—has a liquid sound similar to that of ni in Dominions: Agnus, A-nyus; Magnum, ma-nyam; Magnificat, ma-ny-fi-cat.

SC—before e, i, y, ae, as sh in Shell (Descēndit, de-shēn-dit; Sūcipe, su-shi-pe; Sciat, shi-at): in all other cases is pronounced like sk (Scriptūra, Skri-ptū-ra; Schola, skō-la; Scāpulis, skā-pu-lis).

Double consonants must actually be doubled in their intensity; thus: Tollis, Peccāta, Hosānna, Alleluia: not Tolis, Pecāta, Hosāna, Alelūia.—Ecce: as ech-che.

Dactylic words like Glōria, Filiūm, Ėtiām, Grātiām, etc., consist of three syllables which are to be pronounced distinctly: Glō-ri-a, Fī-li-um, Ė-ti-am, Grā-ti-am (not: Glō-ria, Fī-li-um, Ė-ti-am, Grā-ti-am).