

## Henri Potiron (1949)

Choirmaster of Sacred Heart Basilica (Paris)  
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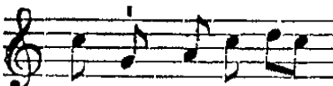
B. *In syllabic passages* where no episemas are given we may feel some hesitation. Two principles now come into play :

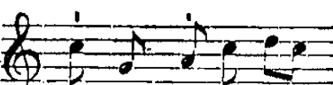
(a) First, that of *counting back in two's*. The last note of the phrase, by reason of its very length, indicates an ictus; and since duple rhythm is simpler and therefore more natural, we count back from this last note and mark the alternate notes with the ictus. The same procedure is used if the position of an ictus is fixed in the middle of a phrase (because of a neum, for example) :



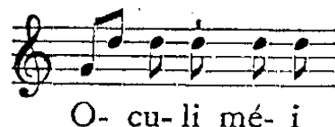
(The sign + denotes the certain ictus; the others are determined by counting back in two's).

(b) The second principle is to follow the *natural verbal rhythm*, which means that in each word the ictus falls on the last syllable. In cases like *lauda ducem* (above), this principle runs counter to the previous one.

Similarly a case like :   
méntes tu-ó-rum

could quite easily be  
rhythmed thus :   
méntes tu-ó-rum

In the absence of any episema, therefore, different solutions are possible. In *recitation*, where the purely musical element tends to disappear (we are not speaking merely of psalmody), we always fall back on the second principle :



But, as we shall see, the accompanist must take care not to mark by any harmonic movement those ictus which are merely logical and of minor importance (†).

### 3. Rules for Accompaniment.

In principle, there ought to be no harmonic change except at an ictus. Furthermore, the accompaniment does not have to mark every ictus; far from it.

The Father John Brébeuf Hymnal **“has no parallel and not even any close competitor.”**

<https://ccwatershed.org/hymn/>

— Author for the Church Music Association of America weblog • 10 June 2022