

LESSON II

Ager Vaticanus *The Vatican Field*

Second Declension **er, ir** Nouns

vir viri m. man

Case	Singular	Plural
nom.	vir	viri
gen.	viri	virorum
dat.	viro	viris
acc.	virum	viros
abl.	viro	viris

puer pueri m. boy, child

Case	Singular	Plural
nom.	puer	púeri
gen.	púeri	puerorum
dat.	púero	púeris
acc.	púerum	púeros
abl.	púero	púeris

ager agri m. field, ground

Case	Singular	Plural
nom.	ager	agri
gen.	agri	agrorum
dat.	agro	agris
acc.	agrum	agros
abl.	agro	agris

- ◆ Most 2nd declension masculine nouns end in **us** in the nominative singular but there are some that end in **er** and one that ends in **ir**.
- ◆ Excepting the nominative singular, these nouns have the same case endings as all 2nd declension masculine nouns, so there is very little new to learn here. These nouns show why it is important to always learn the genitive singular.
- ◆ The genitive singular 1) identifies the declension the noun belongs to and 2) provides the stem.
- ◆ Looking at the genitive singular of **puer**, **vir**, and **vesper** you see that the stem is the same as the nominative singular form. You have seen this in 3rd declension nouns such as **soror**, **sororis**, and **sol**, **solis**.
- ◆ Looking at the genitive singular of **ager**, **culter**, **magister**, and **liber** you see that the genitive singular form drops the letter **e**.
- ◆ **Liberi**, **liberorum** is a noun that has only plural forms. Do not confuse:

liber libri book
liberi liberorum children

The **Ager Vaticanus** on the west bank of the Tiber River was the 14th district of the ancient city of Rome. Low-lying and damp, it was considered unhealthy and was used as a cemetery. The emperor Caligula built a racetrack in the **ager**, which was later enlarged by Nero. It was the site of the martyrdom of St. Peter and thus became the location of St. Peter's Basilica and Vatican City.

Vocabulary

Latin	Gender	English	Derivative(s)
ager agri	<i>m.</i>	field, ground	<i>agriculture</i>
culter cultri	<i>m.</i>	knife	<i>cutlery</i>
liber libri	<i>m.</i>	book	<i>library</i>
magister magistrī (magistra -ae)	<i>m.</i> <i>f.</i>	teacher (male) teacher (female)	<i>magistrate, master</i>
liberi liberorum	<i>m.</i>	children	
vir viri	<i>m.</i>	man	<i>virile</i>
puer pueri	<i>m.</i>	boy, child	<i>puerile</i>
vesper vesp̄eri	<i>m.</i>	evening	<i>vespers</i>