

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:

C—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*; *Eréxit*, *e-ré-ksit*; *Déxteram*, *déks-teram*; etc.

Z—as *dz* (not *ds*): *Názareth*, *Ná-dzareth*.

EX (alone) is pronounced *eks*. If *ex* is the beginning of a word: when combined with a Vowel, is pronounced *egs* (*Exáudi*, *egs-áu-di*; *Exémplum*, *e-gsém-plum*; *Exívit*, *egs-í-vit*; etc.); when combined with a Consonant, is pronounced *eks*: *Excélsis*, *eks-chél-sis* (not *ek-shél-sis*!); *Exspécto*, *eks-pé-cto*; *Extra*, *eks-tra*; etc.

TI—when followed by a Vowel is like *tsi* (*Étiam*, *é-tsi-am*; *Patiéntia*, *pa-tsi-én-tsi-a*; *Póntio*, *Pón-tsi-o*); except when the *ti* is preceded by *s* (*Hóstia*, *ós-ti-a*; *Hóstium*, *ós-ti-um*): in this and all other cases is pronounced as ordinary *t* (*Petitiónem*, *pe-ti-tsi-ó-nem*).

TH—as simple *t* because *h* is mute: *Cathólicam*, *Ca-tó-li-cam*.

CH—always as *k*: *Chorus*, *ko-rus*; *Chéru-bim*, *ké-ru-bim*.

GN—has a liquid sound similar to that of *ni* in *Dominions*: *Agnus*, *A-nyus*; *Magnam*, *ma-nyam*; *Magníficat*, *ma-ný-fi-cat*.

SC—before *e*, *i*, *y*, *ae*, as *sh* in *Shell* (*Descéndit*, *de-shén-dit*; *Súscipe*, *sú-shi-pe*; *Sciat*, *shi-at*): in all other cases is pronounced like *sk* (*Scriptúra*, *Skri-ptú-ra*; *Schola*, *sko-la*; *Scápulis*, *ská-pu-lis*).

Double consonants must actually be *doubled* in their intensity; thus: *Tollis*, *Peccáta*, *Hosánna*, *Allelúia*: not *Tolis*, *Pecáta*, *Hosána*, *Alelúia*.—*Ecce*: as *ech-che*.

Dactylic words like *Glória*, *Fílium*, *Étiam*, *Grátiam*, etc., consist of *three* syllables which are to be pronounced *distinctly*: *Gló-ri-a*, *Fí-li-um*, *É-ti-am*, *Grá-ti-am* (not: *Gló-ria*, *Fí-lium*, *É-tiam*, *Grá-tiam*).