

GREGORIAN CHANT

THE SUPREME MODEL FOR

SACRED MUSIC



WHAT IS  
“GREGORIAN  
CHANT”?

**GREGORIAN CHANT** IS MONOPHONIC,  
OR UNISON, LITURGICAL MUSIC OF  
THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH,  
USED TO ACCOMPANY THE TEXT OF  
THE MASS AND THE PSALM SINGING  
OF THE DIVINE OFFICE



# WHY IS GREGORIAN CHANT SO IMPORTANT FOR CATHOLICS - AND EVERYBODY ELSE!

OUR traditional  
worship music!

lasted in one form or  
another for 1500 years.

responsible for the  
development of music  
notation.

supported the creation  
of polyphonic or  
homophonic worship  
music.

provided the foundation  
for the creation of the  
polyphonic style.

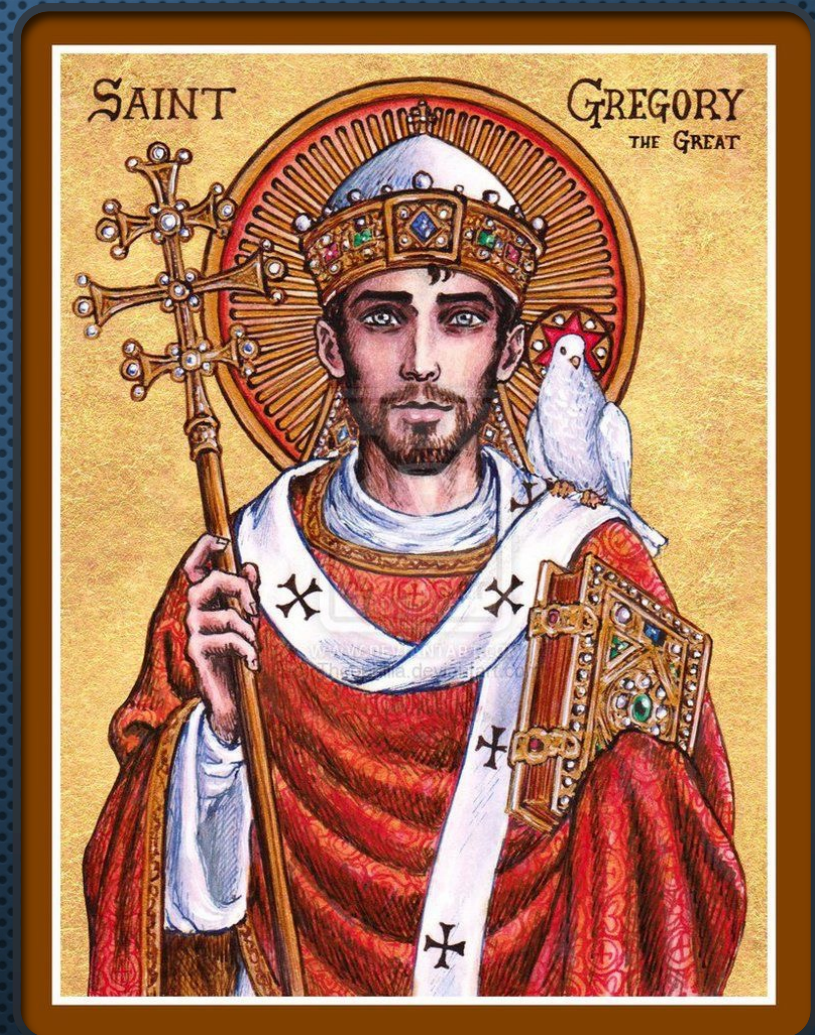
preserves the Latin  
language of the Roman  
Church.

best music for fidelity to  
the words of Scripture,  
the teachings of the  
church, and a reverent  
experience of the  
Divine Mysteries.



# WHY IS IT CALLED “GREGORIAN”?

- Because of this man: Pope St. Gregory I the Great (r. 590-604)
- Rumor is he composed the chant and collected it into liturgical books . . . Do not listen to rumors!
- Actually, the chant of Gregory’s day is “Old Roman.”
- In fact, St. Gregory didn’t compose or standardize it.
- BUT the English revered him because he sent St. Anselm of Canterbury to convert them.
- Did you see the dove?





# HOW OLD IS GREGORIAN CHANT?

Liturgical Chanting existed in the Jewish recitation of psalms and prayers – but we don't know what it sounded like.



Christians developed their own chant (of uncertain origin) in the early years of the Church.



Early Christian Chant grew out of Byzantine Chant in the East.



Chant makes an **official appearance** in the West around the 8<sup>th</sup> century.



Chant develops in the Frankish kingdom, especially under Charlemagne (r. 768-814).





“Unless sounds are remembered by man, they perish, for they cannot be written down.”

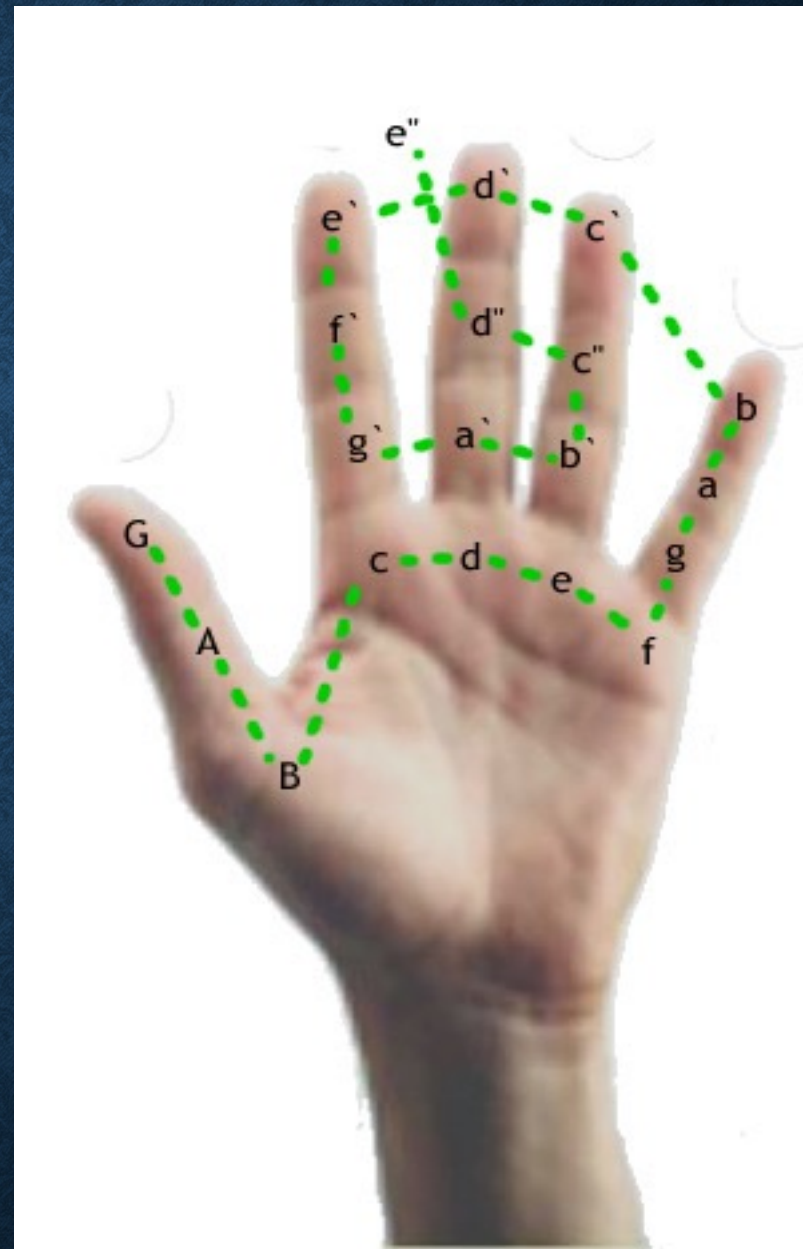
Isidore of Seville (ca. 560-636)



# Thank you, Guido!



The Guidonian Hand





**R**eg. Viderunt omnes fines ter-  
rae salutare de i nostri  
iubilare deo omnis ter-  
rae. Notum fecit  
do mi  
nus salutare suum ante  
conspectum gentium re uela uit  
iustitiam suam.

A first pass at  
musical notation:  
Squiggles!

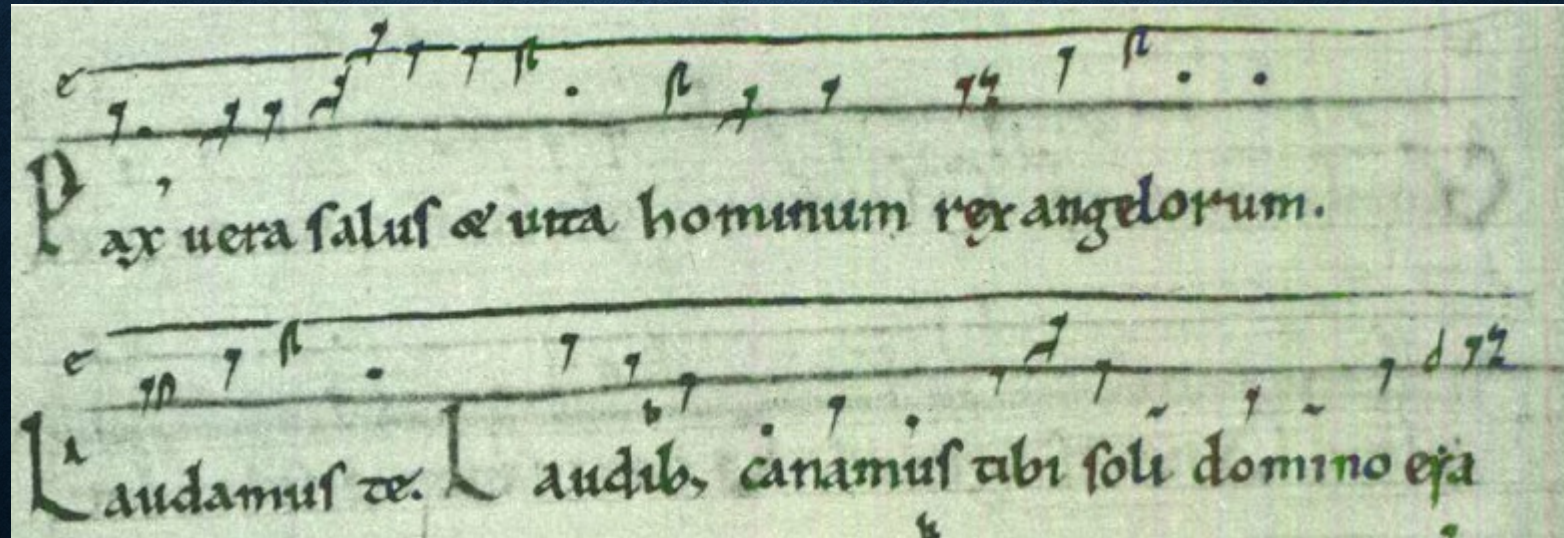
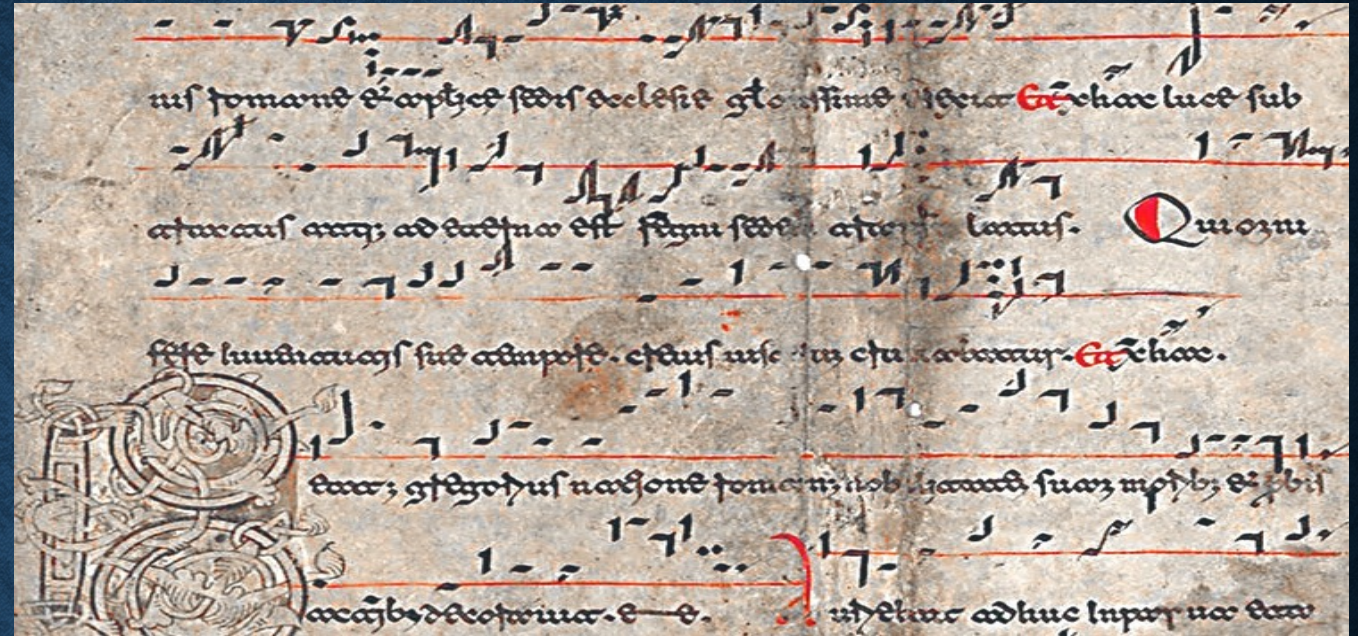


And Guido does it again!

Let's lock in a tone with a single line and then build around it.

That worked! Let's lock in two tone with two lines.





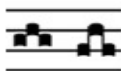
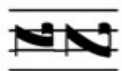









Etc.





## Table of Neumes

The following table lists the most basic notes and groups:

	<b>punctum</b>		<b>virga</b>
	<b>podatus (pes)</b> bottom note sung first		<b>clivis</b> higher note sung first
	<b>torculus</b> all notes are of equal value, sung consecutively		<b>porrectus</b> three notes, the first two at either end of the diagonal
	<b>climacus</b> all notes, including the small <i>rhombus</i> , are of equal value, and are sung consecutively		
	<b>bistropa (distropa)</b> repeated notes sung as a single note of double length		<b>tristropa</b> repeated notes sung as a single note of triple length
	<b>pressus</b> repeated notes sung as a single note of double length		<b>quilisma</b> middle note of a three-note group; the note before is expressed
	<b>scandicus</b> all notes are of equal value		<b>salicus</b> the last <i>two</i> notes form a podatus; the note marked with the ictus is lengthened
	<b>liquescent notes</b> pronounce a diphthong (a-u) or voiced consonant (l, m, n, j, etc.) on the small note		when the first interval of the <i>salicus</i> is a 5th, the <i>first</i> two notes form the podatus; the note marked with the ictus is lengthened

# NOW LET'S GET RID OF THE SQUIGGLES!



And everybody sing!





ILLUMINATED CHANT

A TREASURE OF WESTERN ART







# OUR HEROES: THE BENEDICTINES AT SOLESMES

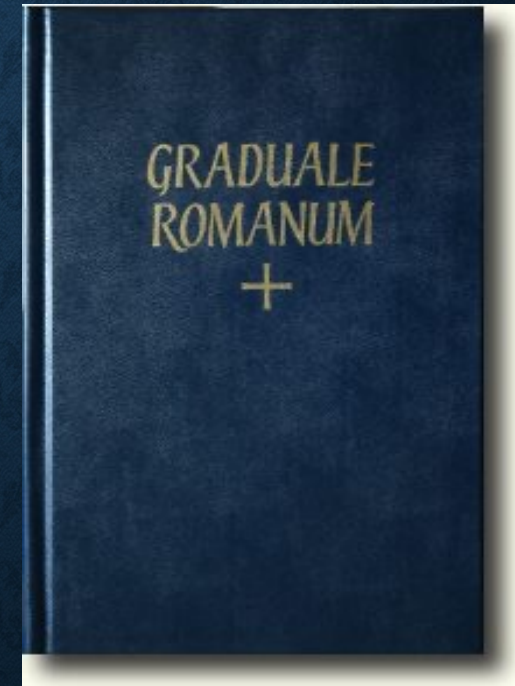
The Abbey of  
Solesmes, France



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# Pater noster



Pa-ter no-ster, qui es in coe-lis: san-ti-fi-ca-tur no-men tu-um;  
 ad ve-ni-at re-gnum tu-um: fi-at vo-lun-tas tu-a, si-cut in cae-lo  
 et in ter-ra. Pa-nem no-strum quo-ti-di-a-num da no-bis ho-di-e:  
 et di-mit-te no-bis de-bi-ta no-stra, si-cut et nos di-mit-ti-mus  
 de-bi-to-ri-bus no-stris, et ne nos in-du-cas in ten-ta-ti-  
 o-nem, sed li-be-ra nos a ma-lo.



P  
 A-ter noster, qui es in cae-lis: sancti-fi-ce-tur  
 no-men tu-um; adve-ni-at regnum tu-um; fi-at vo-lun-  
 tas tu-a, sic-ut in cae-lo, et in terra. Panem nostrum



# 3 KINDS OF CHANT

Syllabic: one note per syllable



Neumatic: one neume per syllable

Example of Neumatic chant notation. The text is: **S**anctus, Sanctus, Sanctus Dómi-nus De-us  
Sá-ba-oth. Ple-ni sunt cæ-li et ter-ra gló-ri-a  
tu-a. Ho-sánna in ex-cél-sis. Be-ne-díctus qui ve-nit

WACZERSHED  
CORPUS CHRISTI  
*Sanctus I, "Lux & origo", in Pascual Season.*  
Vocals courtesy of Matthew J. Curtis  
<http://antoinedanteimass.org/>  
Gregorian Missal p 79

Melismatic: long melody on a syllable

Example of Melismatic chant notation. The text is: **K**Y-ri-e e-lé-i-son. *ij.* Chri-  
ste e-lé-i-son. *ij.* Ký-ri-e e-lé-i-son. *ij.* Ký-ri-e e-lé-i-son.

IV. — Aux Fêtes Doubles. 1.  
(Cunctipotens Genitor Deus)  
X. S.



Latin (with one exception)	English
Kyrie (Greek)	Lord Have Mercy
Gloria	Glory be to God
Credo	Creed (Profession of Faith)
Sanctus and Benedictus	Holy, Holy, Holy
Agnus Dei	Lamb of God



## The Four Marian Antiphons (Seasonal)

- ***Alma Redemptoris Mater*** (“Loving Mother of our Savior”), is sung from the Vespers of the Saturday before the first Sunday of Advent to the Feast of the Purification, inclusive

- ***Ave Regina Caelorum*** (“Hail, Queen of Heaven”), is sung from the Presentation of the Lord through Good Friday, inclusive.

***Regina Coeli Lætare*** (“Joy to Thee, O Queen of Heaven”), is sung during Easter.

- ***Salve Regina*** (“Hail, Holy Queen”), is sung from first Vespers of Trinity Sunday until None of the Saturday before Advent.