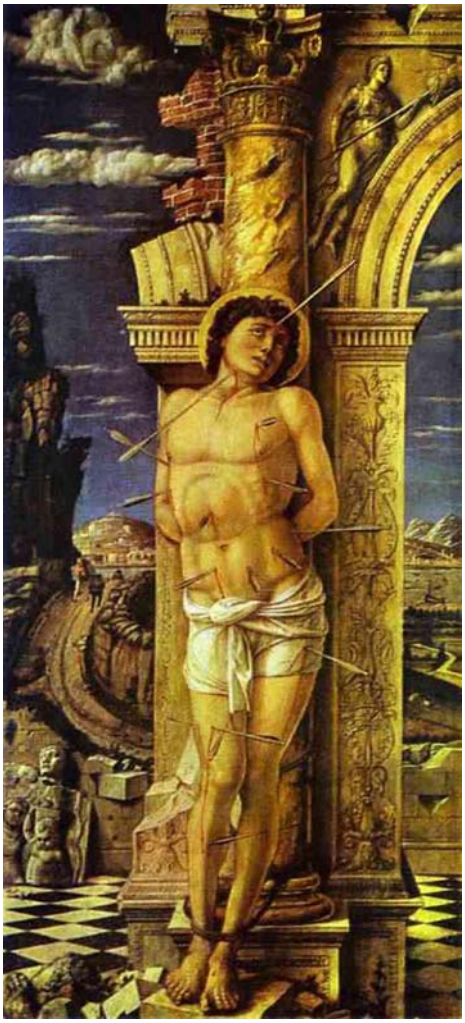
Guillaume Du Fay

Opera Omnia 02/03

O sancte Sebastiane

Edited by Alejandro Enrique Planchart



Marisol Press
Santa Barbara, 2011

Guillaume Du Fay

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02/03 O sancte Sebastiane - O martyr Sebastiane - O quam mira

Guillaume Du Fay

Cantus 1

O san - cte Se - ba - sti - a - ne, Sem - per, ve - spe -

Resolutio

O san - cte Se - ba - -

Cantus 2

Contratenor

Tenor

10

re et ma - - - ne, Ho - ris cun - ctis et mo - men - tis, Dum ad - huc sum sa - - nae

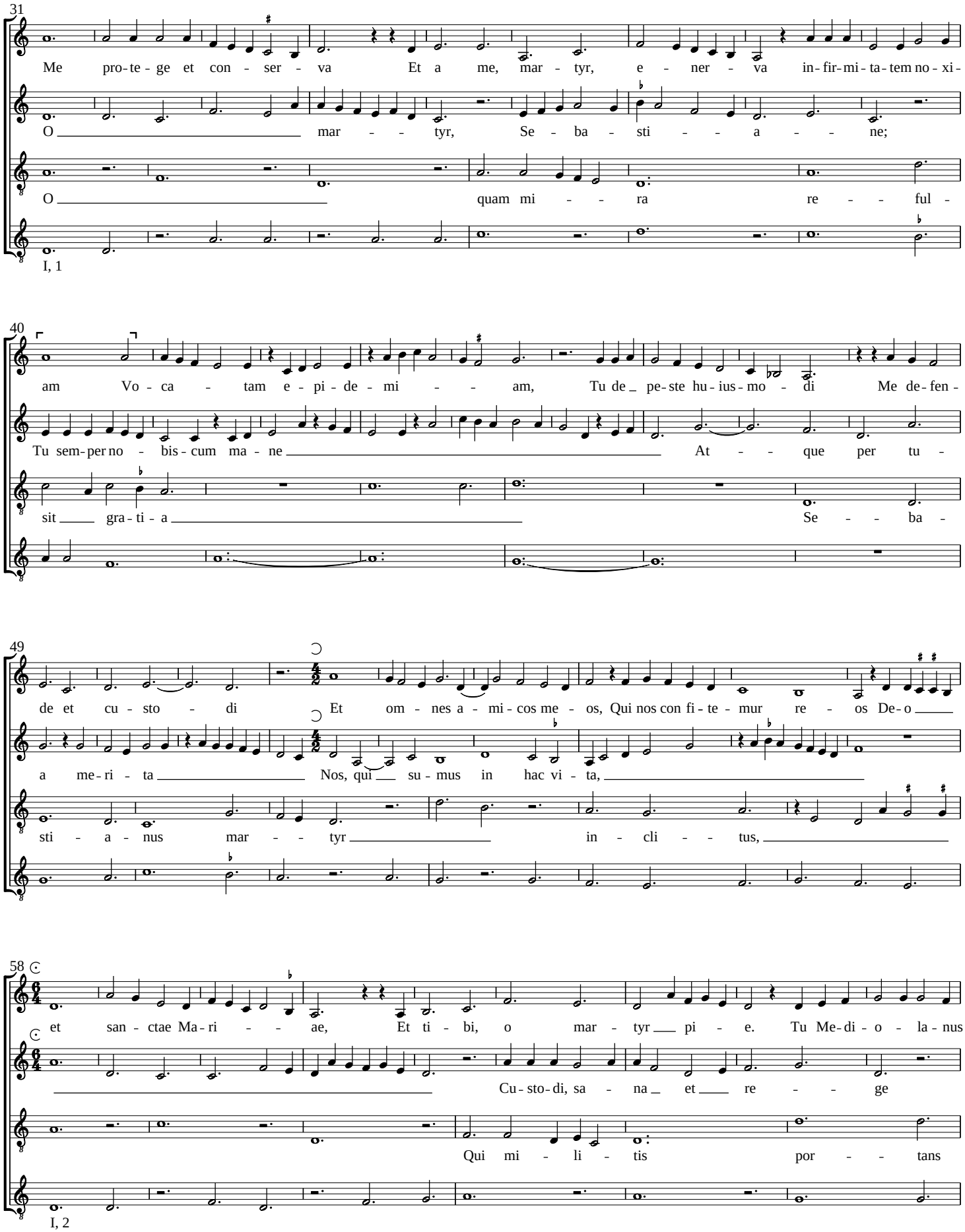
ba - sti - a - ne, Sem - per, ve - spe - re et ma - - ne, Ho - ris cun - ctis et

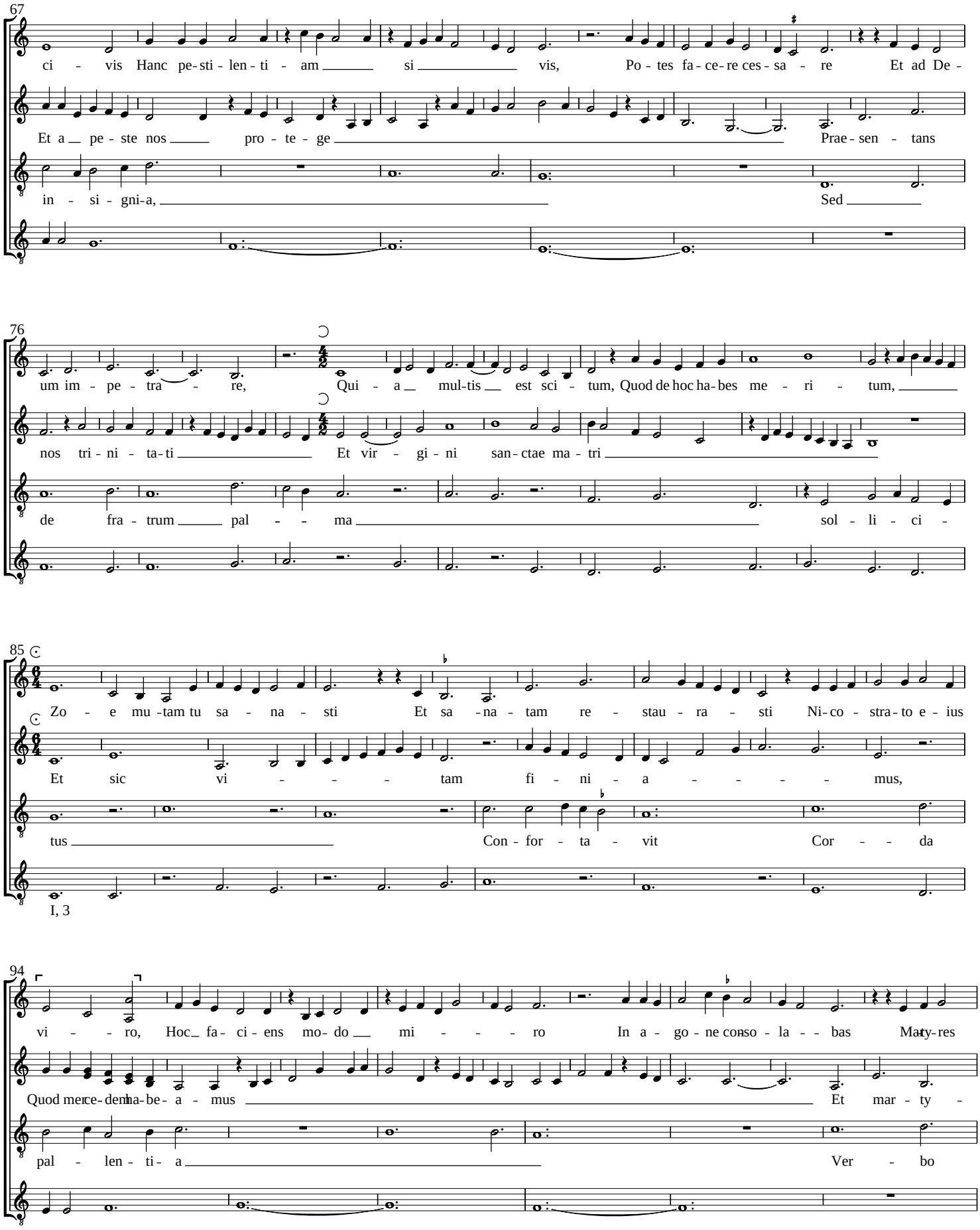
19

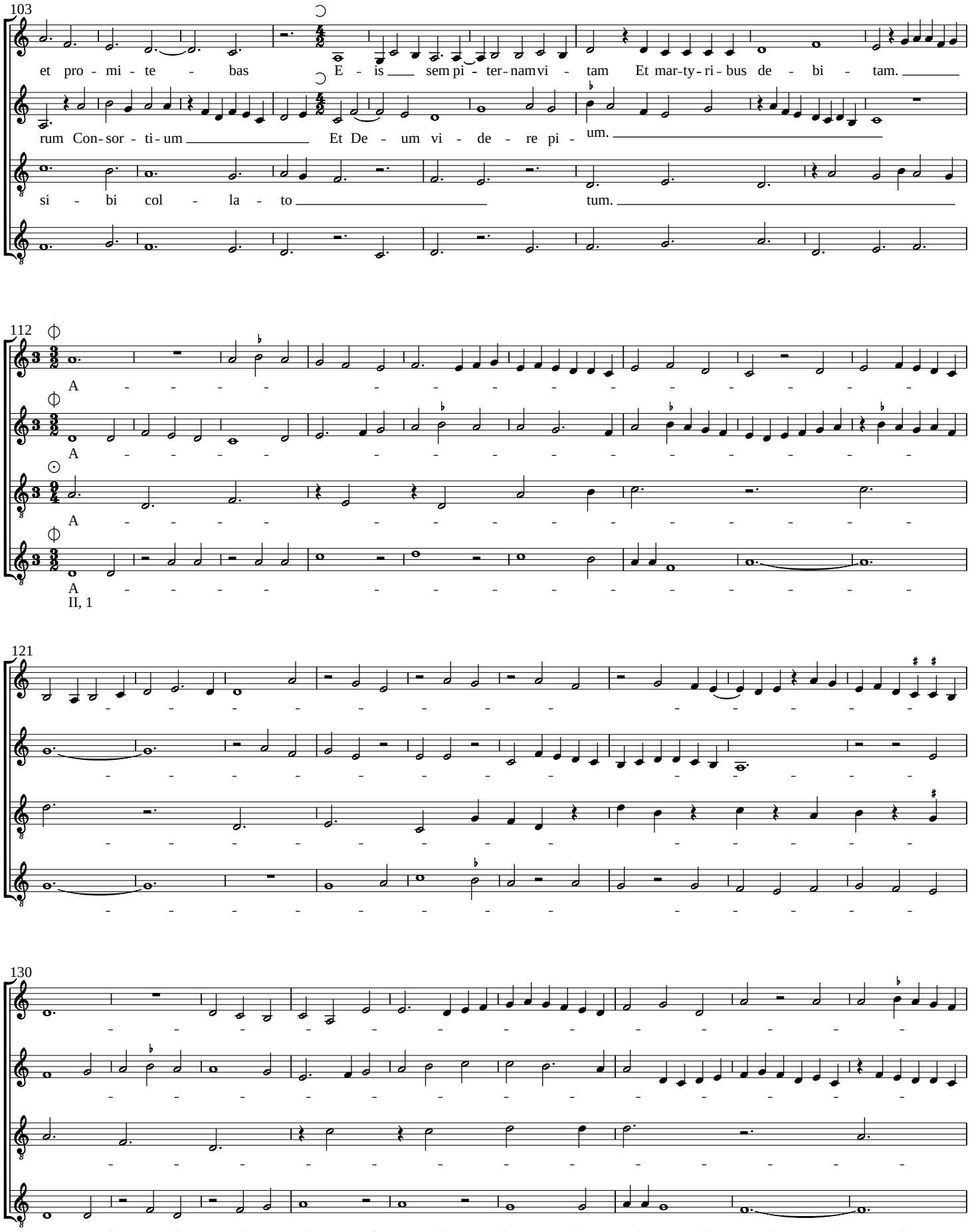
men - - - tis,

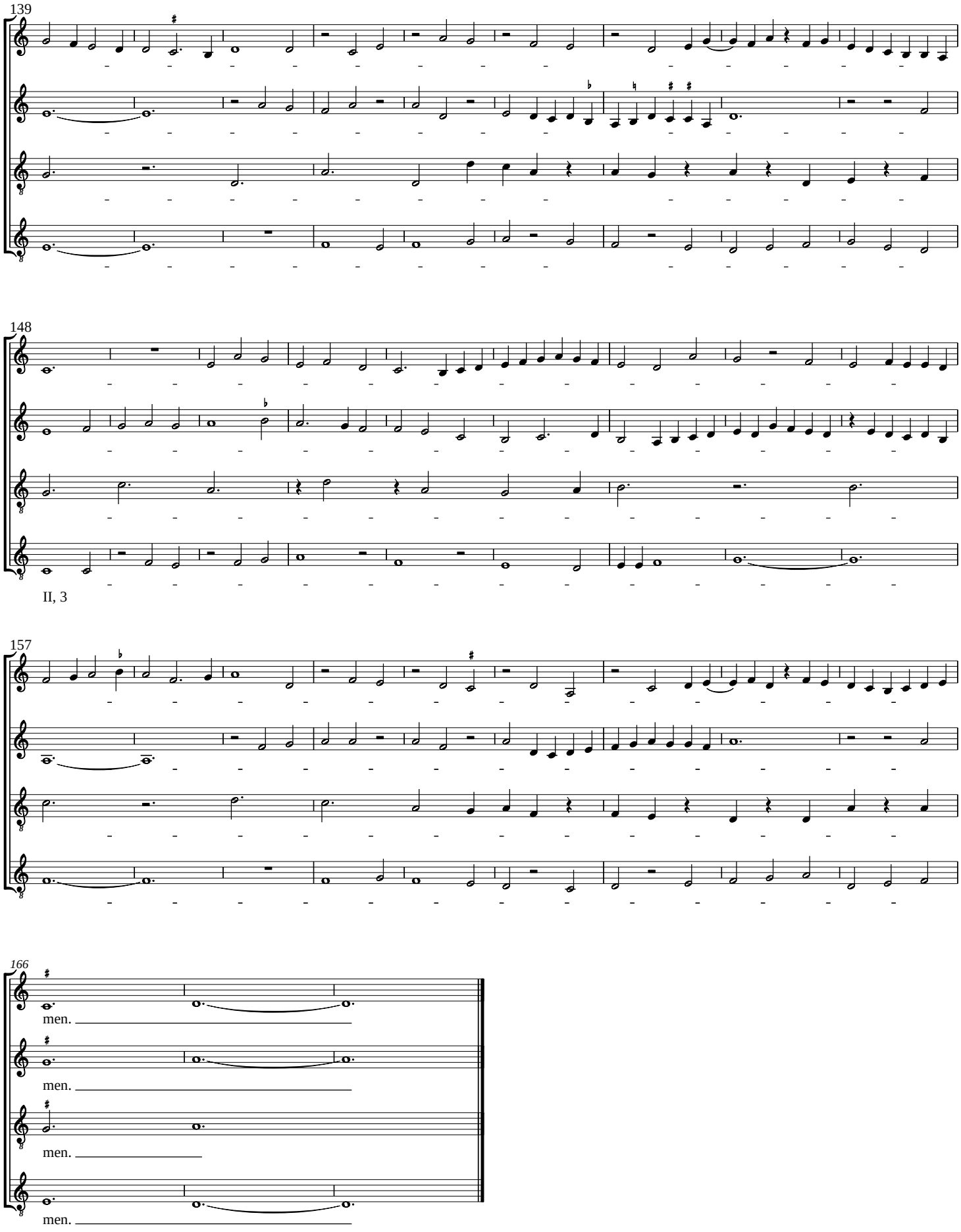
mo - men - tis, Dum ad - huc sum sa - nae men - - tis,

28


31
Me pro-te-ge et con-ser-va Et a me, mar-tyr, e-ner-va in-fir-mi-ta-tem no-xi-
O mar-tyr, Se-ba-sti-a-ne;
O quam mi-ra re-ful-
I, 1
40
am Vo-ca-tam e-pi-de-mi-am, Tu de pe-ste hu-ius-mo-di Me de-fen-
Tu sem-per no-bis-cum ma-ne At-que per tu-
sit gra-ti-a Se-ba-
49
de et cu-sto-di Et om-nes a-mi-cos me-os, Qui nos con fi-te-mur re-os De-o
a me-ri-ta Nos, qui su-mus in hac vi-ta,
sti-a-nus mar-tyr in-cli-tus,
58
et san-ctae Ma-ri-ae, Et ti-bi, o mar-tyr pi-e. Tu Me-di-o-la-nus
Cu-sto-di, sa-na et re-ge
Qui mi-li-tis por-tans
I, 2


67
ci - vis Hanc pe-sti - len - ti - am si vis, Po - tes fa - ce - re ces - sa - re Et ad De -
Et a pe - ste nos pro - te - ge Prae - sen - tans
in - si - gni-a, Sed
76
um im - pe - tra - re, Qui - a mul-tis est sci - tum, Quod de hoc ha-bes me - ri - tum,
nos tri - ni - ta-ti Et vir - gi - ni san - ctae ma - tri
de fra - trum pal - - ma sol - li - ci -
85
Zo - e mu -tam tu sa - na - sti Et sa -na - tam re - stau - ra - sti Ni-co - stra-to e - ius
Et sic vi - - - tam fi - ni - a - - - - - mus,
tus Con - for - ta - vit Cor - - da
I, 3
94
vi - - - ro, Hoc fa - ci - ens mo - do mi - - - - ro In a - go - ne con-so - la - - bas Mar-ty-res
Quod mer-ce-de-mi-na-be - a - mus Et mar - ty -
pal - len - ti - a Ver - bo


103
et pro - mi - te - bas E - is sem pi - ter - nam vi - tam Et mar-ty-ri-bus de - bi - tam.
rum Con-sor - ti-um Et De - um vi - de - re pi - um.
si - bi col - la - to tum.
112
A
A
A
A
II, 1
121
130
II, 2
D-OO


139
148
II, 3
157
166
men.
men.
men.
men.

02/03 O sancte Sebastiane - O martyr Sebastiane - O quam mira

Guillaume Du Fay

Cantus 1

O _____ san - cte Se - - ba - - sti - a - ne, Sem - per, ve - spe -

Resolutio

O _____ san - cte Se - - ba - -

Cantus 2

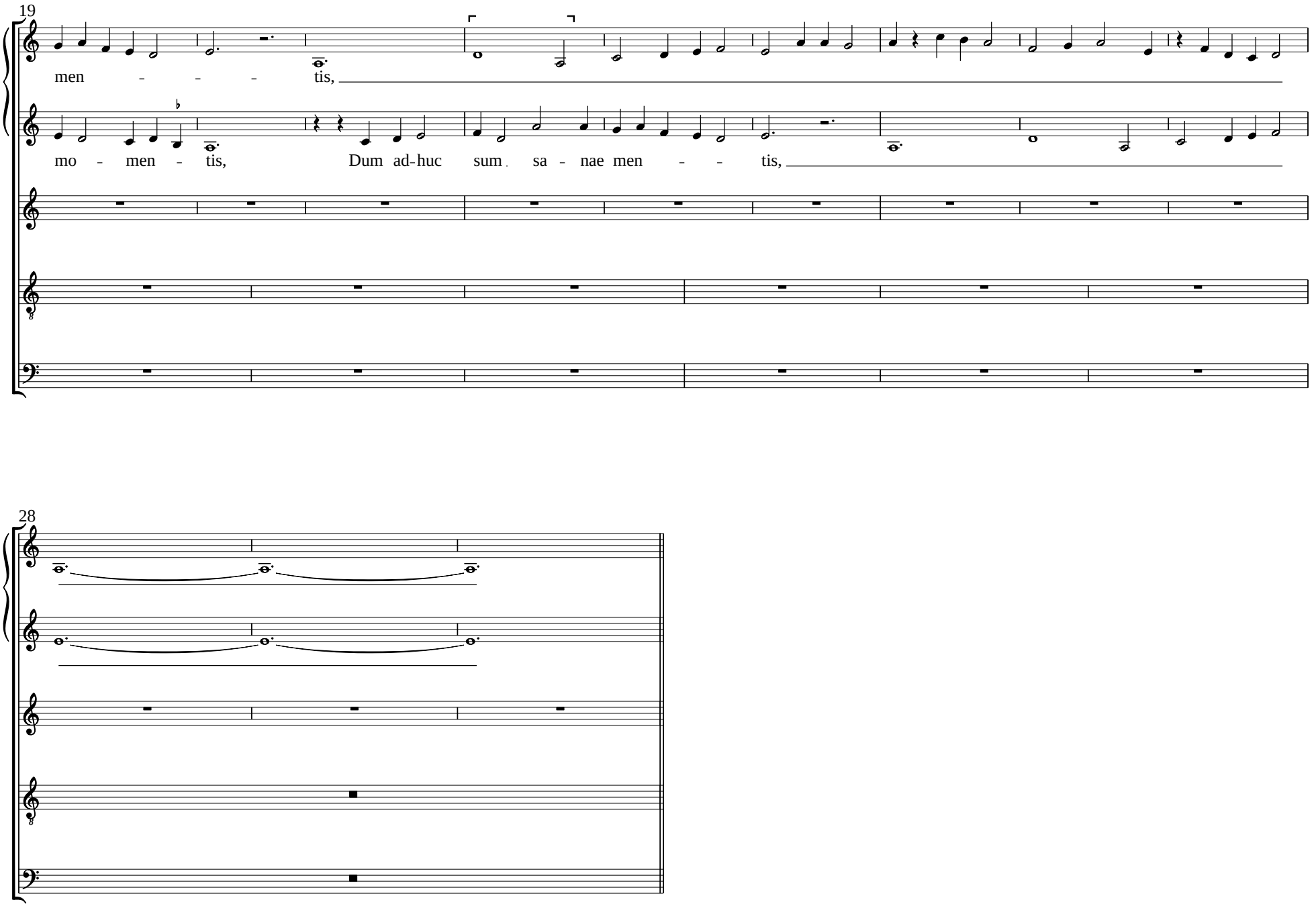
Contratenor

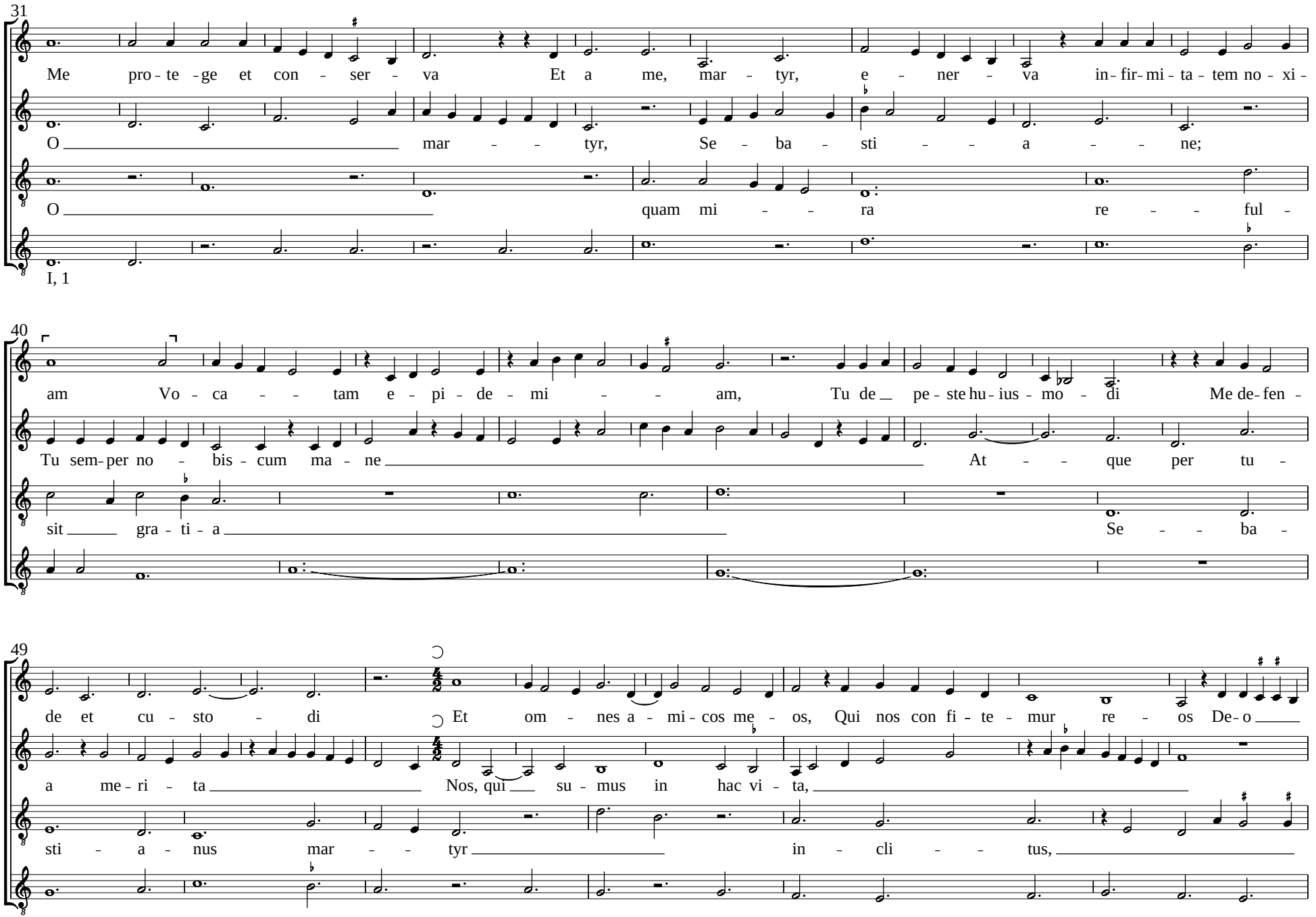
Tenor

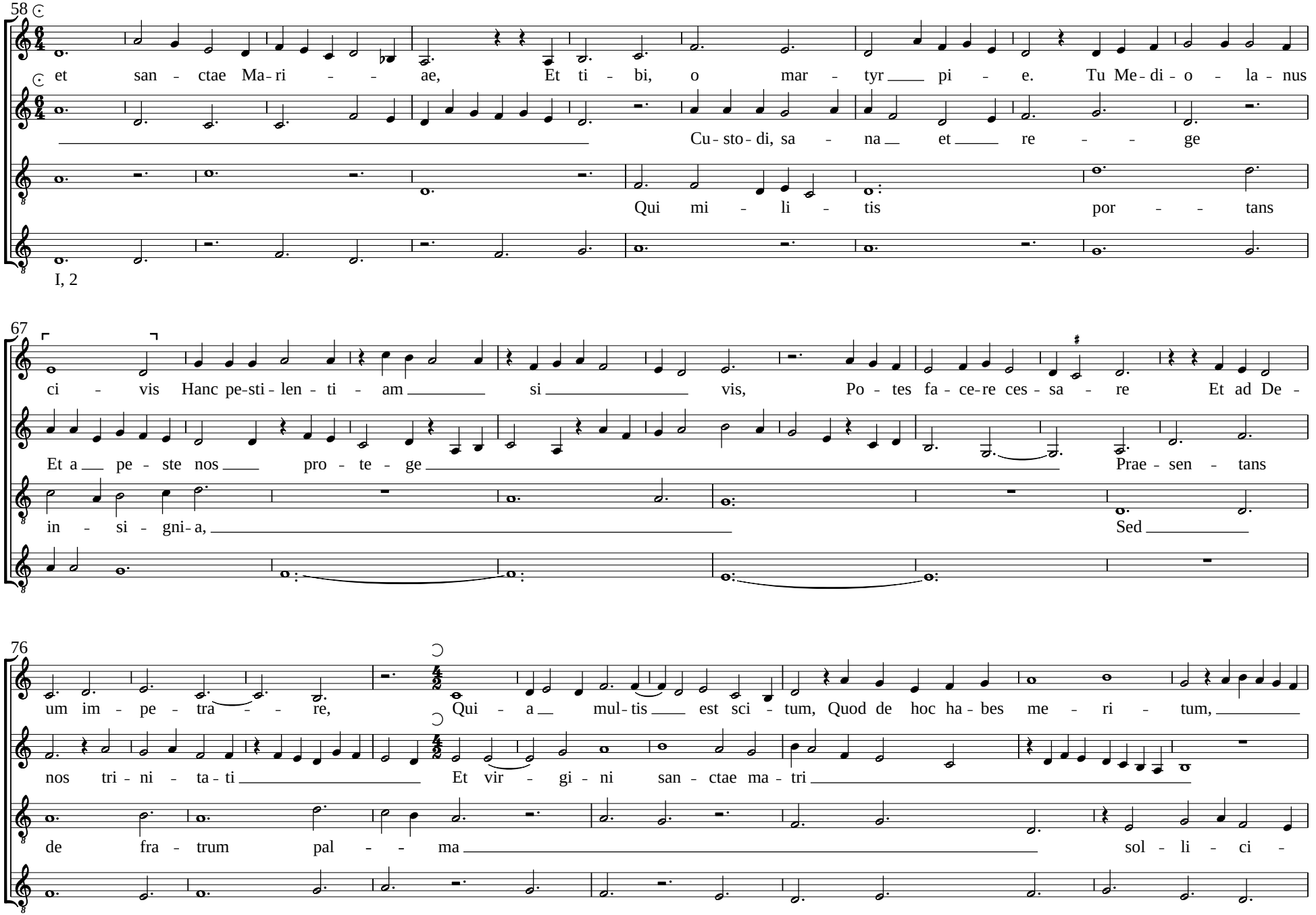
10

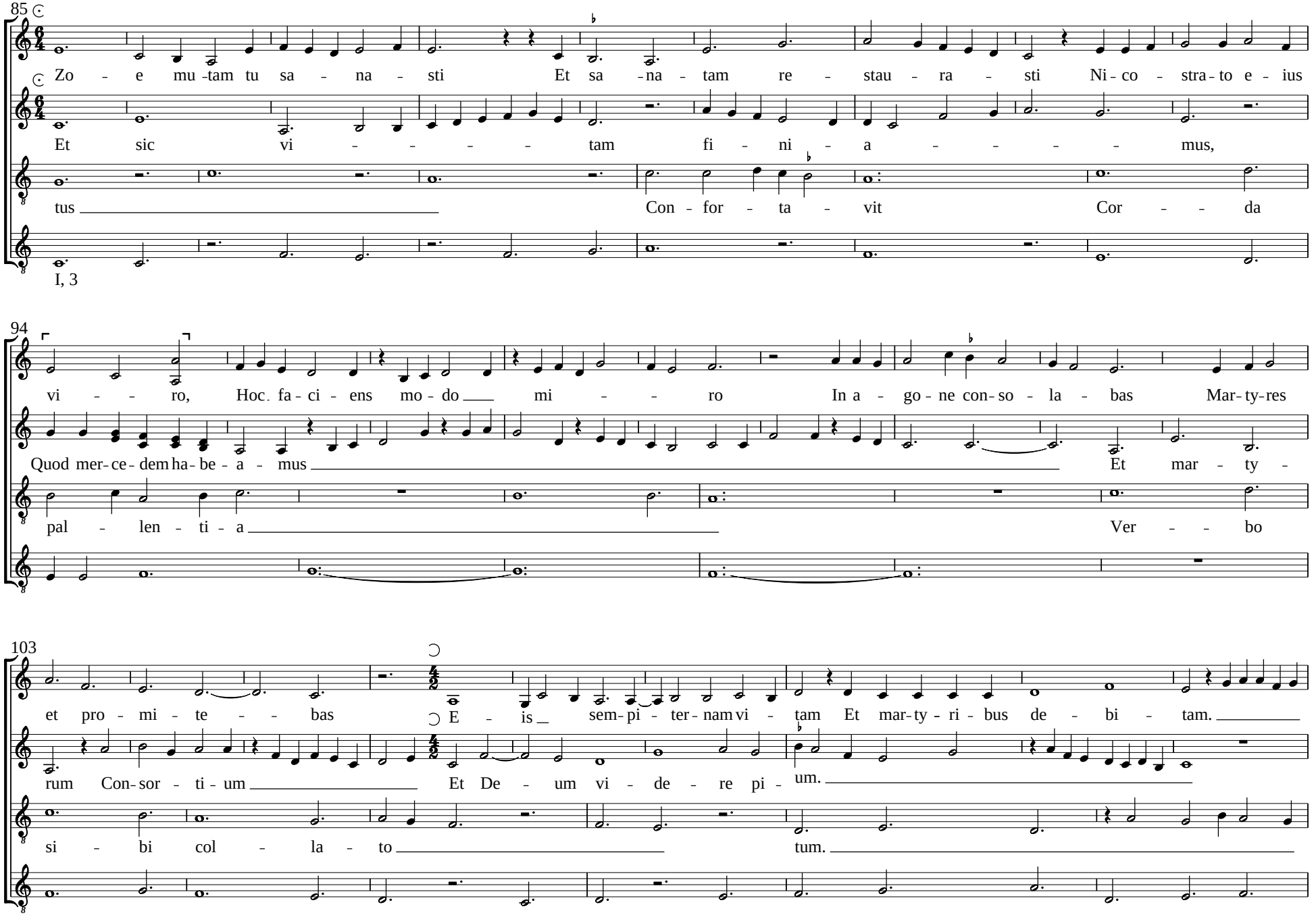
re et ma - - ne, Ho - ris __ cun - ctis et mo - men - tis, Dum ad - huc sum __ sa - nae

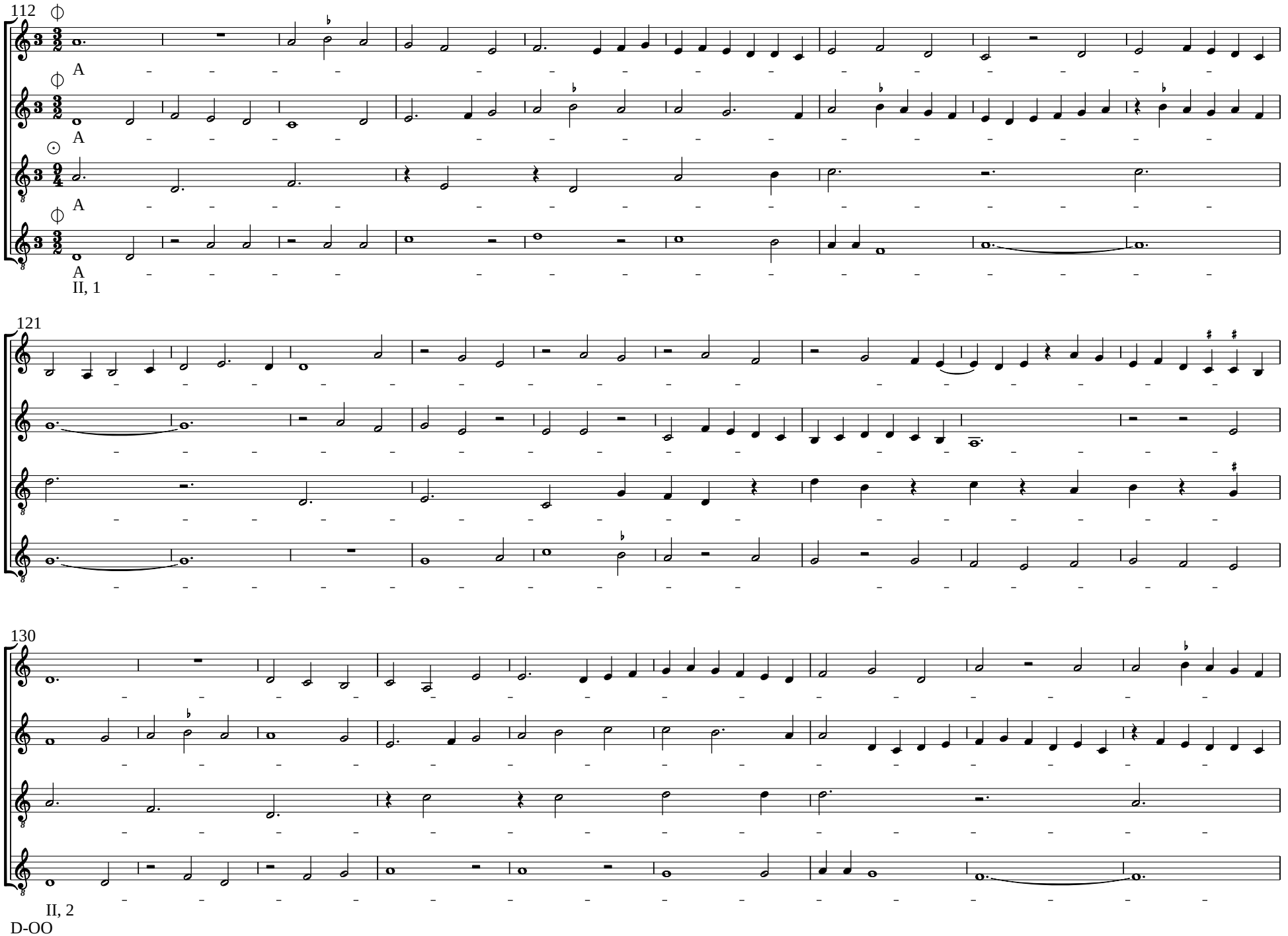
ba - sti - a - ne, Sem - per, ve - spe - re et ma - - ne, Ho - ris __ cun - ctis et


19
men - - - tis,
mo - men - tis, Dum ad-huc sum sa - nae men - - tis,
28

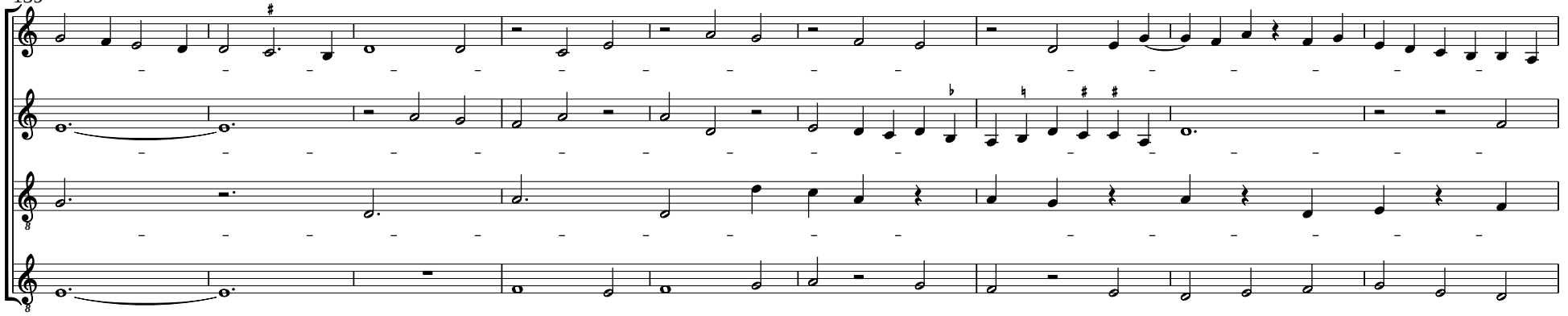

31
Me pro - te - ge et con - ser - va Et a me, mar - tyr, e - ner - va in - fir - mi - ta - tem no - xi -
O mar - - tyr, Se - ba - sti - - - a - - ne;
O quam mi - - ra re - - - ful -
I, 1
40
am Vo - ca - - tam e - pi - de - mi - - am, Tu de pe - ste hu - ius - mo - di Me de - fen -
Tu sem - per no - bis - cum ma - ne At - - que per tu -
sit gra - ti - a Se - - ba -
49
de et cu - sto - di Et om - nes a - mi - cos me - os, Qui nos con fi - te - mur re - os De - o
a me - ri - ta Nos, qui su - mus in hac vi - ta,
sti - a - nus mar - - tyr in - cli - - tus,


58
et san - ctae Ma - ri - - - ae, Et ti - bi, o mar - tyr pi - e. Tu Me - di - o - la - nus
Cu - sto - di, sa - na et re - - - ge
Qui mi - li - tis por - - - tans
I, 2
67
ci - vis Hanc pe-sti - len - ti - am si vis, Po - tes fa - ce - re ces - sa - re Et ad De -
Et a pe - ste nos pro - te - ge Prae - sen - tans
in - si - gni - a, Sed
76
um im - pe - tra - - - re, Qui - a mul - tis est sci - tum, Quod de hoc ha - bes me - ri - tum,
nos tri - ni - ta - ti Et vir - gi - ni san - ctae ma - tri
de fra - trum pal - - - ma sol - li - ci -


85
Zo - e mu-tam tu sa - na - sti Et sa - na - tam re - stau - ra - sti Ni - co - stra - to e - ius
Et sic vi - - - - - tam fi - ni - a - - - - - mus,
tus Con - for - ta - vit Cor - - da
I, 3
94
vi - - - ro, Hoc. fa - ci - ens mo - do mi - - - ro In a - go - ne con - so - la - bas Mar - ty - res
Quod mer - ce - dem ha - be - a - mus Et mar - ty -
pal - len - ti - a Ver - - bo
103
et pro - mi - te - - - bas E - is sem - pi - ter - nam vi - tam Et mar - ty - ri - bus de - bi - tam.
rum Con - sor - ti - um Et De - um vi - de - re pi - um.
si - bi col - la - to tum.


112
A
A
A
A
II, 1
121
130
II, 2
D-OO

139



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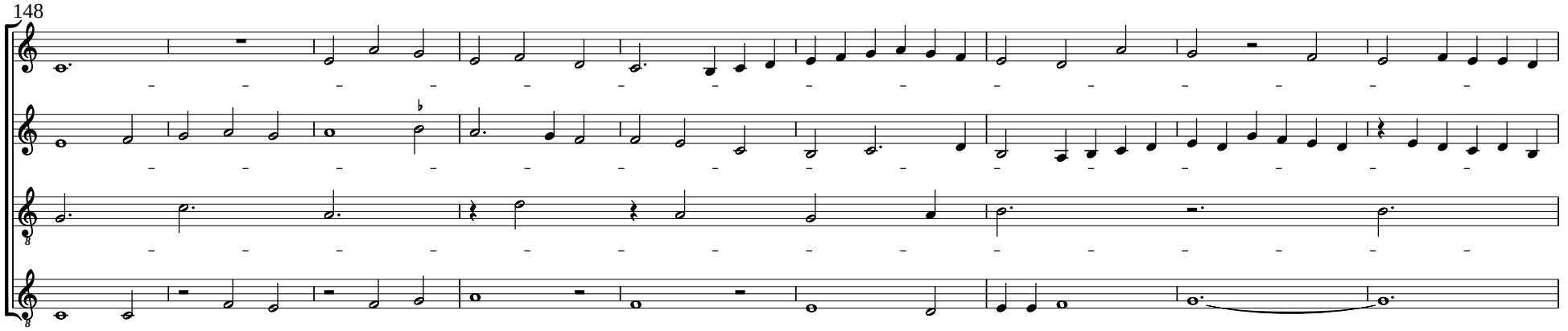
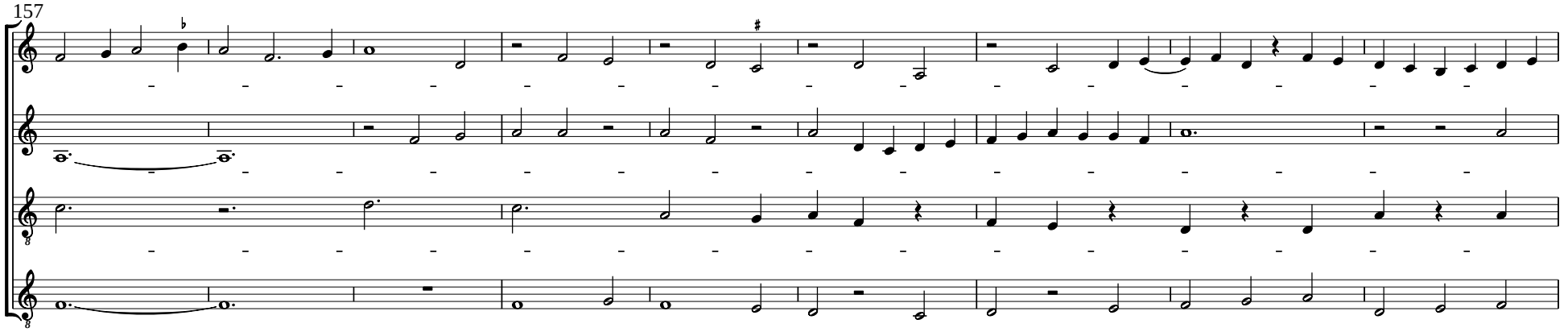


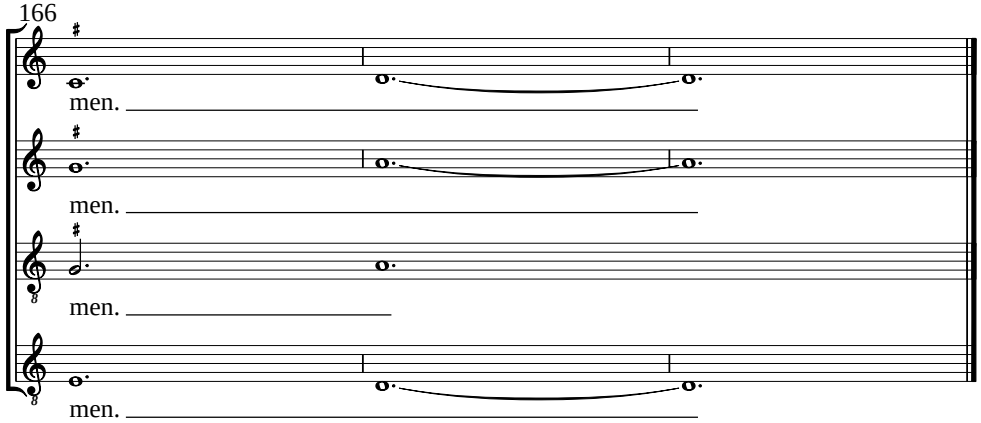
II, 3

157



D-OO

166



02/03 O sancte Sebastiane – O martyr Sebastiane – O quam mira

Sources

Q15 (II), fols. A 247v-249r, R 218v-220r, M 244-245, "du fay." Full black notation with void coloration. Texts in cantus 1 and 2 and in the contratenor; no text in the tenor except for the amen.

Ox 213 (2), fols. 31v-32r (no. 51), "Guillermus du [illegible] y Ad honorem sancti sebastiani Martiris." Texts in cantus 1 and 2 and in the contratenor; tenor incipit "Gloria et honore" and amen.

Clefs and Mensurations (same in both sources)

		1	50	58	79	85	106	109
Cantus 1	c2	☉	☽	☉	☽	☉	☽	⌽
Cantus 2	c2	☉	☽	☉	☽	☉	☽	⌽
Contratenor	c4	⊙	-	-	-	-	-	⊙
Tenor	c4	⊙	-	-	-	-	-	⌽

Texts

Cantus 1	
O sancte Sebastiane, Semper, vespere et mane, Horis cunctis et momentis, Dum adhuc sum sanae mentis, Me protege et conserva Et a me, martyr, enerva Infirmitatem noxiam Vocatam epidemiam. Tu de peste huiusmodi Me defende et custodi Et omnes amicos meos, Qui nos confitemur reos Deo et sanctae Mariae Et tibi, o martyr pie. Tu Mediolanus civis Hanc pestilentiam, si vis, Potes faces cessare Et ad Deum impetrare, Quia a multis est scitum, Quod de hoc habes meritum. Zoe mutam tu sanasti Et sanatam restaurasti Nicostratos eius viro, Hoc faciens modo miro. In agone consolabas Martyres et promittebas Eis sempiternam vitam Et martyribus debitam. Amen.	O Saint Sebastian, Always, evening and morning, At all hours and minutes,[1] As long as I am of sound mind, Protect and preserve me And keep away from me, o martyr, The evil illness Called epidemic. From this kind of plague Keep me and defend me And all of my friends Who acknowledge ourselves sinners To God and Holy Mary And to you, O pious martyr. You, O citizen of Milan, Can, if you wish, make This plague come to an end And to ask this of God, For to many it is known, That you have such power. Zoe the mute you cured And thus cured you returned To her husband Nicostratus, This you did as a miracle. In their suffering you used to console The martyrs and promise Them eternal life And (the life) due to martyrs. Amen.

[1] Properly a *momentum* is a specific unite of time measurement, 1/40 hour = 1½ minutes, for this information, as well as for assistance with the translation I am indebted to Leofranc Holford-Strevens.

Cantus 2	
O martyr Sebastiane, Tu semper nobiscum mane Atque per tua merita Nos, qui sumus in hac vita Custodi, sana et rege Et a peste nos protege, Praesentans nos trinitati Et virgini sanctae matri. Et sic vitam finiamus, Quod mercedem habeamus Et martyrum consortium Et deum videre pium. Amen.	O martyr Sebastian, Abide always with us And through your merits, Us, who are in this life, Keep, heal, and rule. And protect us from the plague, Presenting us to the Trinity And the Holy Virgin Mother. And may we so finish life That we have mercy And the company of martyrs And the sight of holy God. Amen.
Contratenor	
O quam mira refulsit gratia Sebastianus, martyr inclitus, Qui militis portans insignia, Sed de fratrum palma sollicitus Confortavit corda pallentia Verbo sibi collatus caelitus.	O, how wonderful shone the grace Sebastian, the famous martyr, Who, carrying military insignia, But caring for the palm of the brethren, Comforted the weakening hearts With words given from heaven.
Tenor in Ox 213	
Gloria et honore. Amen.	In glory and honor. Amen

The tenor color consists of a long melody (89 notes) in mode 1, divided by the taleae into three segments of 29 notes with the last two notes for the final cadence at the very end of the motet. Despite the incipit *Gloria et honore* in Ox 213 no plainsong has been identified as a source.[2] This does not mean that the incipit is in error (although it is absent from Q15). To be sure a number of Italian motets of the early fifteenth century use tenors composed *ad hoc*. The length of the melody suggests that this tenor, like the tenor of the motet *Rite maiorem* comes most likely from the melismatic end of the respond of an as yet unidentified responsory for St. Sebastian. The tenor color runs twice, the first three taleae are notated in ⊙ and the last three in ⌽. All voices are isorhythmic within each set of taleae, but the rhythmic pattern of the upper voices changes between the first and second set of taleae. The tenor is notated identically in both colores, so the shift in mensuration produces a small change in the rhythm that affects only the single pair of minims in each talea. Thus although the tenor is strictly speaking mensural rather than isorhythmic the actual results are very close to those if strict isorhythm. Structure I + c/3t > c/3t + F (3:1).

The texts of the motet consist of two rhymed prayers found in numerous breviaries, collectaneae, and books of hours. Cantus 1 uses the first twenty nine and cantus 2 the last twelve verses of one prayer and the contratenor uses a second prayer in its entirety. Both are edited in Analecta Hymnica,[3] with further sources listed in the *Repertorium Hymnologicum*.[4] Besseler's edition cites none of these sources, while De Van's edition cites the manuscripts reported in Analecta and the *Repertorium* and gives a collation of text variants.[5]

[2] De Van, *Opera omnia*, II, xiv-xv, considers some possible chants, none of which coincide with the tenor melody.

[3] Clemens Blume, ed., *Reimsgebete und Leselieders des Mittelalters*, *Sechste Folge*, Analecta Hymnica Medii Aevi 33 (Leipzig: Reisland, 1899. Reprint New York: Johnson Reprint, 1961), nos. 191-2.

[4] Vol. III, No. 13,708 (with additions in Vol. V).

[5] Besseler, ed. *Opera omnia*, I, xiii-xiv, De Van, *Opera omnia*, II, xiv-xv.

The entire text of the rhymed prayers is sung in the first section of the motet (taleae 1-3), with the amen sung in the second (taleae 3-6), the amen is thus an extravagant display of vocalization. Both sections are also governed by the perfect *modus*, and since there is minim equivalence between ⊂ and ⊙ not only is one breve of the lower voices three minims longer than a breve of the upper voices, but the modal *initia* coincide after every six breves of the lower voices, which correspond to nine of the upper voices. Given the level of ornamentation in the uppers voices this creates problems for the engraving, since in order to avoid incomplete units one needs to fit nine measures of the upper parts per line. For readers that might find the normal portrait layout uncomfortable to read, I have provided a second printing of the motet set in landscape format.

In the amen (taleae 3-6) Du Fay shifts cantus 1 and 2 and the tenor to ⦶, but apparently to insure the continuation of the perfect *modus* under the diminished sign, retains ⊙ in the contratenor with minim-semibreve equivalence between it and the other voices.

The canonic introitus takes place outside the isorhythmic scheme, and is a canon within a divided cantus 1, not between cantus 1 and 2 (as indicated in Besseler's edition). Cantus 2 is given a full set of rests for the duration of the introitus. The final note (and rests) of the introitus, as well as the final ligature of all voices at the end of the motet, fall at an *initium* of the *modus* but are not a complete modal unit.

The passages notated in ↄ in cantus 1 and 2 at the end of each talea the in first section of the piece call for four minor semibreves to the breve (since the main mensuration of these voices is ⊂ they replace two major semibreves). The melodic and rhythmic writing in these passages sounds quite Italianate, as if Du Fay had been listening to a good deal of late *trecento* music or to the *ars subtilior* works of Italian composers.

The *mensura* in this motet begins on the major semibreve in all voices, and for the purposes of the ensemble the different size of the breve in cantus 1 and 2 compared with the breve in the tenor and contratenor poses no problem since the performers are beating semibreves. The shift in and out of ↄ is quite easy since in this section the *mensura* shifts to the imperfect breve, which is moving at exactly the same speed as the major semibreve in ⊂. For the amen the *mensura* in ⦶ shifts to the perfect breve (except in the contratenor, where it remains in the major semibreve), which is also moving at the same speed as the major semibreve in ⊂, so that, in fact, the *mensura* remains at the same tempo for the entire motet. As the tempo for the *mensura* (and therefore for all the values associated with it in this piece) I would suggest a value between MM 72 at a minimum and 84 (with extraordinarily agile singers). At any tempo the piece begins at what sounds like a very slow tempo and ends with a blaze of coloraturas. The piece also has some of the most dissonant counterpoint in Du Fay's early works, interestingly enough not in the rhythmically complex first section but in the amen section.

A curious trait of the tenor is that a single ligature in each talea (always at the same spot) is drawn incorrectly in both manuscripts as a normal descending ligature with propriety and perfection: ⚐ (breve-long) when it should have been drawn without propriety: ⚐ (long-long). One of the users of Ox 213 noticed the error, and sought to elongate the first note of each ligature not by erasing the tail but by elongating it beyond all proportion.[6] Besseler and De Van correct the error tacitly. The double notes in the contratenor and cantus at measure 90 are unique to Ox 213. The tenor melody is presented in Example 1 at the end of these notes.

In the edition a whole note followed by : instead of a dot is used for a note worth nine quarter notes.

The date and the occasion for the motet remain uncertain, but the musical style and a series of intertextual relationships with other works, noted by Michael Allsen,[7] and Besseler,[8] place the work in the years 1420-24, when Du Fay was in the service of the Malatesta. The style of the motet, which is very close to that of *O gemma*, and a careful reading of the text (which was a preexistent prayer) suggest that it is not a work connected with a local outbreak of the plague or an epidemic, but rather a plea to St. Sebastian to keep the plague to spreading to the region. The reaction of most courts to actual local outbreaks of the plague was usually flight to what was regarded as a saner region, but fear of the spread of the contagion to the local region was the occasion for elaborate rites to the appropriate saints seeking their protection. This would made sense in 1423 or 1424, when the outbreak of the plague in Bologna and the surrounding countryside caused enormous alarm in the entire Adriatic coast.[9]

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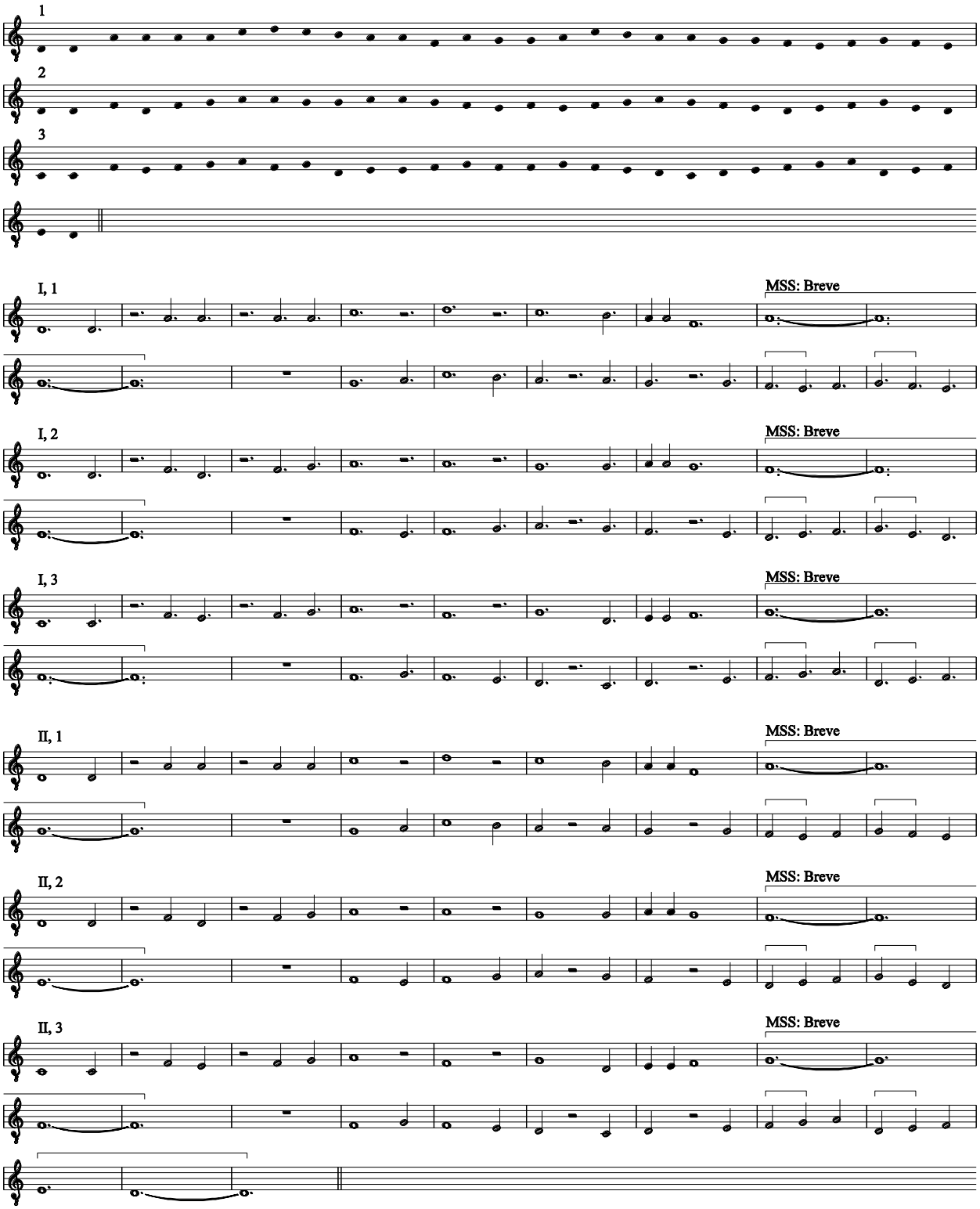
[6] David Fallows, *Oxford Bodleian Library MS. Canon. Misc. 213*, Late Medieval and Early Renaissance Manuscripts in Facsimile 1 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), 34, notes the alteration of the ligatures but misinterprets its significance.

[7] Jon Michael Allsen, "Style and Intertextuality in the Isorhythmic Motet, 1400-1440," Ph.D. Dissertation (University of Wisconsin, Madison, 1992), 472-73.

[8] Besseler, ed. *Opera Omnia*, I, xiii-xiv.

[9] Alfonso Corradi, *Annali delle epidemie occorse in Italia dalle prime memorie fino al 1850*, 5 vols. (Bologna: Gamberini & Parmeggiani, 1869-95. Reprint Bologna: Forni, 1972-3), I, 260-5, particularly 262, and V, 132-3.

Example 1
Cantus Firmus of *O Sancte Sebastiane*