Lesson 2. The Pronunciation of Latin.

The text to which the Gregorian melodies are set is in the Latin tongue, called the language of the Church because it is used in all the official and liturgical services of the Catholic Church.

Hence in order to sing the chant well we must know how to pronounce and enunciate Latin correctly.

170. Pronunciation. This should be based upon the Italian method, which differs from English in the following respects:

a) Vowels: a always open as in father;
   e before a, e, i, u as e in where,
   before consonants usually as e in met, get;
   i — y as ee in seen
   o with the even sound as in German, approximate to o in no
   u as u in full.

   Each vowel should have the same character of sound when short as when long, but do not dwell on the vowel when short.

b) Diphthongs: œ œ like ay in say,
   au as ou in mouse,
   ei is a diphthong only in ei = eight,
   ui in cui and huic is dissyllabic, and not to be pronounced as Kyre and hike.

   In all other cases where two vowels occur together they are sounded separately, and sometimes to distinguish between words spelled alike but pronounced differently, two dots (diacresis or breve) are placed over the second vowel: thus á-ë-ra, De-i, cu-i, De-us, he-u, No-ë, e-i, di-e (not di), di-ë-i, ò-le-um, pld-eu-i, stå-tu-it.

c) Consonants: Those which differ from English pronunciation are:

   c, before e, i, y, œ, œ = ch in church, cedo, cibus etc.;
   before other vowels and consonants e = k, cado,

   c, before e, i, œ, eu, œ = tc, ecce = etsche;
   g always “hard” except before e, i, œ, œ, when it = j as in gentle.

   gn = ny e. g. magnam = mah-nyahm, agnus = ah-nyoos; h as in English except in mihi, nihil, when it is like k; j always = y;
   sc = sh before e, i, œ, œ, in all other cases as in English, suscepit = soo-shay-peet;
\[ ti = tsi \] when preceded and followed by a vowel, gratias, etiam; note also such words as factio;

\[ th = t; ax = ks; xc = ksh \] before e, i, y, thus ex-
celsis ek-shell-sis;

\[ Qu, gu, su = Kw, gw, sw \] when forming one syllable
with the following vowel, quando, lingua, but
su-us, argu-as;

\[ z \] only occurs in foreign words and is like ds.

**171. Accentuation.** Words of two syllables
are always accented on the first syllable. In polysyllab-
es a sign is placed over the vowel to indicate where the
accent falls, but not over capital letters, thus Ephrata =
ephrata; Omnia = ómnia, Aaron = á-a-ron.

Care must be taken not to slur unaccented middle syllables nor to
sing jerkily: réqui-em, not reký-m, suá-vis not swavis; ten-ta-li-ó-nem,
not ten-ta-lyonem; sé-cu-lum, not seculum; fí-li-us, not fílyus; ó-cu-li, not
ocli; ré-conciti-á-tio, not reconcilyatyo.

Accentuation means strengthening of the tone\(^1\) (ori-
ginally elevation of the tone), but not necessarily prolonging
or sustaining it (cf. Dóminūs dēstíũō).

**172. Correct and distinct division of syllables and words.** For without this the recitation would be
unintelligible or misunderstood.

\( a) \) **Syllables.** A consonant between two vowels
belongs to the syllable which follows. Thus bo-nae, not
bon-æ; ti-bi, not tib-i; glo-ri-a, not glor-i-a.

Two consonants at the beginning of Latin and Greek
words belong to the following syllable: pa-tris, a-qnus.

The division must be especially clear when two si-
lar vowels stand together; fi-li-i, mánu-um; also when
m or n occur between two vowels; this will prevent the
unpleasant nasal colouring of the first vowel: no-men,
A-men, ve-ni, ho-nó-re, se-nes.

\( b) \) **Words.** Beware of running two words together,
therefore read and sing: sub Póntio, not su-pontio; quia
apud, not quiapud; Patri et, not Patret; dona eis, not doneis;
Deo omnis, not Deomnis (cf. p. 29 sqq.).

\(^1\) Gregoriusblatt 1899, 46 sq.
173. **Exercise.**
(The teacher should ask in each case why $c = \text{ch}$ or $k$; and $ti = tsi$ or simply $ti$.)

c: spécies, lucis, Lucas, scutum, bénedic, benedictat, benedícite, ecce, cæcus, cœna, mácula, Chérubim, diléctus, coróna, accípiens, conclúscábis, crucifíxus, ecclésia, circum.

**gu, qu:** sanguis, loquúntur, élóquium, quárite, quóniam, quando, réquiem, gustáte.

ti: látitia, quóties, pétite, hóstias, patiúntur, ultiónis, pétii, negotiatóri, cœléstium, divítiæ, cunctis, áctio, scintílla, tértia.

**Middle syllables:** pásso, glorióse, quóniam, mansuetúdistis, státuit, posuísti, pretióso, sílea, noxiális, tríbuit, gáudium, sepeliébas, filióque, deprecationem, custódia, abiéctio, águas, fácie.