A GUIDE TO GREGORIAN NOTATION

Neumes = notes sung on a single syllable

- \(\text{Do clef: Indicates where Do is on the staff.}
- \(\text{Fa clef: Indicates where Fa is on the staff.}
- \(\text{Punctum: Single note with time value of 1 beat.}
- \(\text{Dotted punctum: Long note with time value of 2 beats. Second beat sung softly.}
- \(\text{Bistropha: Long note with time value of 2 beats. Sung with slight crescendo.}
- \(\text{Podatus: Bottom note is sung first; followed by the top note which is softened.}
- \(\text{Clivis: 2 descending notes; read from left to right.}
- \(\text{Liquescent: Pronounce diphthong (a-u) or a voiced consonant (l, m, n, etc.) on small note that ends syllable.}
- \(\text{Scandicus: Ascending 3 notes}
- \(\text{Quilisma: Ascending 3 notes noted by jagged line in middle. Middle note sung lightly, moving towards the top note.}
- \(\text{Torculus: 3 notes, rise to second note, then descends to last note.}
- \(\text{Porrectus: 3 notes, middle one lowest. Drawn simply with a line to connect notes.}
- \(\text{Climacus: Descending neum 3 or more notes. All notes same value (1 beat each.}
- \(\text{Custos: Indicates what the first note will be on the next line.}
An asterisk (*) within text indicates one singer/choir followed by another singer/choir. Most often used in this booklet to show when the cantor begins the piece, followed by all.

Bars (signs of pause)

(a) Quarter bar: Separates clauses in the text. No breath, unless necessary
(b) Half bar: Separates members of phrase. Almost always implies taking breath.
(c) Full bar: Separates phrases. Slight slowing of movement before bar. Silence of brief duration after bar.* Take breath.
(d) Double bar: Indicates end of a piece or one of its principal parts. Also used to mark place where 2 choirs alternate. Silence of brief duration after bar.* Take breath.

* There may or may not be a rest (1 or 2 count) after a full or double bar. Rules vary. Follow choir director.

Notation at the end of section of text:

bis: Latin word meaning twice. Sing the section twice.
ij: Latin numeration for twice. Sing the section twice.
iij: Latin numeration for three times.

This is often found in the Kyrie. Note that the number of repetitions may differ depending upon the Form of the Mass.