

Ecclesiastical Latin

Diction: Italian, Latin, French, German ...the sounds and 81 exercises for singing them.
John Moriarty, E. C. Schirmer Music Co., Boston, Mass, 1975, p.153-164.
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Vowels **Only five vowels occur in liturgical Latin.**

a	ah		
e	eh	not ay	miserere (mee-seh-reh-reh) (and s , not z)
ae			Galilaeam (Gah-lee-leh-ahm)
oe			
i	ee	never pronounce as in the word "sit"	
y			
o	oh	an open-sounding o , not closed as in "glow"	
u	oo	as in "food", not as in "foot"	
j	y	Jesum (Yeh-soom) (and s , not z)	

Diphthongs - **Sound both vowels clearly, even if set to one note.**
The second vowel of each pair is a little weaker than the first.
laudamus (lah-oo-dah-moos) --oo weaker than lah

Consonants

Double consonants are prolonged somewhat as in terram and altissimus. Dwell on the double consonant.

d	dental--tip of tongue on back of upper teeth; tongue completely relaxed, not a hard d .	
t	dental--tip of tongue on back of upper teeth; tongue completely relaxed, not a hard t . English t sounds ugly in Latin.	
p	dry--no intrusion of air between consonant and the following vowel. peccata (the p pronounced almost like a combination of p and b)	
r	single r --flip (to learn, start by sounding a d in place of the r) double r -- trill initial r --trill for emphasis In religious texts, trilled r used sparingly.	
soft c	when followed by e, i, y, ae, oe	innocens (een-oh-tshens) (and s , not z)
soft g		reconciliavit (reh-cohn-tshee-lee-ah-veet) (dental t)
hard c	when followed by a, o, u	sanctus (sahnk-toos) ergo (ehr-goh --flipped r)
hard g		
gn	ni as in "onion"	agnus (anyoos) magnificat (magnificat)
h	silent	except two words in which h has a k sound: mihi (miki) & nihil (nikil)
s	always unvoiced--never z	words such as vestes, miserere

hard sc sk before a, ou vobiscum (voh-bee-skoom)
soft sc sh before e, i scimus (shee-moos)

ti tsee when followed by a vowel and preceded by any letter except **s**, **t**, or **x**.
gratias (grah-tsee-ahs)

th t catholical (kah-toh-lee-kam)

x voiced (egz) when prefix **ex** begins a word and is followed by a vowel or **h**.
exalto (eg-zahl-toh) exaudi (egz-ah-oo-dee)

x unvoiced (eks) in all other positions
exules (ek-soo-lehs) confligere (cohn-fleek-seh-reh) surrexit (soo-rek-seet)

qu kw qui (kwee) use a glide--two vowels are not sounded separately.

EASTER SEQUENCE

Victimae Paschali laudes immolent Christiani.

Veek-tee-meh Paskahlee lah-oo-des ee-moh-lent kree-stee-ah-nee.
(dry p) (dental d) (dental t)

Agnus redemit oves: Christus innocens Patri reconciliavit peccatores.

Ah-ni-oos reh-deh-meet oh-ves: kree-stee-oos ee-noh-tshens Patree reh-cohn-tshee-lee-ah-veet peh-kah-toh-rehs.
(dental d & t) (s, not z) (s, not z)(dry p, dental t) (dental t, dry p) (s--not z)

Mors vita duello confligere mirando: dux vitae mortuus, regnat vivus.

Mohrs veetah doo-ehl-loh cohn-fleek-seh-reh mee-rahn-doh: dooks veeteh mohr-too-oos, renyat veevoos.
(flip r) (dental t) (dental d, dwell on ll)(s--not z) (dental t)

Dic nobis, Maria, quid vidisti in via?

Deek noh-bees, mah-ree-ah, kweed vee-dee-stee een vee-ah.
(dental d) (dental d) (elide ee of "vidisti in")

Sepulchrum Christi ventis, et gloriam vidi resurgentis:

Seh-pool-kroom kree-stee vehn-tees, et glo-dee-am vee-dee reh-soor-gen-tees:
(dental t) (flip r) (s--not z)

Angelicos testes, sudarium et vestes.

Ahn-gel-ee-cohs tehs-tehs, soo-dah-ree-oom et veh-stehs.
(dental t) (dental d)(dental t) (s--not z)

Surrexit Christus spes mea: praecedet suos in Galilaeam.

Soo-rek-seet kree-stoos spes meh-ah: preh-tsheh-det soo-ohs een Gah-lee-leh-ahm.
(dental t) (dental t)

Scimus Christum surrexisse a mortuis vere: Tu nobis, victor Rex, miserere.

Shee-moos kree-stoom soo-rek-see-seh ah mohr-too-ees veh-reh: Too nohbees, veek-tohr Reks, mee-seh-reh-reh.
(trill rr) (flip r) (flip r) (connect with trilled rr) (s, not z)

Amen. Alleluia.

Ah-mehn. Ah-leh-loo-ee-ah.

Mark your score where needed as a reminder.

And know basically what you are singing: just key words such as Agnus (Lamb), reconciliavit (reconciles), mortuus (who died), regnat (reigns), resurgentis (resurrection), Angelicos (bright angels), victor Rex (victor King).