

# THE LIBER USUALIS

WITH INTRODUCTION AND RUBRICS  
IN ENGLISH

EDITED BY THE BENEDICTINES OF SOLESMES

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Omnia jura vindicabimus tam in universam nostram excogitandi scribendique rhythmī rationem quam in carmina quae non inveniuntur in vaticana editione sed ex Solesmensibus libris excerpta sunt.

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## INTRODUCTION.

This new English Edition of the *Liber Usualis* gives a brief summary of the Rules for the proper execution and interpretation of the Vatican Edition of the Roman Chant, according to the Solesmes Method.

The Vatican Edition contains the Official Musical Text. *To ensure uniformity in the rendering* of the Chant of the Church, ecclesiastical legislation provides that this musical text may be used "with the addition of the Solesmes Rhythmic signs", as an aid.

The use of these signs is officially authorised by the Congregation of Rites. Musicians, generally, have long since experienced the wisdom and even the necessity of this official sanction to the Solesmes Method as the sure means to secure a desired and uniform system of interpretation.

As in all Art-forms, so in Plainsong, rules are the outcome of a wide practical experience, insight and research. The Rules presented here have been worked out and co-ordinated by the Benedictine monks of the Solesmes Congregation. Based as they are on the ancient Manuscript Records, which have been thoroughly examined in their application to the Vatican text, those Rules have for some fifty years proved their efficacy as a convincing guide to the proper unified execution of the Gregorian melodies in the daily carrying out of the Liturgy by the monks of Solesmes themselves.

Our Holy Father, Pope PIUS XI, in an autograph letter to His Eminence Cardinal Dubois, on the occasion of the Founding of the Gregorian Institute, at Paris, in 1924, writes: "*We commend you no less warmly for having secured the services of these same Solesmes monks to teach in the Paris Institute; since, on account of their perfect mastery of the subject, they interpret Gregorian music with a finished perfection which leaves nothing to be desired*".

With this quotation of an august commendation, the present Edition is now offered by the Solesmes monks, that the Roman Chant may be a profitable instrument "*capable of raising the mind to God, and better fitted than any other to foster the piety of the Nations*".

This Edition with complete musical notation includes the following:

1. The Kyriale with *Cantus ad libitum*.
2. The Mass of the Sundays and Feasts including those of double rank throughout the year, with Vespers and Compline for the same.
3. Prime, Terce, Sext, None, for Sundays and Feasts of the First and Second Class.
4. Matins of Christmas, Easter, Pentecost, Corpus Christi; Lauds for Feasts of the First Class.
5. The Litanies: the Mass of Rogation Days, Ember Days, Easter and Whitsun weeks; the Vigils of Christmas, Epiphany and Whitsun.
6. The services of Ash Wednesday, the Triduum of Holy Week and Easter Day.
7. The principal Votive Masses and the Offices for the Dead.

In the beginning of the book will be found the Common Tones of the Mass and Office. Chants for special occasions, e. g. the Blessing of the Holy Oils, Ordinations, etc, are included in the Appendix.