John Webber

THE NATIVITY

liturgical music drama in five scenes from the Chester Mystery Play of the same name

WEBBER MUSIC
198111

Characters:

Gabriel
An Angel
Mary
Joseph
Salome, Tabella - two midwives
SATB Chorus

Orchestra:

2 Flutes
2 B♭ Clarinets
Organ
Strings

the score is transposed

This work was commissioned by St. James' Episcopal Church, Capitol Hill, Washington, D.C.

The first performance was on Christmas Eve 1980, St. James' Church. Rembert Herbert, Choir Director and John Webber, Conductor.

Hymns are to be sung between each scene. With hymns the whole should last about 30 minutes.

SCENE 1

GABRIEL:
Hail be thou Mary Mai den free
full of grace God is with thee
A mong all women blessed thou be,
and the child of thy body

CHORUS:
In a time fore told by Saint and Seer
Unto Earth so dark with fear
Did God's blessed messengers draw near
Our gladness to restore.

MARY:
My God that reigns in majesty
Who wondrously a mazes me
A simple maiden of my degree
To be greeted thus graciously.

GABRIEL:
Mary fear thou not this case,
a mong all women special grace
thou hast found before God's face;
By thee this shall be done:
Conceive and bear,
I tell thee, a child.
So great shall no be
as he; his name
Jesu shall be.

MARY:
How may this be? Thou art so bright,
Oh! Tell me how this may be right.

GABRIEL:
The Holy Ghost shall in thee light from God in majesty
for God's own son shall come to Earth
And thou Mary shallt give him birth.
For nothing in God's might
and worth impossible is.

CHORUS:
To Mary gracious in God's sight
And to Josef dreaming in the night
Angels whispered of coming light
And bade them fear no more

In a time fore told by Saint and Seer
Unto the Earth so dark with fear
Did God's blesst messengers draw near
our gladness to restore.

SCENE 2

JOSEPH:
Alas and woe is me
Who hath made her with child?
Mine it is not I make so bold
For I am both old and cold.
There fore will I sleep a while
now will my wife me be guile
I will go from her myself I am loath to de file.
Alas and woe is me

AN ANGEL:
Joseph thou must wife believe
this thing is God's own will
the child that she shall bear I wis
of the Holy Ghost begotten is
to save mankind that did amiss
and prophecy to fullfill.

JOSEPH:
Ah! now I know Lord it is so
of understand ing I was slow
and while on Earth I may go
for Ma ry I shall care.

Now Christ shall come with us to dwell
as the pro phets did fore tell
O Lord God eternal Thee I worship here.

CHORUS:
So mortal love did undertake
To bear the consequence and weight.
Of sheltering for salvations sake
The Holy Fa thers Son.

AN ANGEL:
Goog man I warn thee verily,
To Bethlthem to take thy way
Lest thou in danger fall today
If that thou be too long.

CHORUS:
In Bethlehem it did begin
to mend the crack of mannes sin.
That to this pair God did commend
The care of His great Son.

SCENE 3

JOSEPH:
Marry spouse sooth to say
Shelter I hope we may
For great Lords of stout array occupy this city

Therefore we must no other way
sleep in this stable till it be day.

MARY:
Help me down then my dear
for I hope my hour is near

MARY:
Christ in this stable that is here

JOSEPH:
It will make men meek believe
I may to show him here will we

JOSEPH:
Mary sweetheart I will try
to fetch two women from nearby
For though in thee be God from high
coming as mankind
Yet a woman should help thee
For a custom's sake as thinks me.

MARY:
Christ in this stable that is here
I hope born will be

JOSEPH:
It will make men meek believe
I may to show him here will we

CHORUS:
In Bethlehem did God commend
to this blessd pair His Son's care
so mortal love did undertake
to gaurd the Christ for our sakes.

JOSEPH:
Mary sweetheart I will try
to fetch two women from nearby
two will I fetch anon to thee if I may find any.

SCENE 4

JOSEPH:
Women God you save and see
Is it your will to come with me?
My wife has come to this city with child
Her time is near help her now for charity.

SALOME:
Already good man lead the way
We will do whatever we may
For two other such midwives
That we can do well thy wife shall say
and that thou shall well see

TABELLA:
Come good man show us the way
With God's help e're it be day
That we can do well
For two other such midwives
I dare well say are not in this city.

SCENE 5

MARY:
Joseph! Tidings of great joy!
I have a son a sweet boy.
Lord, thanked be thou nought
can destroy thy power and grace!
Pain none at all I felt this night.
But even so did Christ alight,
and come is here in my sight
God's Son as you may see!

MARY:
Lord, blessed must thou be
That simple born art as I see.
To deprive the devil of his mastery,
Come thou art today I have a son a sweet boy!

SALOME:
Bless'd be God Amazed am I
Now believe I well and verily.
To save man God is come from high;
Thou Lord art God's own Son.

TABELLA:
Ah, Dear Lord! Heav'nly King!
That this is a marv'lous thing.
without pain or travailing,
Thou Lord art God's own Son

JOSEPH:
Lord, welcome! Sweet Jesu!
Thy name thou hadst e're I thee knew.
Now I believe the angel's words true
Thou hast come on earth this way.

MARY:
Fine clothes are not for thee,
therefore thy sweet body free
In this manger safe shall be,
And heaped about with hay

JOSEPH:
For thou art come man's bliss to sow,
To this end thy law will show,
Now man's joy begins to grow,
And suff'ring to pass away.

MARY:
I have a Son!
I have a Son, Lord!
I have a Son a sweet boy!

SALOME:
Now I believe now I believe Lord!

TABELLA:
A fair Son she has won, Lord!

JOSEPH:
Welcome, Lord, welcome Lord, Lord!
Sweet Jesu!

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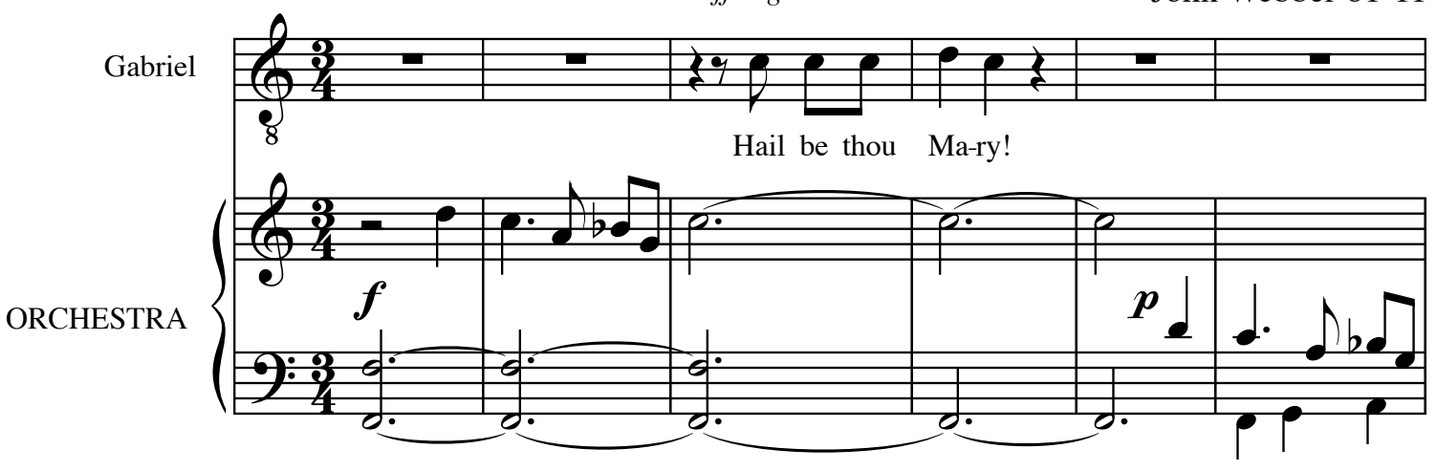
liturgical music drama in five scenes from the Chester Mystery Play of the same name

Mary is onstage,
Gabriel is heard offstage:

John Webber 81-11



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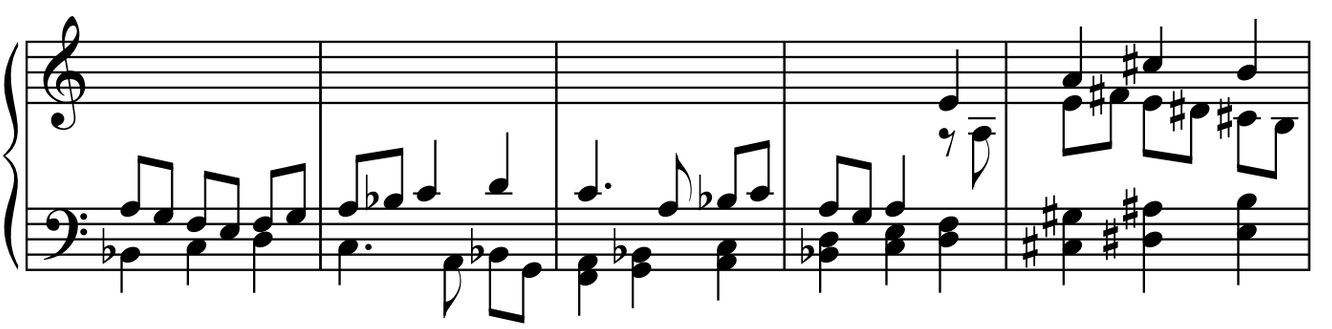

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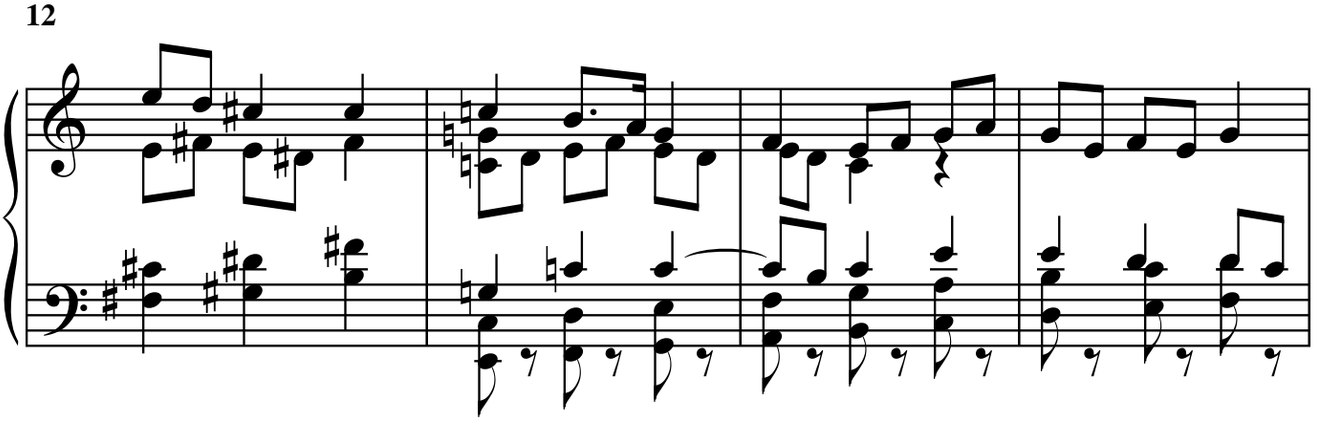
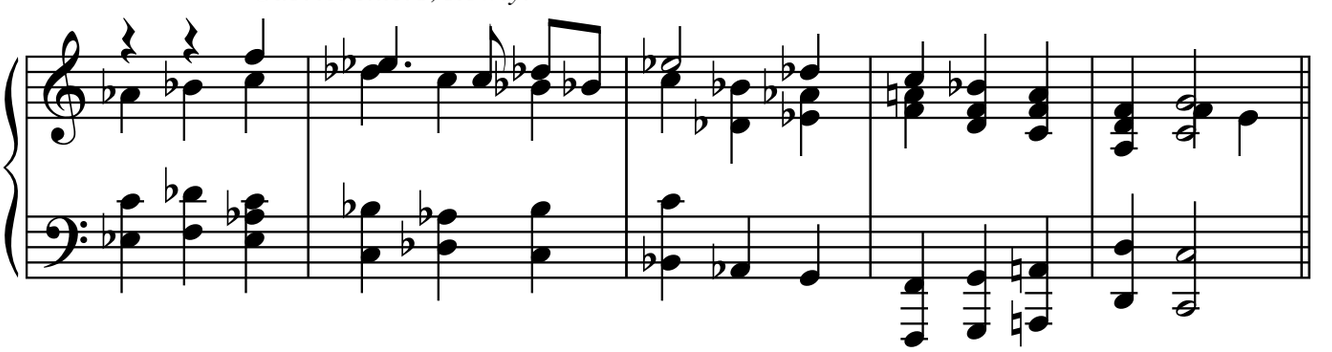
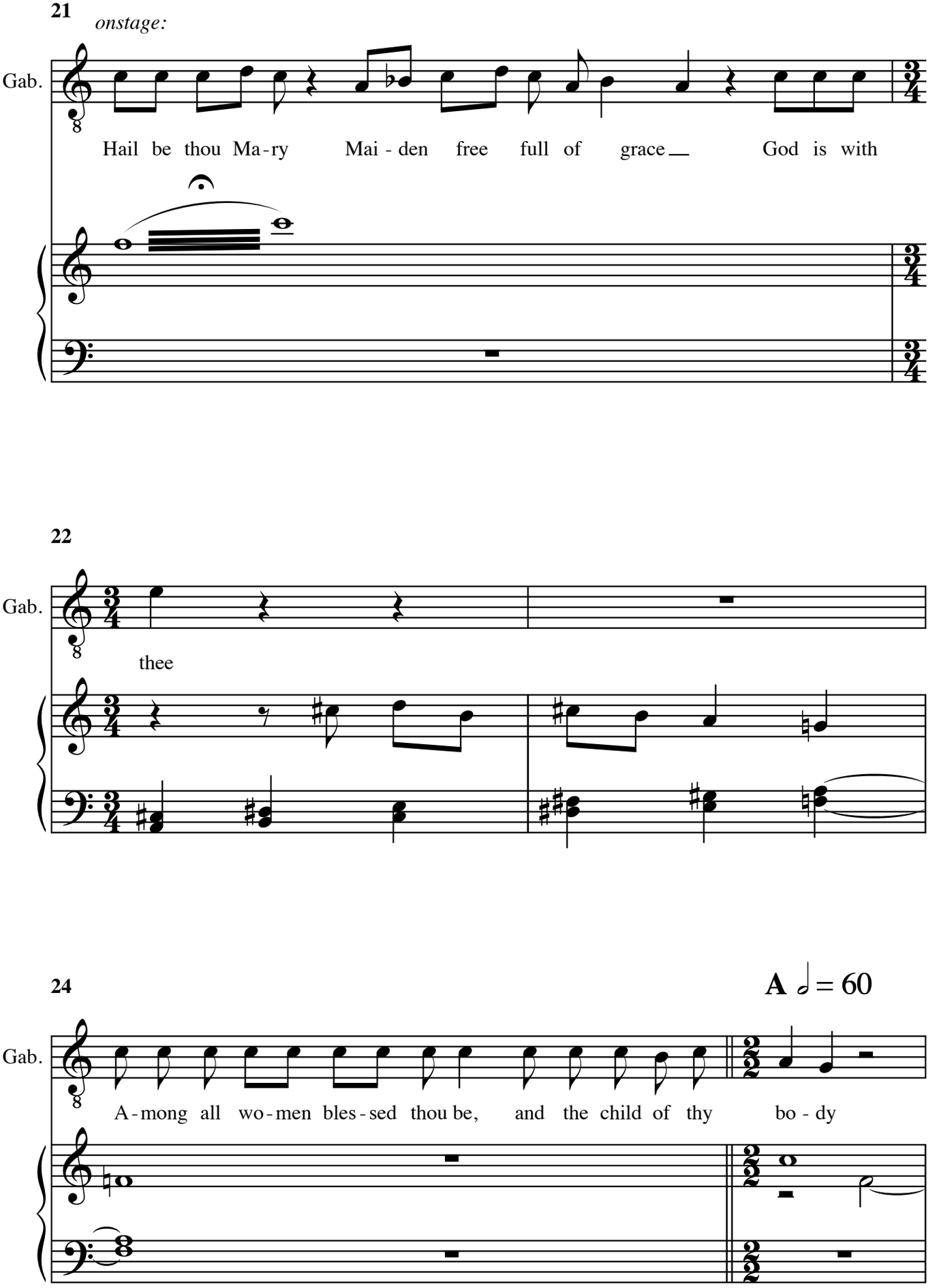
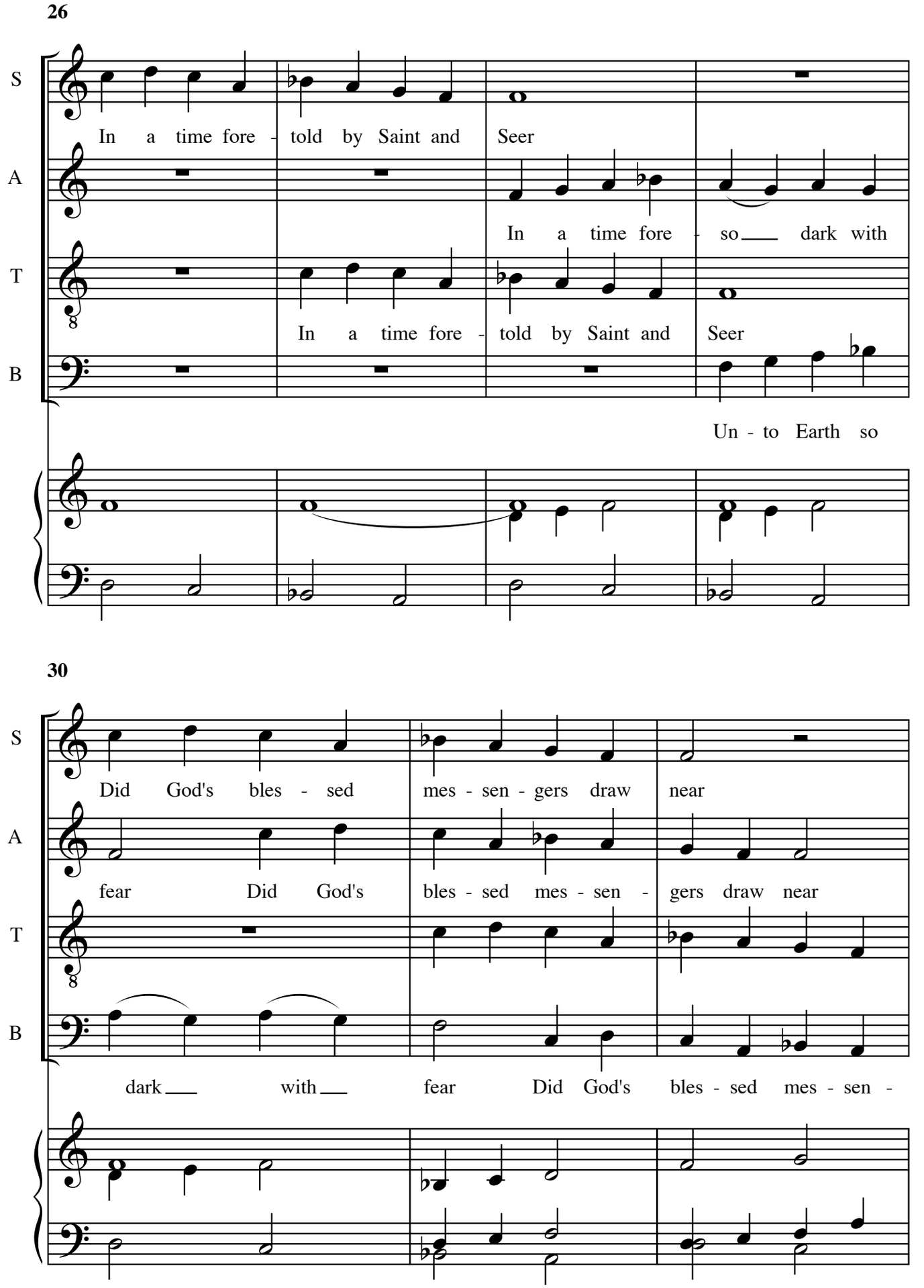


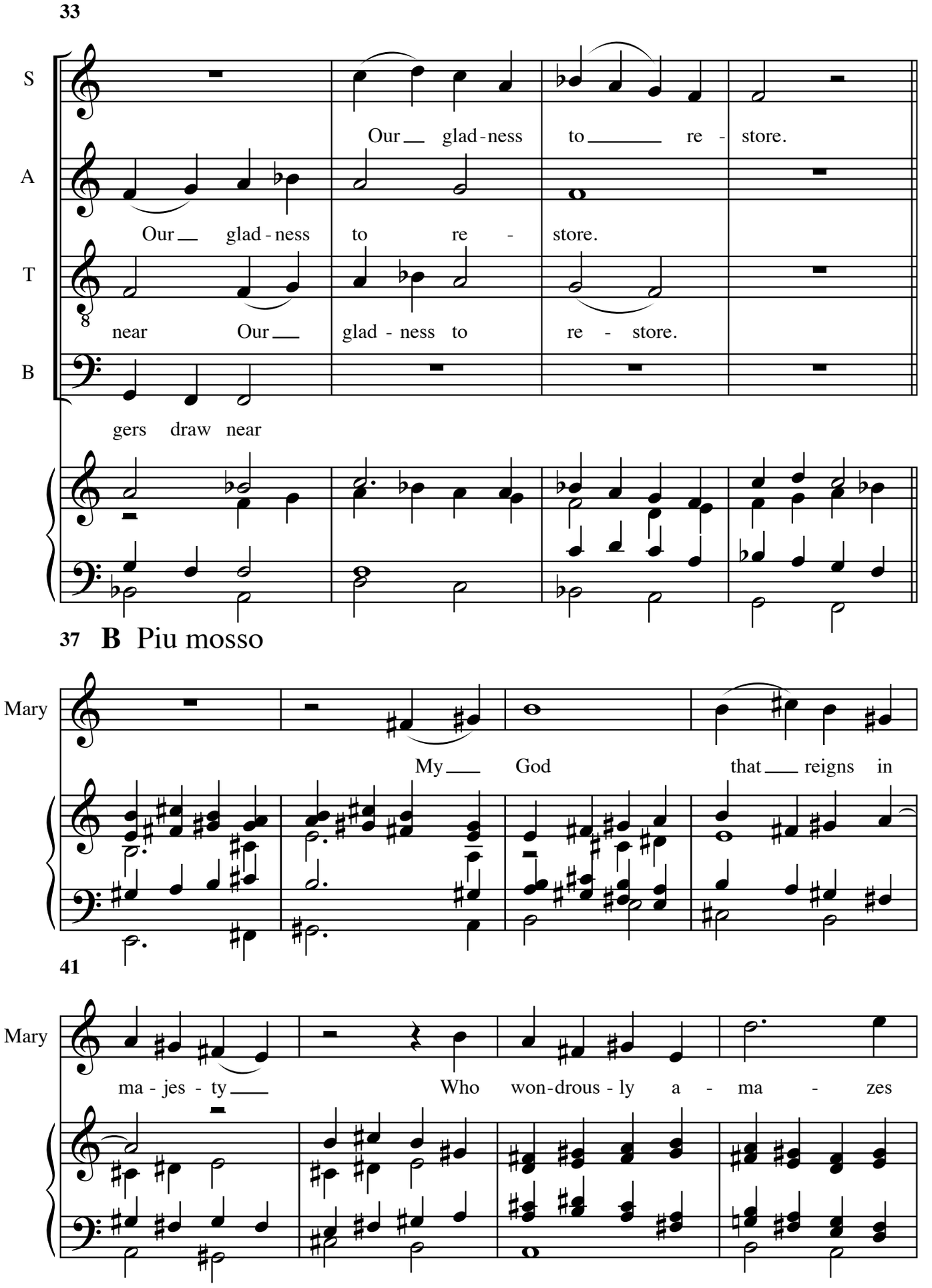
16

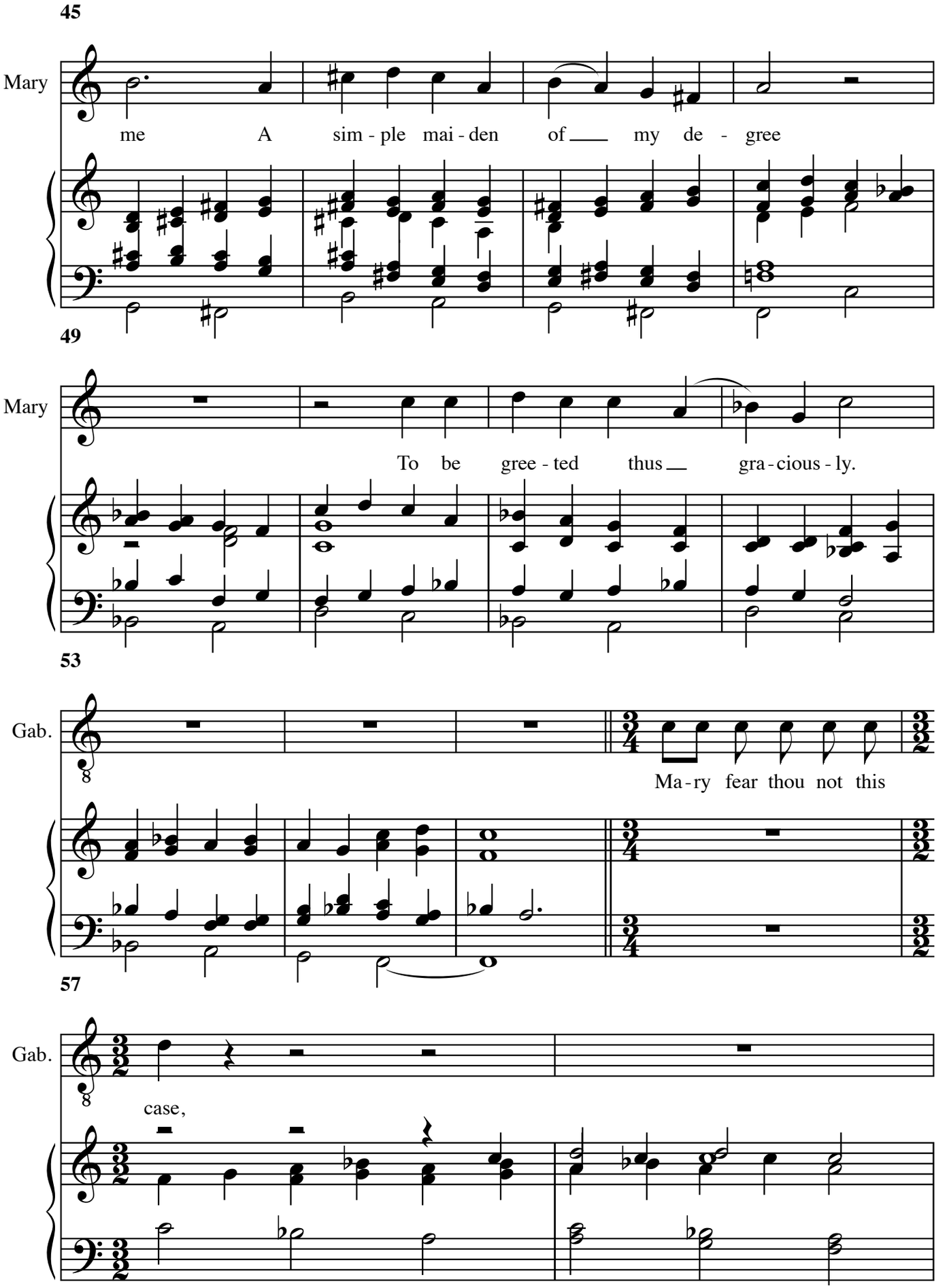
Gabriel enters, slowly.

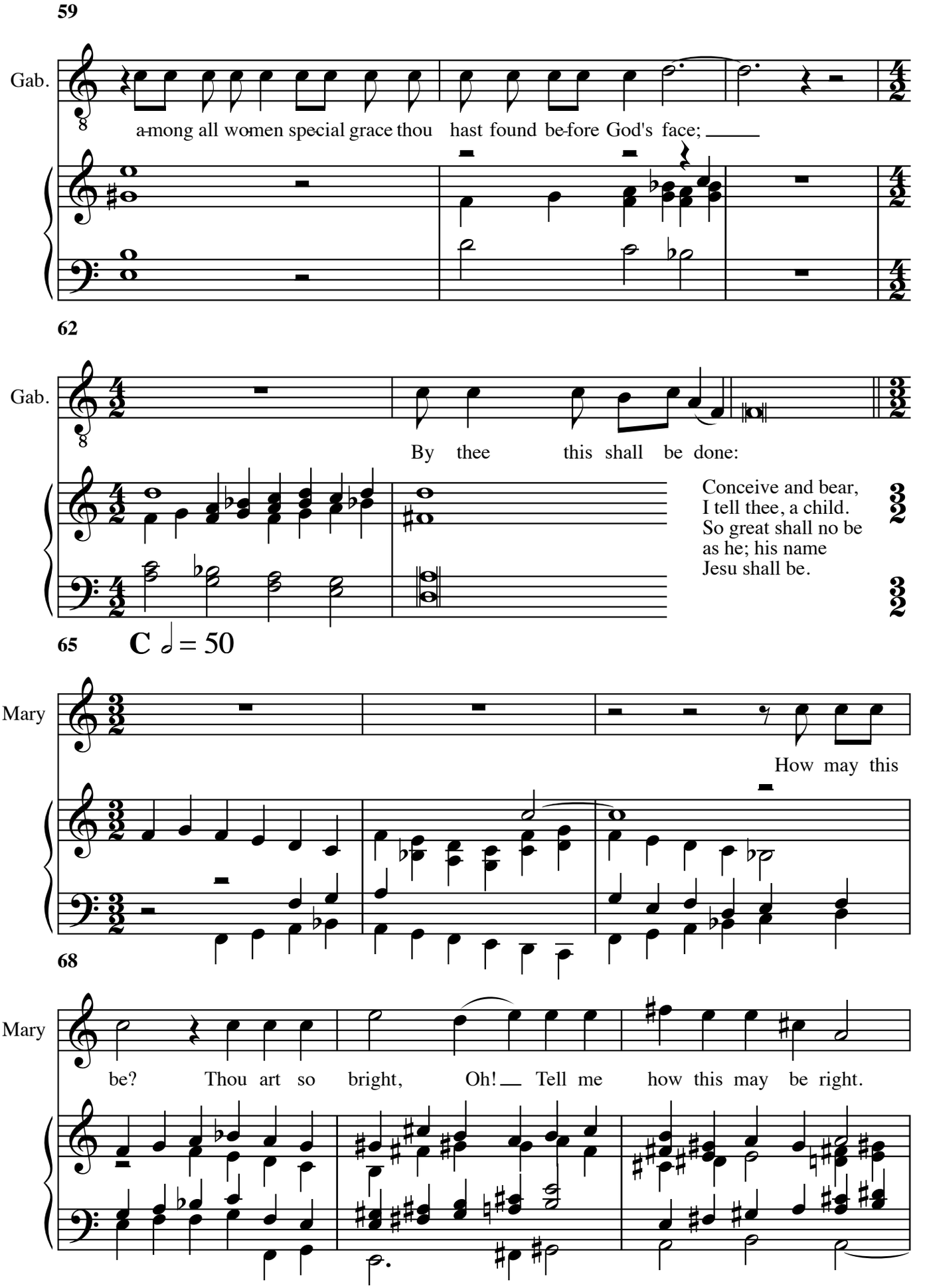



21
onstage:
Gab.
Hail be thou Ma-ry Mai-den free full of grace God is with
22
Gab.
thee
24
A = 60
Gab.
A-mong all wo-men bles-sed thou be, and the child of thy bo-dy

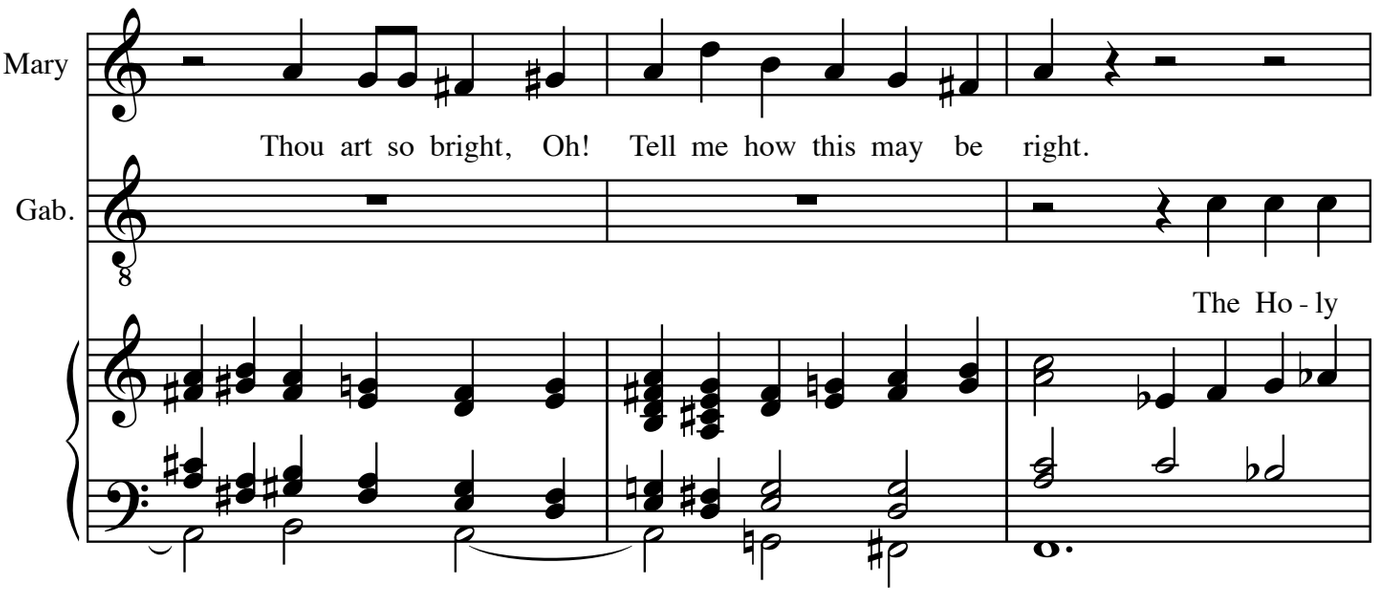

26
S
In a time fore - told by Saint and Seer
A
In a time fore - so dark with
T
In a time fore - told by Saint and Seer
B
Un - to Earth so
30
S
Did God's bles - sed mes - sen - gers draw near
A
fear Did God's bles - sed mes - sen - gers draw near
T
B
dark with fear Did God's bles - sed mes - sen -


33
S
Our glad-ness to re - store.
A
Our glad - ness to re - store.
T
near Our glad - ness to re - store.
B
gers draw near
37 B Piu mosso
Mary
My God that reigns in
41
Mary
ma - jes - ty Who won-drous - ly a - ma - zes

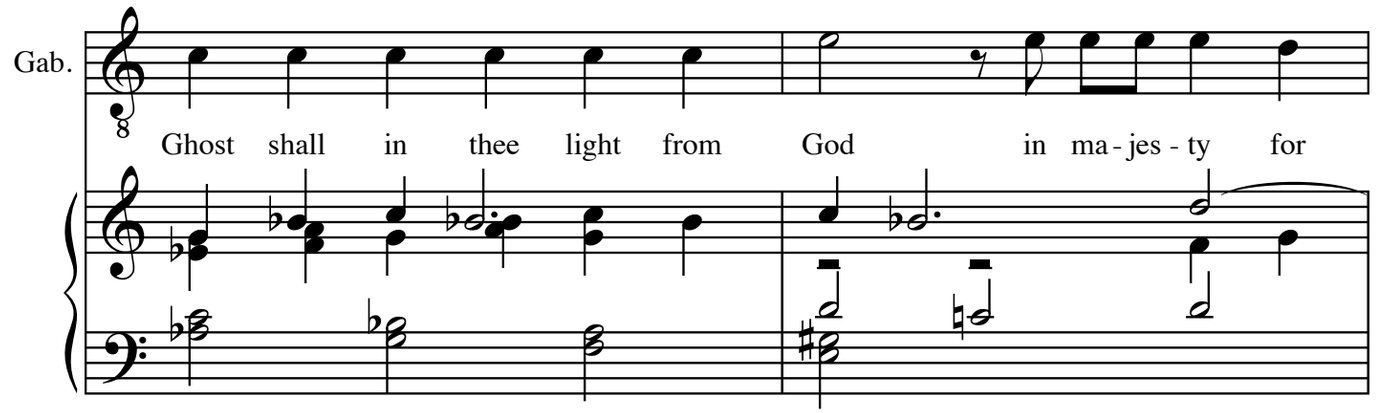

45
Mary
me A sim - ple mai - den of my de - gree
49
Mary
To be gree - ted thus gra - cious - ly.
53
Gab.
Ma - ry fear thou not this
57
Gab.
case,


59
Gab.
a-mong all wo-men spe-cial grace thou hast found be-fore God's face;
62
Gab.
By thee this shall be done:
Conceive and bear,
I tell thee, a child.
So great shall no be
as he; his name
Jesu shall be.
65
C 𝅗𝅥 = 50
Mary
How may this
68
Mary
be? Thou art so bright, Oh! Tell me how this may be right.

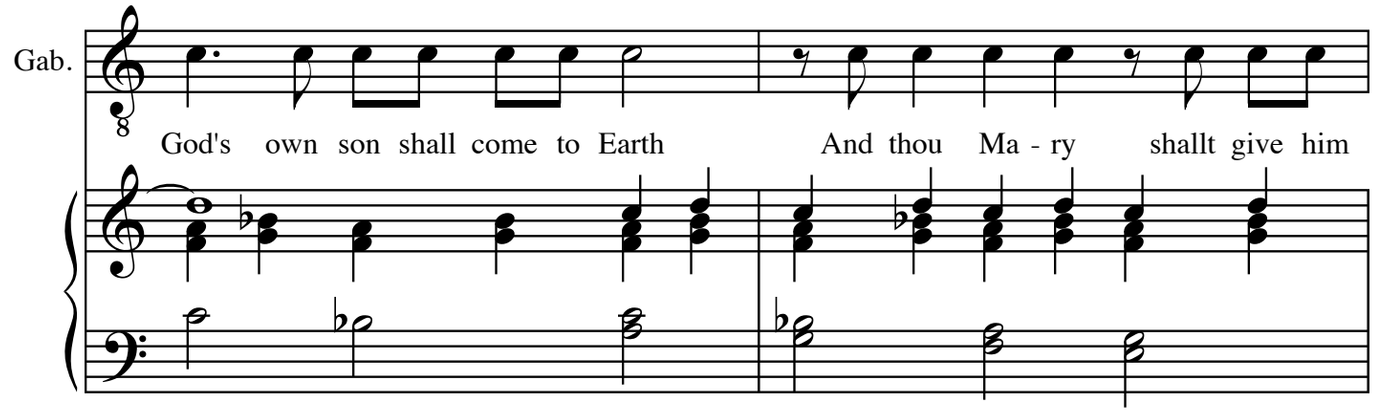
71

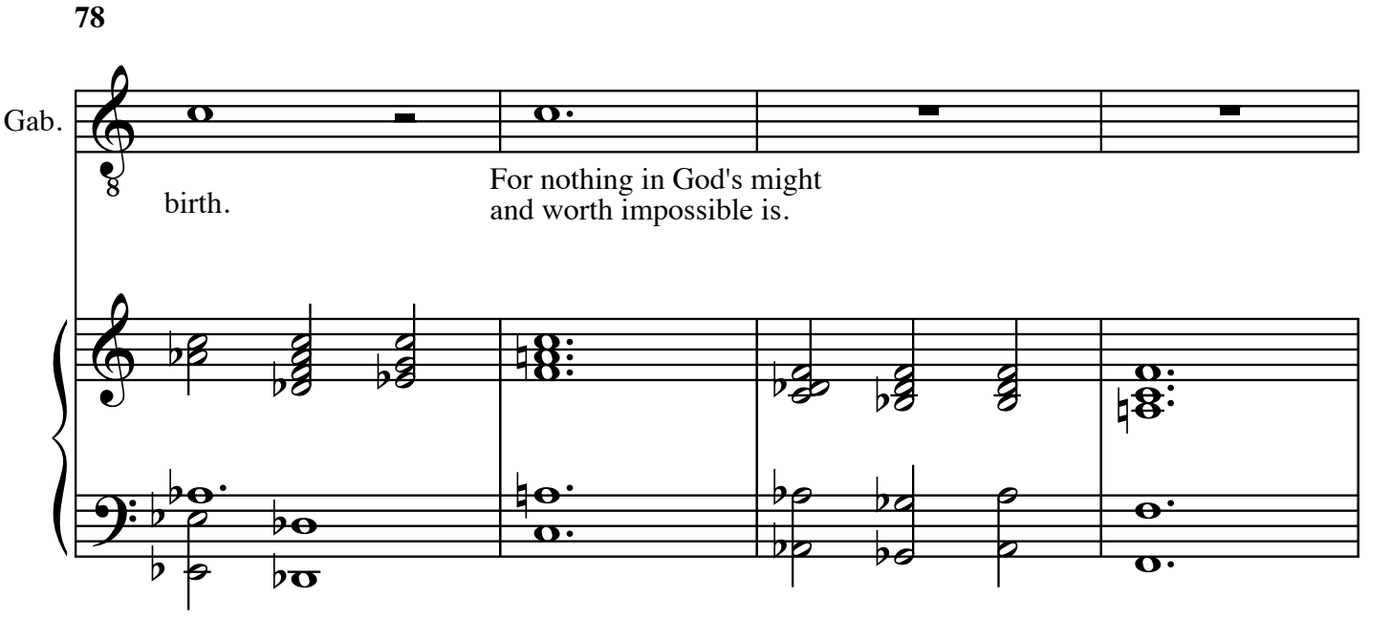

Mary
Thou art so bright, Oh! Tell me how this may be right.
Gab.
The Ho - ly

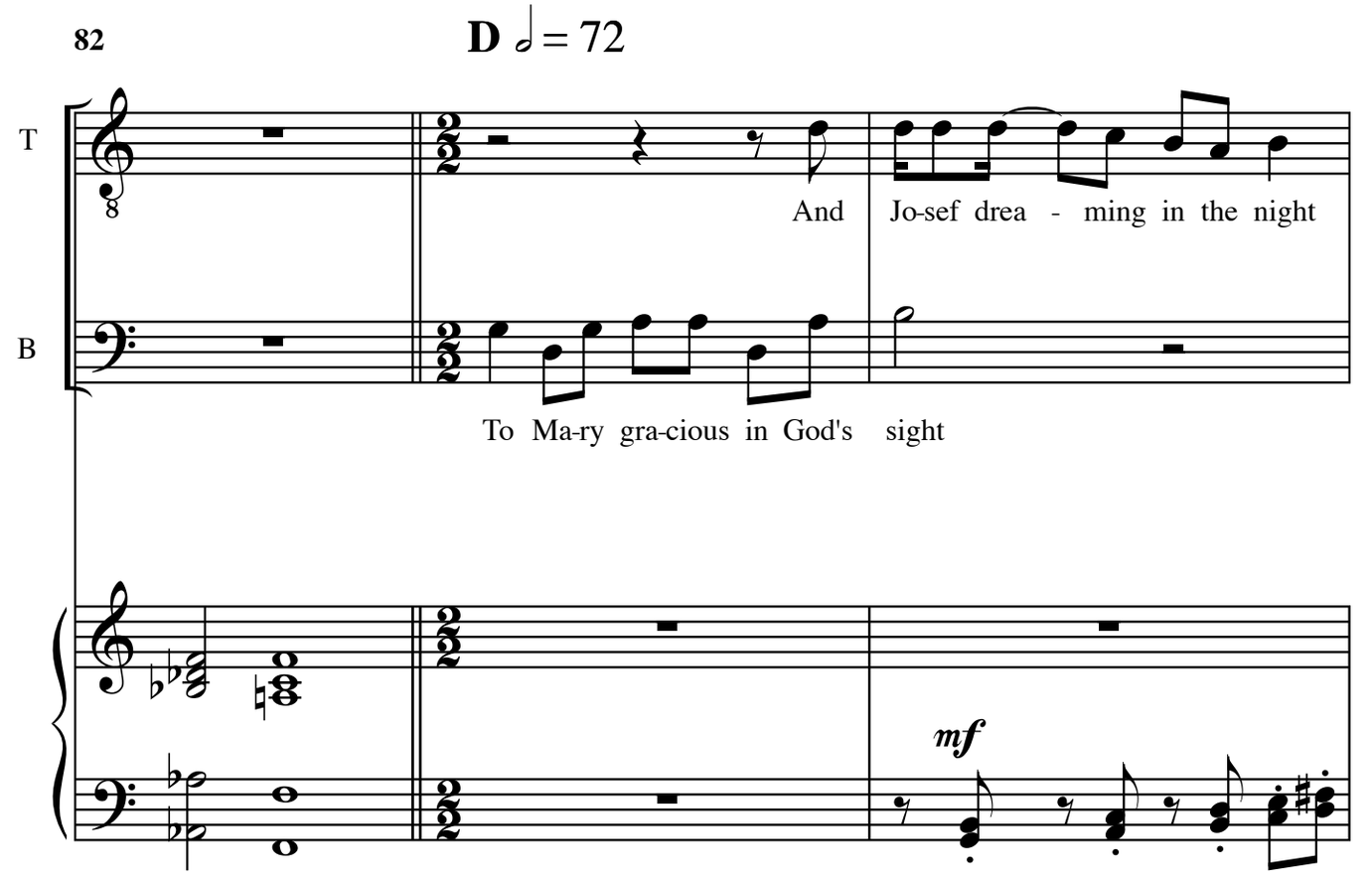
74

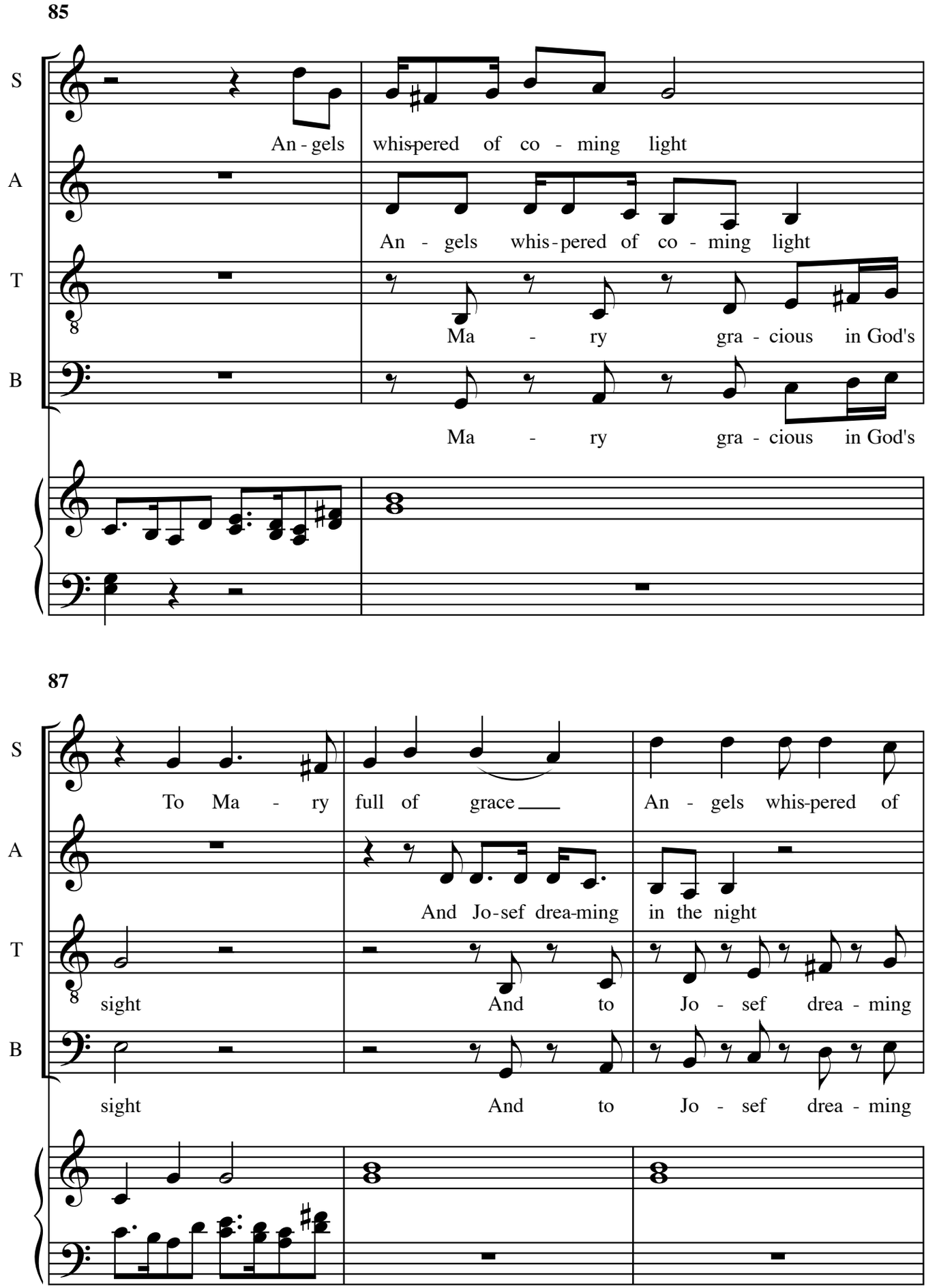

Gab.
Ghost shall in thee light from God in ma - jes - ty for

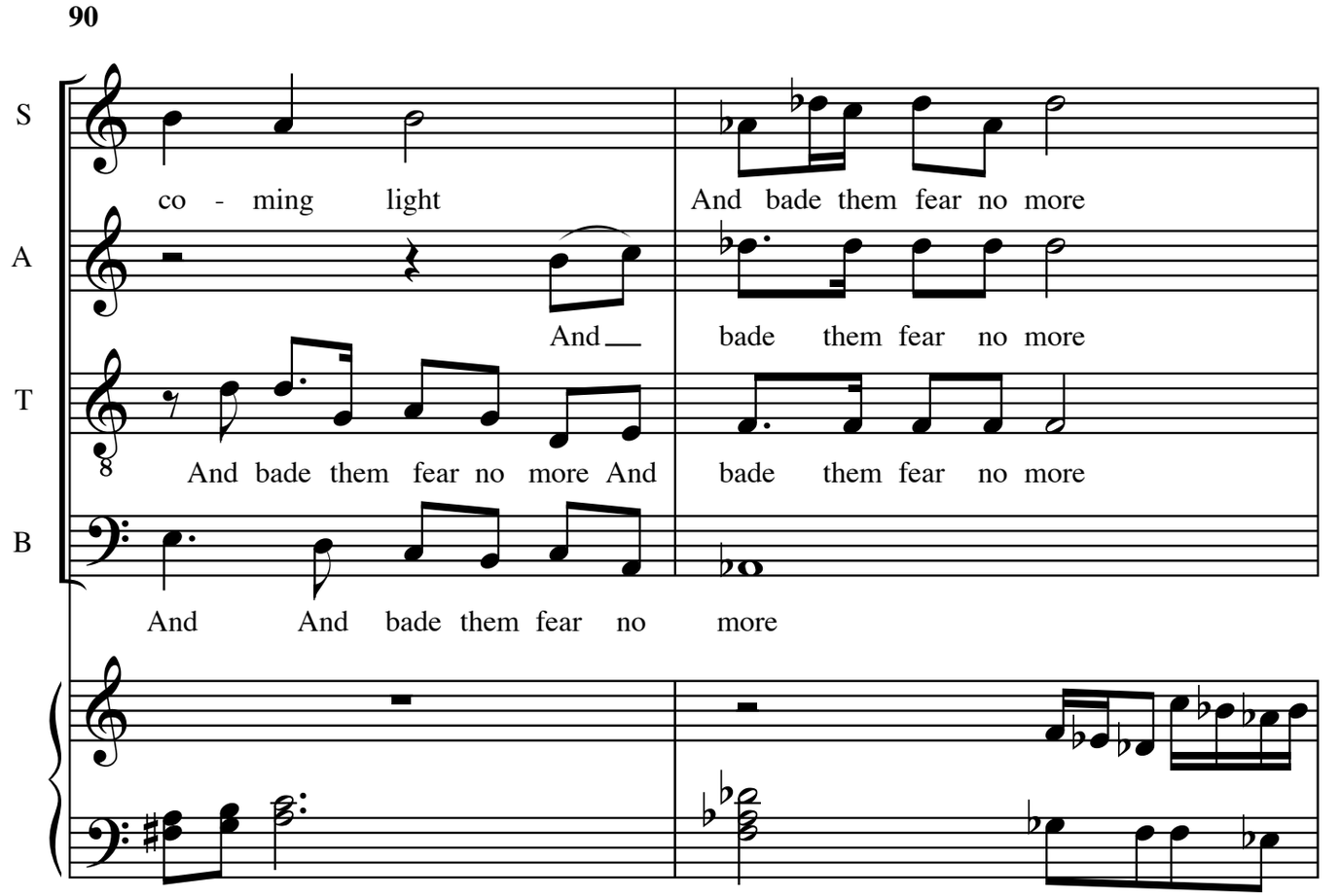
76

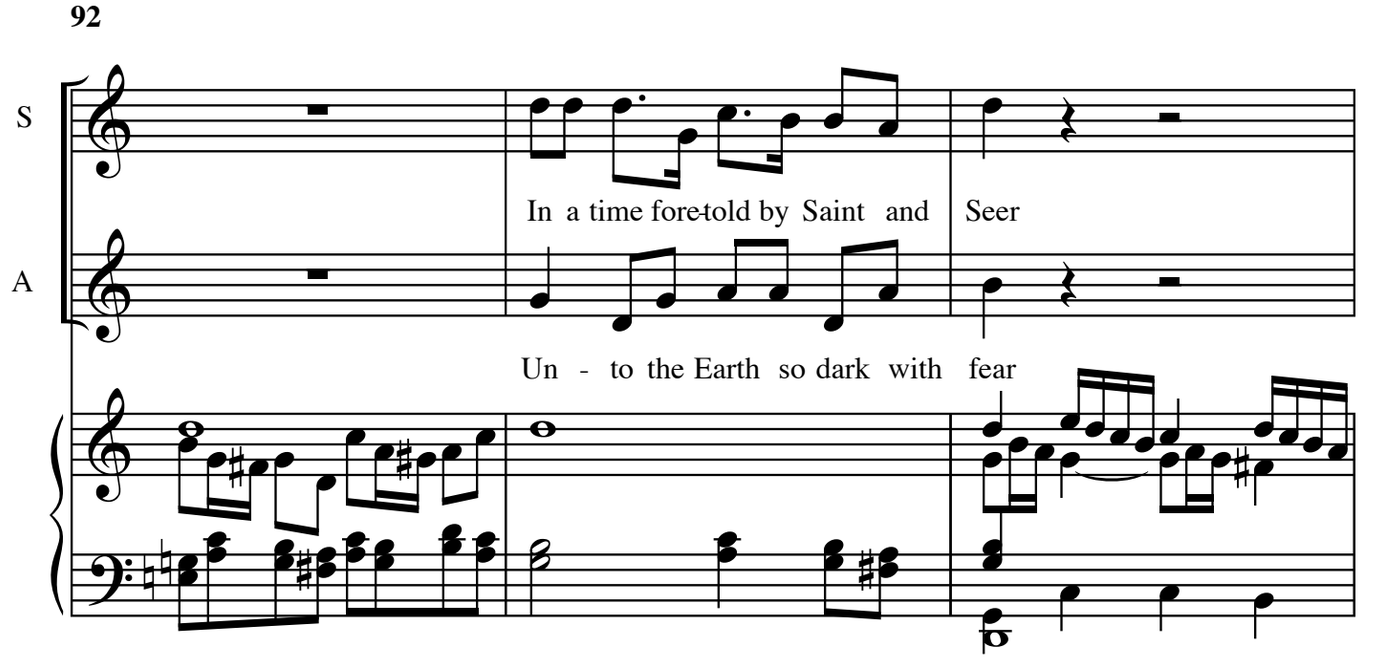

Gab.
God's own son shall come to Earth And thou Ma - ry shallt give him

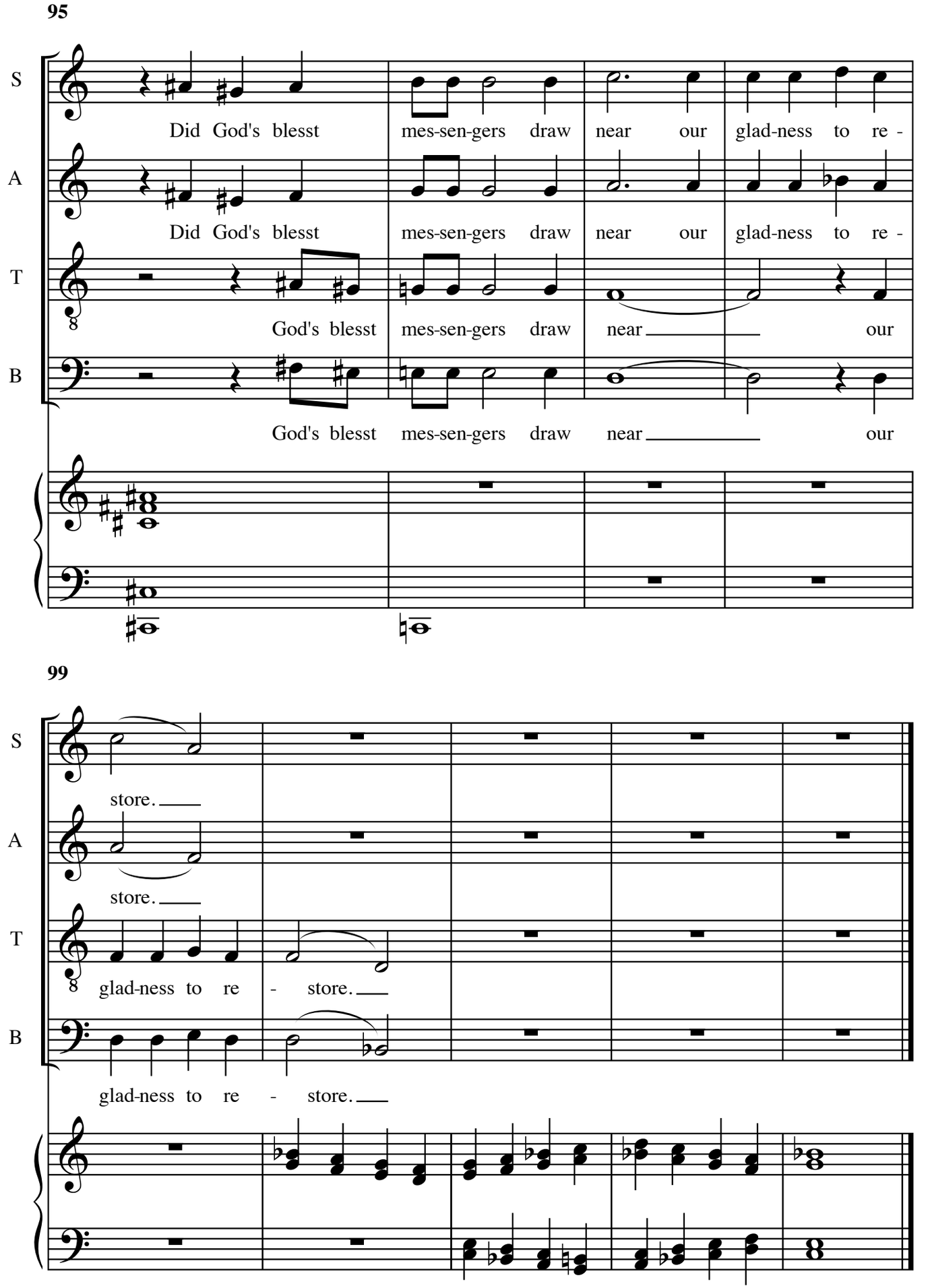

78
Gab.
birth.
For nothing in God's might
and worth impossible is.


82
D 𝅗𝅥 = 72
T
B
And Jo-sef drea - ming in the night
To Ma-ry gra-cious in God's sight
mf


85
S
An - gels whis-pered of co - ming light
A
An - gels whis - pered of co - ming light
T
Ma - ry gra - cious in God's
B
Ma - ry gra - cious in God's
87
S
To Ma - ry full of grace An - gels whis-pered of
A
And Jo-sef drea-ming in the night
T
sight And to Jo - sef drea - ming
B
sight And to Jo - sef drea - ming

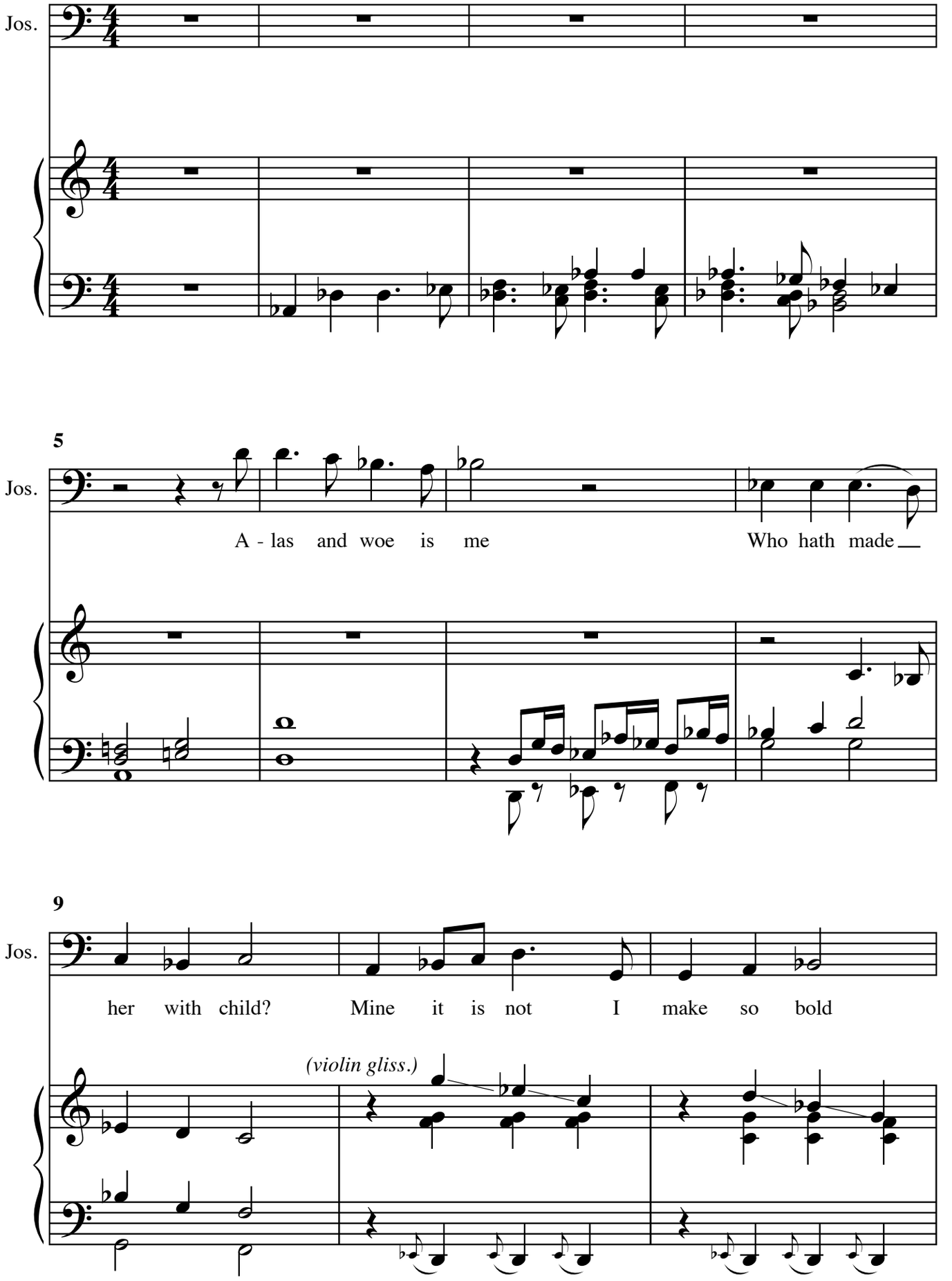

90
S
co - ming light
And bade them fear no more
A
And
bade them fear no more
T
And bade them fear no more And
bade them fear no more
B
And And bade them fear no more

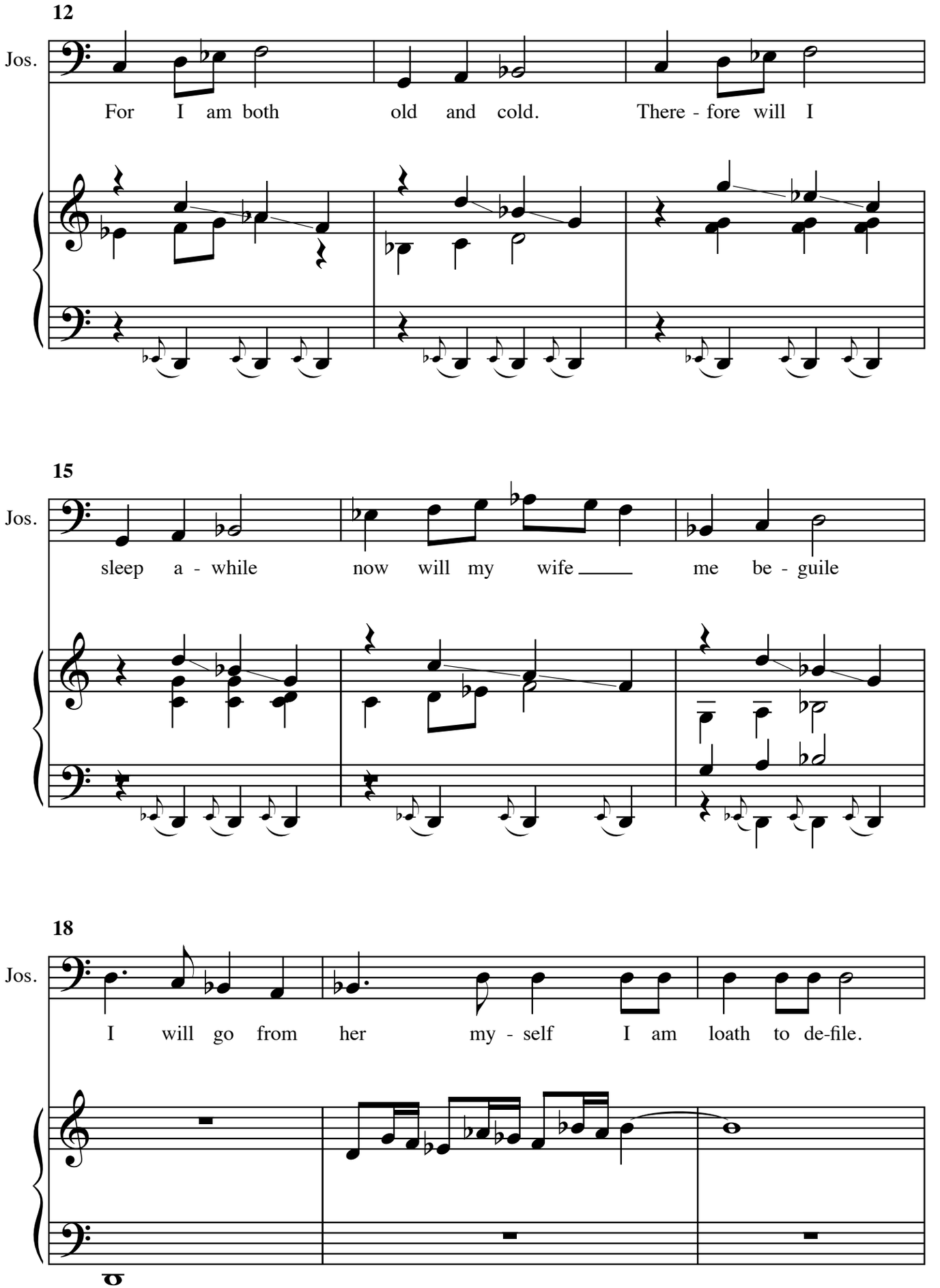

92
S
In a time fore-told by Saint and Seer
A
Un - to the Earth so dark with fear

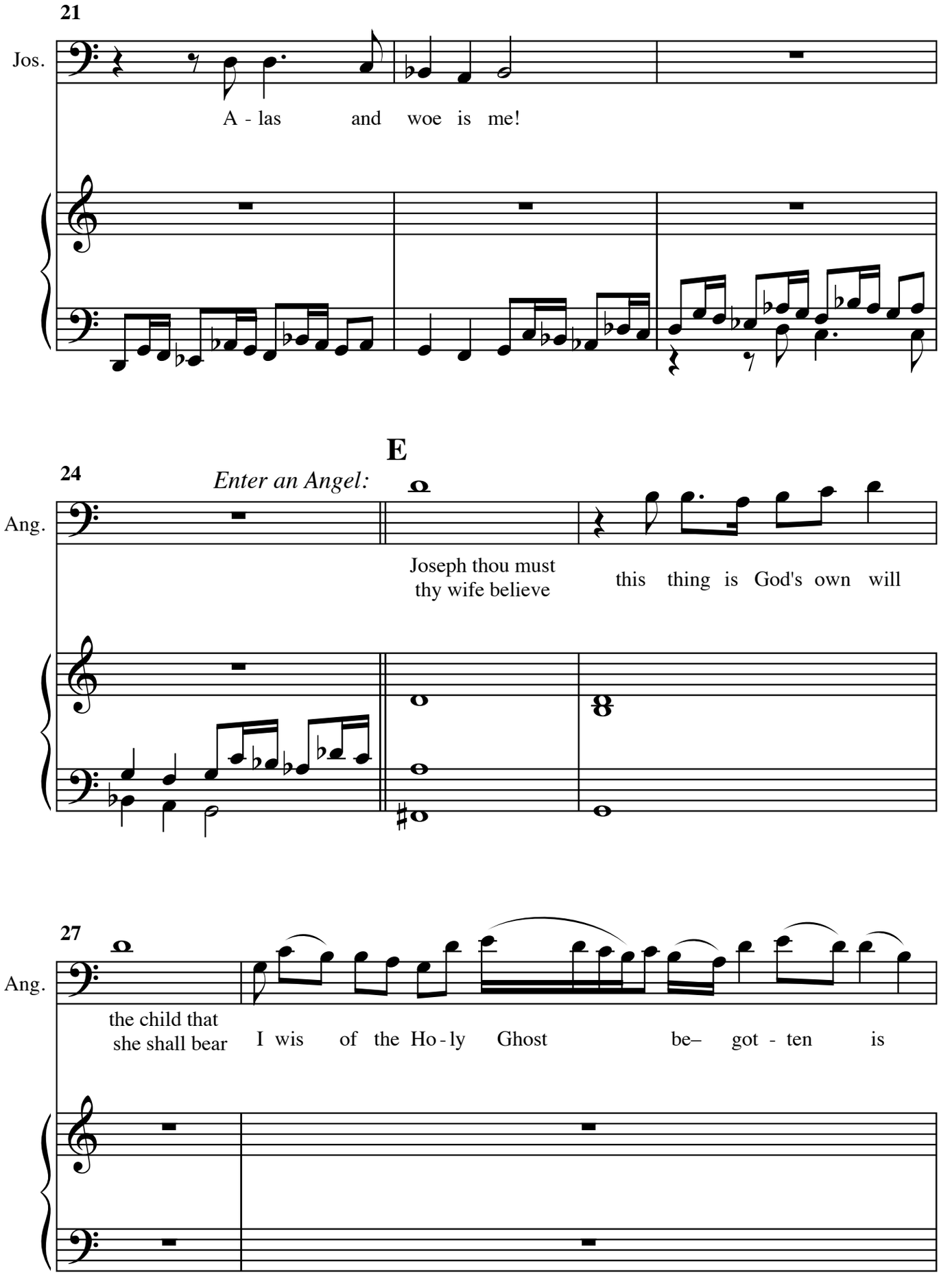

95
S
A
T
B
Did God's blesst mes-sen-gers draw near our glad-ness to re -
Did God's blesst mes-sen-gers draw near our glad-ness to re -
God's blesst mes-sen-gers draw near our
God's blesst mes-sen-gers draw near our
99
store.
store.
glad-ness to re - store.
glad-ness to re - store.

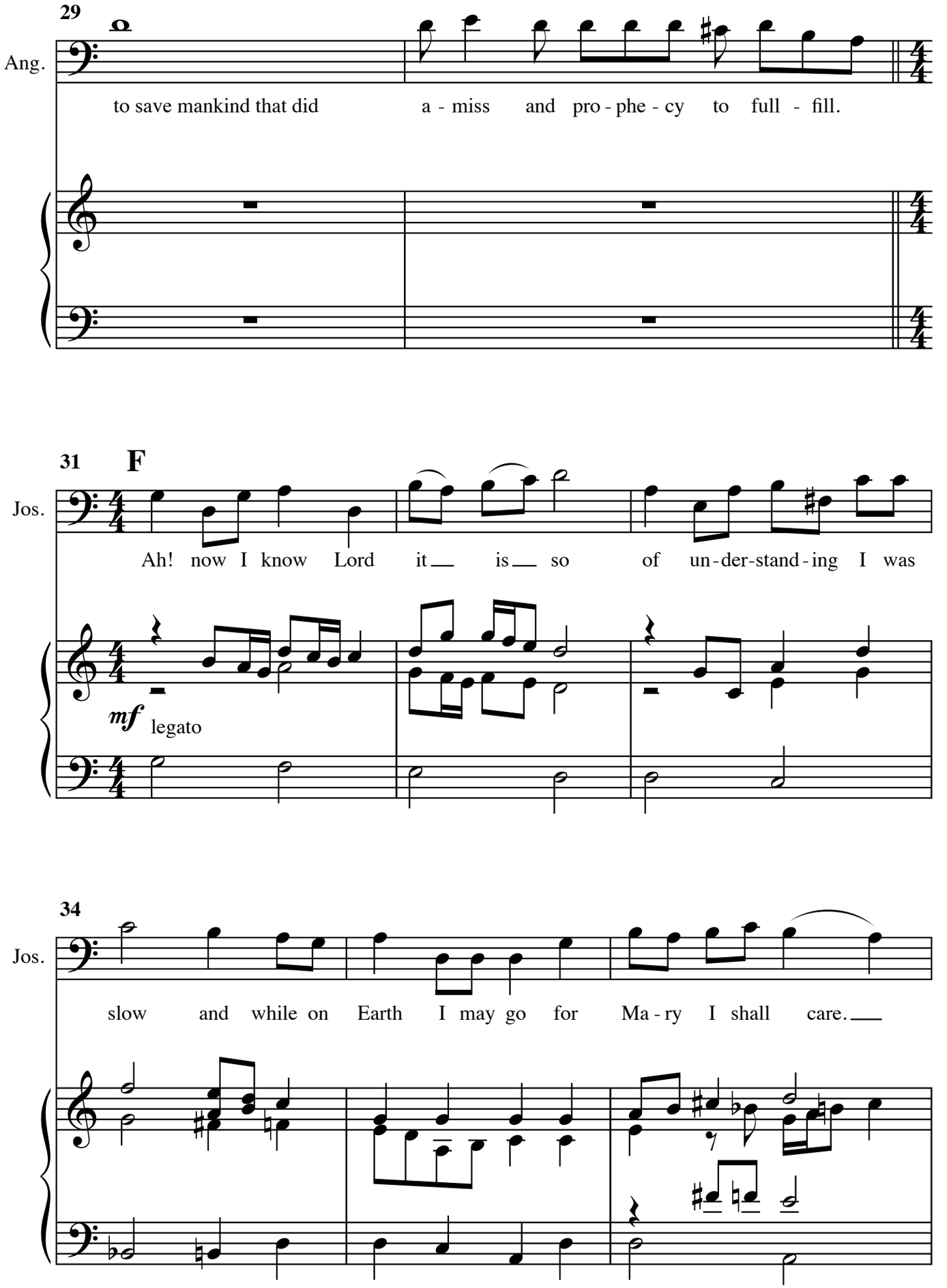
Scene 2, spritely, ♩ = 92

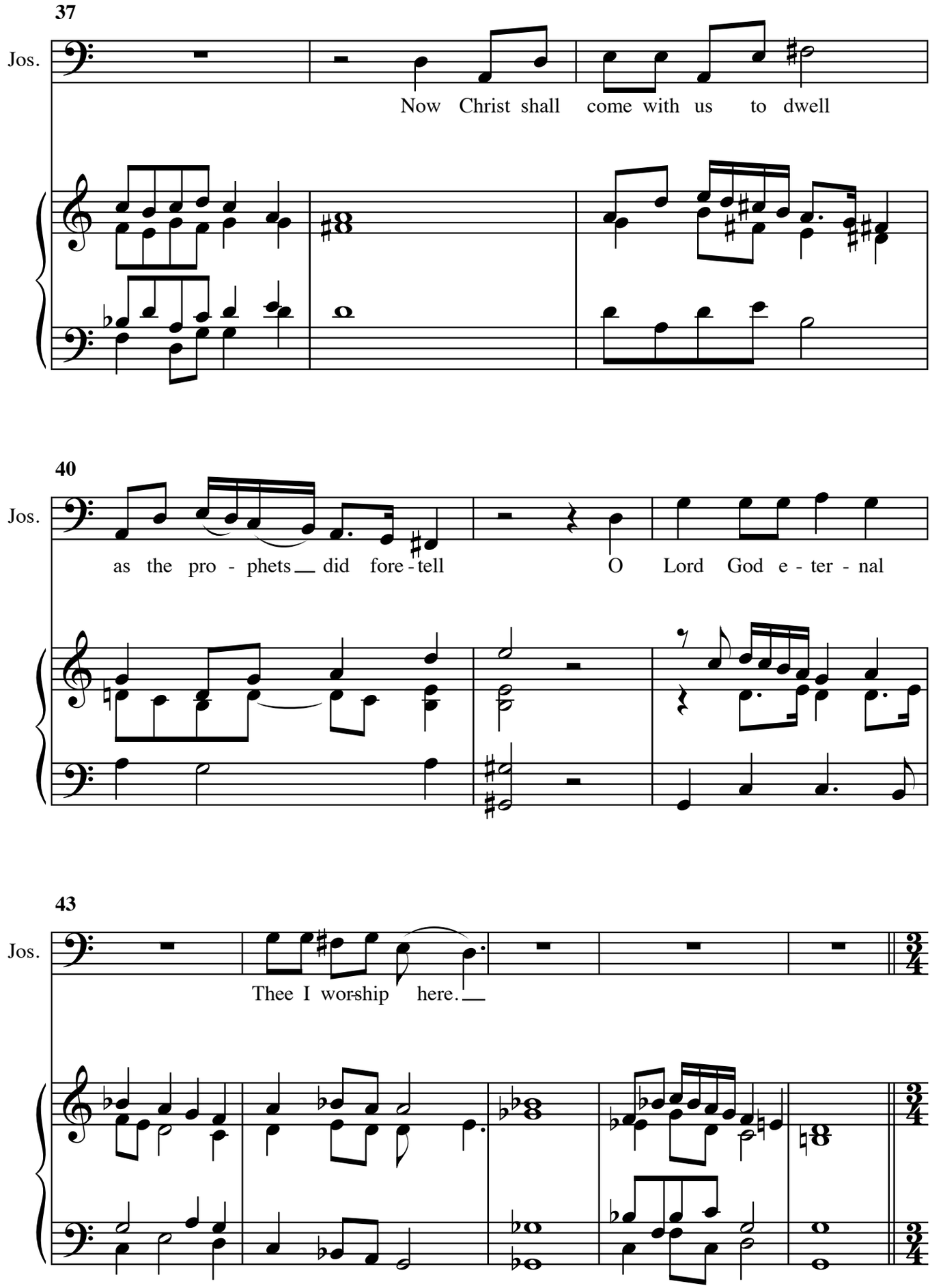
Joseph enters and finds Mary

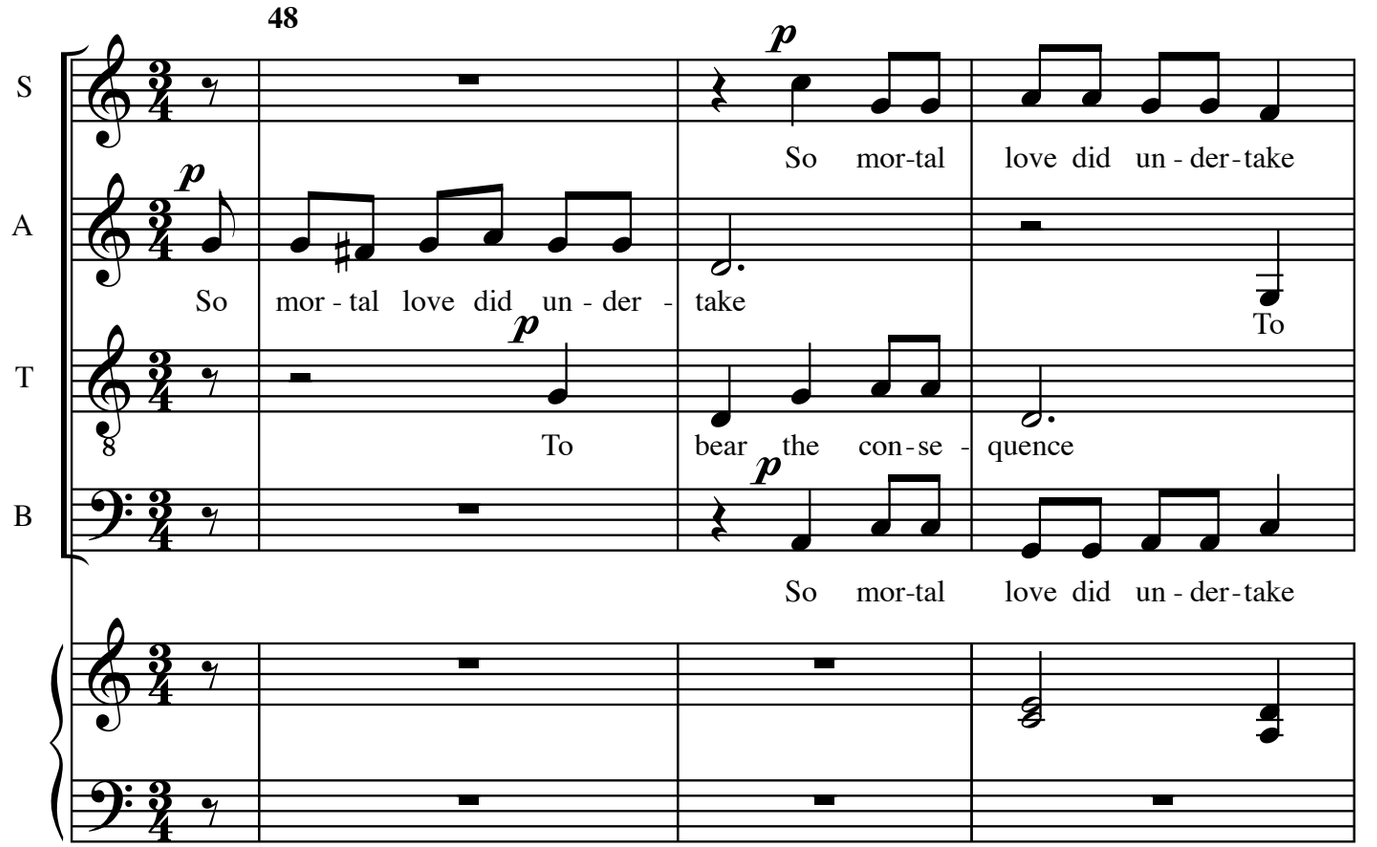


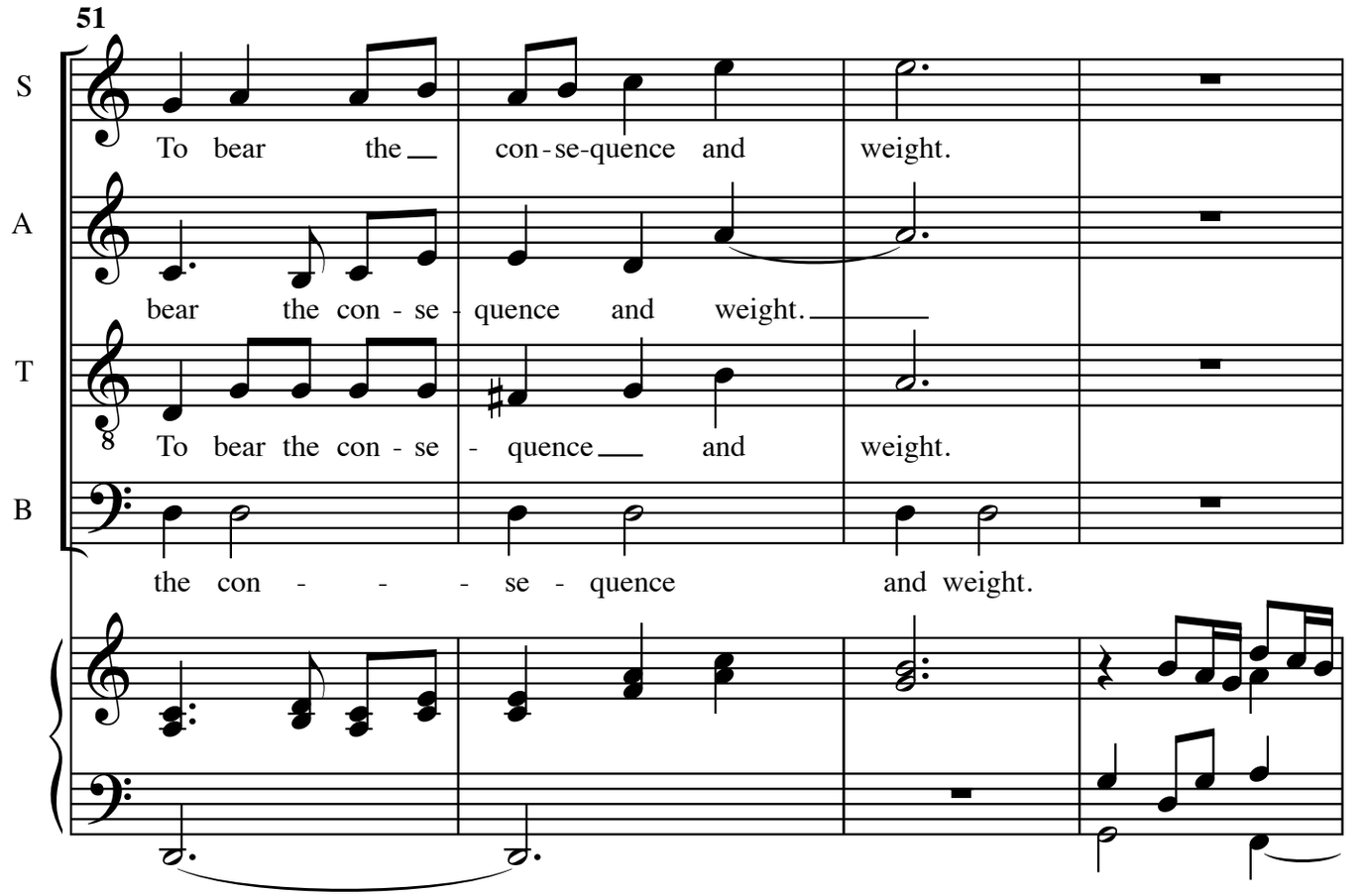

12
Jos.
For I am both old and cold. There - fore will I
15
Jos.
sleep a - while now will my wife me be - guile
18
Jos.
I will go from her my - self I am loath to de-file.

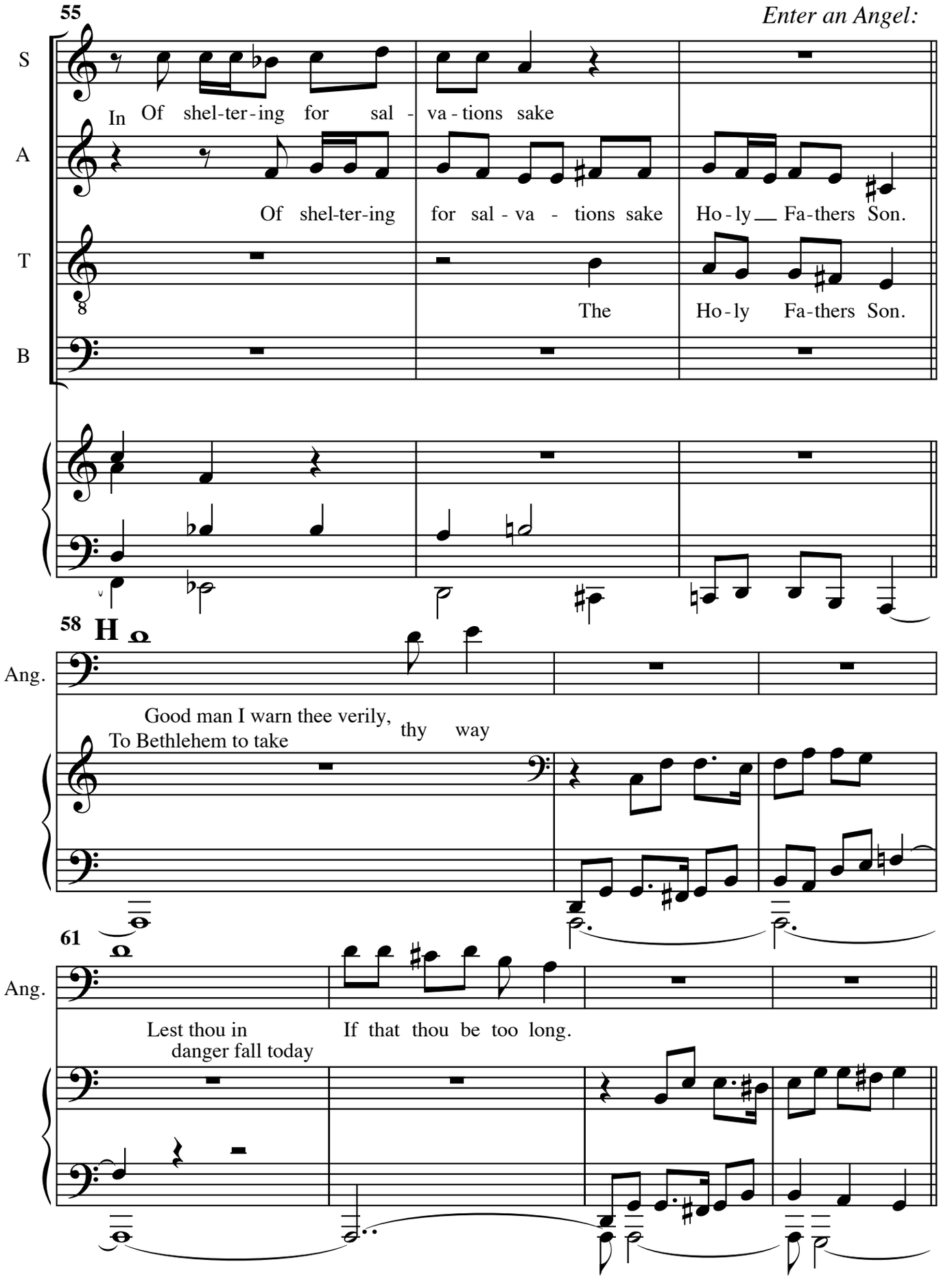

21
Jos.
A - las and woe is me!
E
24
Enter an Angel:
Ang.
Joseph thou must
thy wife believe
this thing is God's own will
27
Ang.
the child that
she shall bear
I wis of the Ho - ly Ghost be– got - ten is

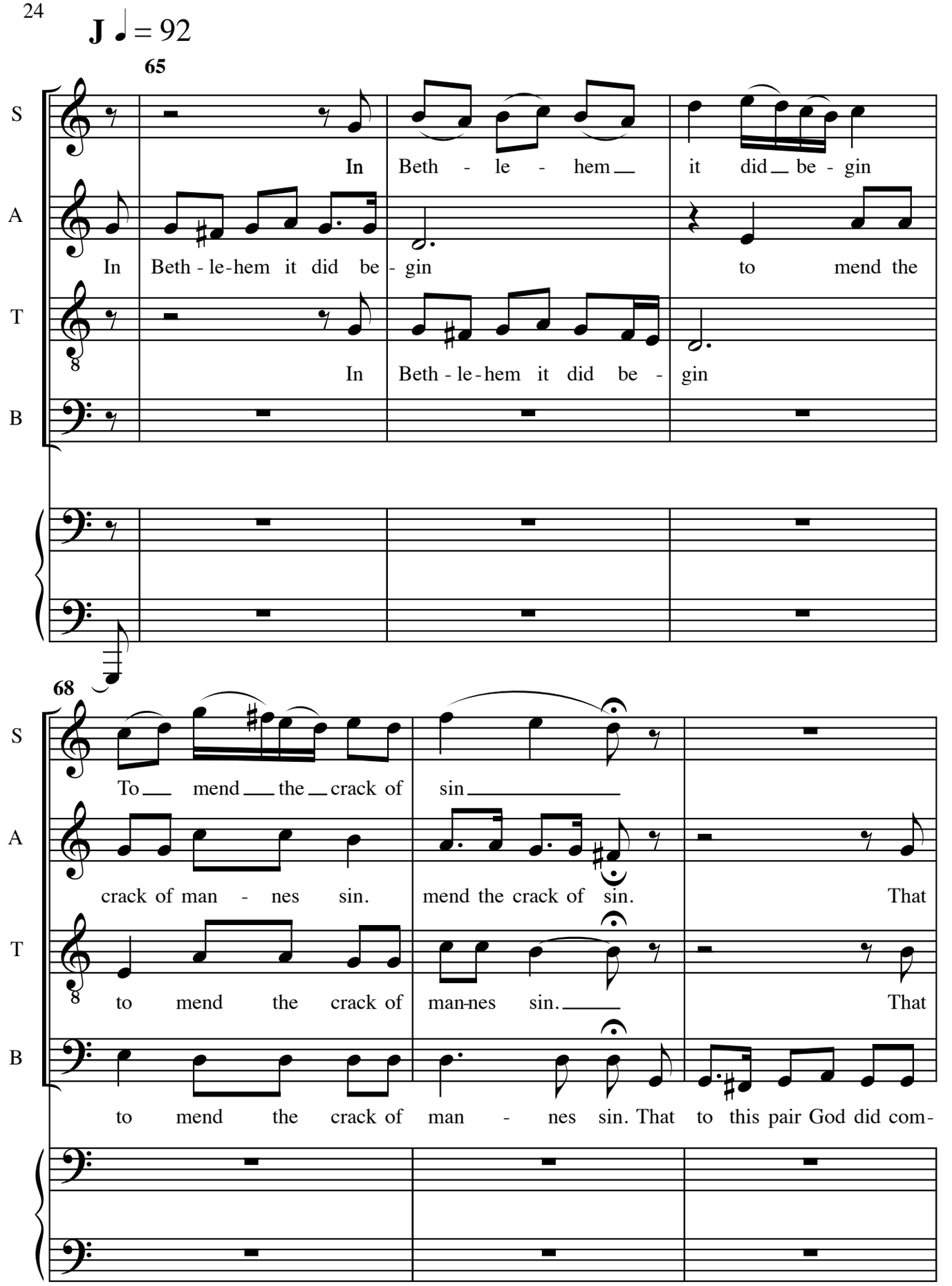

29
Ang.
to save mankind that did a - miss and pro - phe - cy to full - fill.
31
F
Jos.
Ah! now I know Lord it is so of un - der - stand - ing I was
mf
legato
34
Jos.
slow and while on Earth I may go for Ma - ry I shall care.

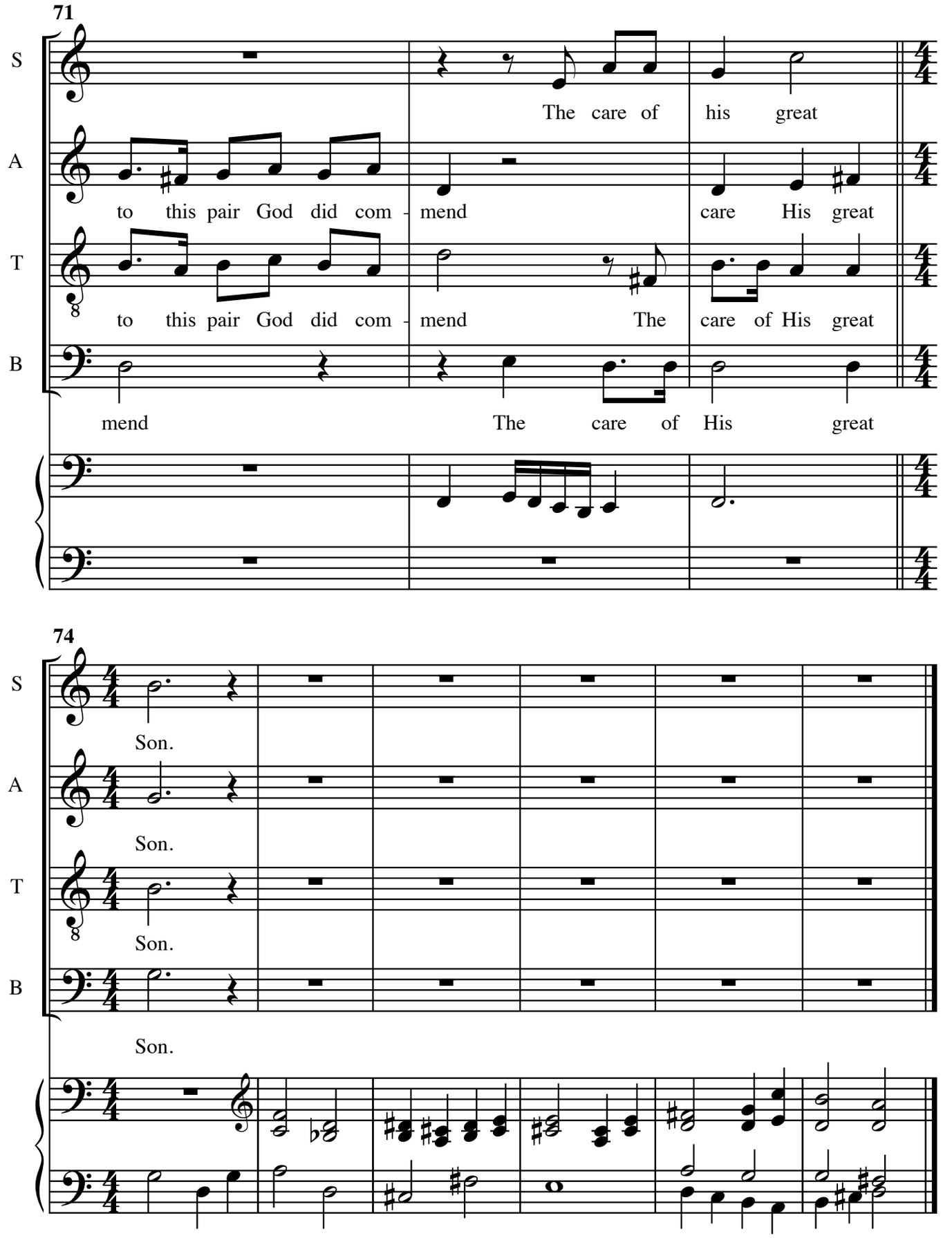

37
Jos.
Now Christ shall come with us to dwell
40
Jos.
as the pro - phets did fore - tell O Lord God e - ter - nal
43
Jos.
Thee I wor-ship here.


48
S
A
T
B
p
So mor-tal love did un-der-take
So mor - tal love did un - der - take
To
To bear the con-se - quence
So mor-tal love did un - der-take


51
S
A
T
B
To bear the con-se-quence and weight.
bear the con - se - quence and weight.
To bear the con - se - quence and weight.
the con - - - se - quence and weight.

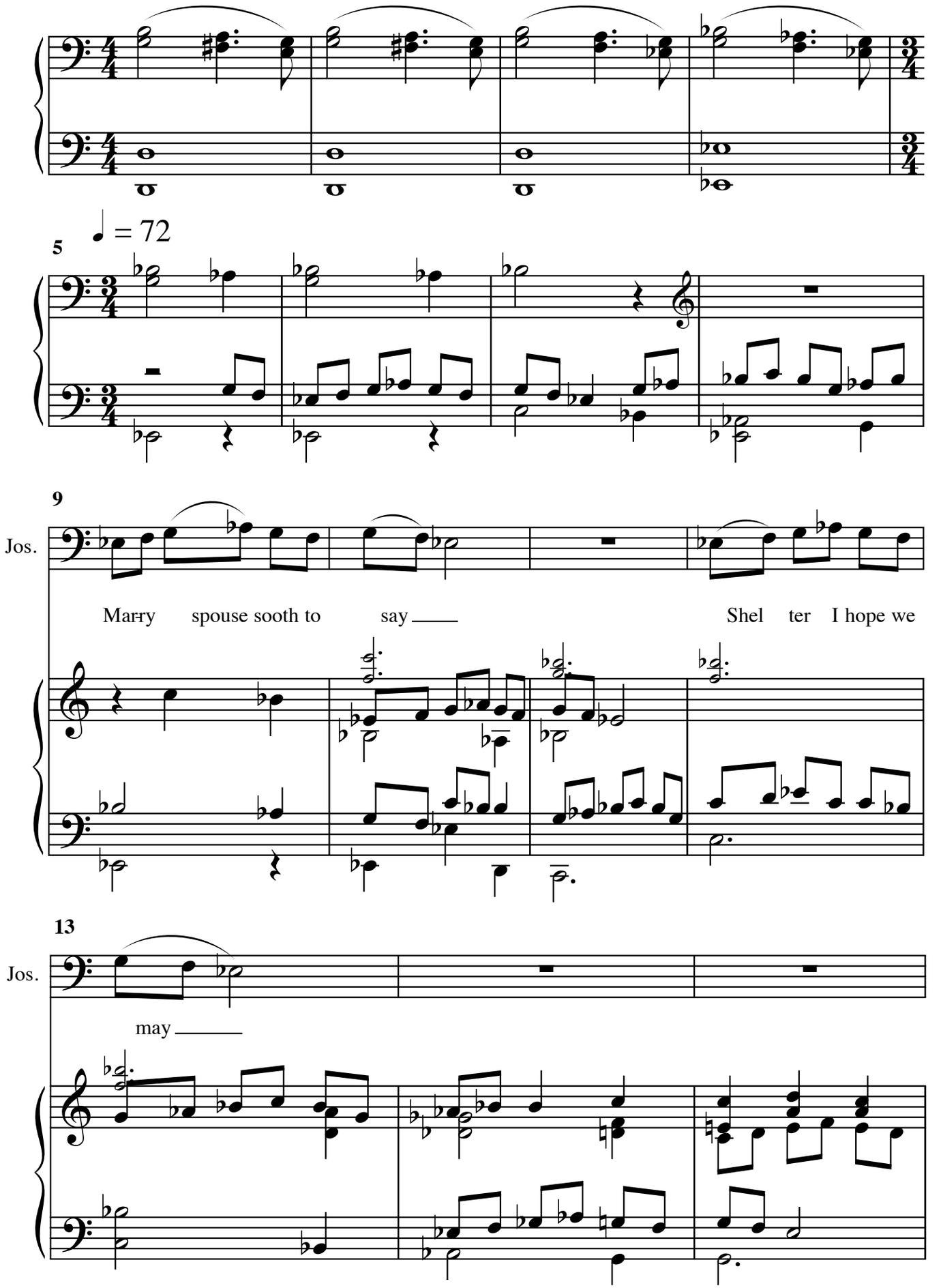

55
Enter an Angel:
S
In Of shel-ter-ing for sal - va-tions sake
A
Of shel-ter-ing for sal - va - tions sake Ho-ly Fa-thers Son.
T
The Ho-ly Fa-thers Son.
B
58
Ang.
Good man I warn thee verily, thy way
To Bethlehem to take
61
Ang.
Lest thou in danger fall today
If that thou be too long.

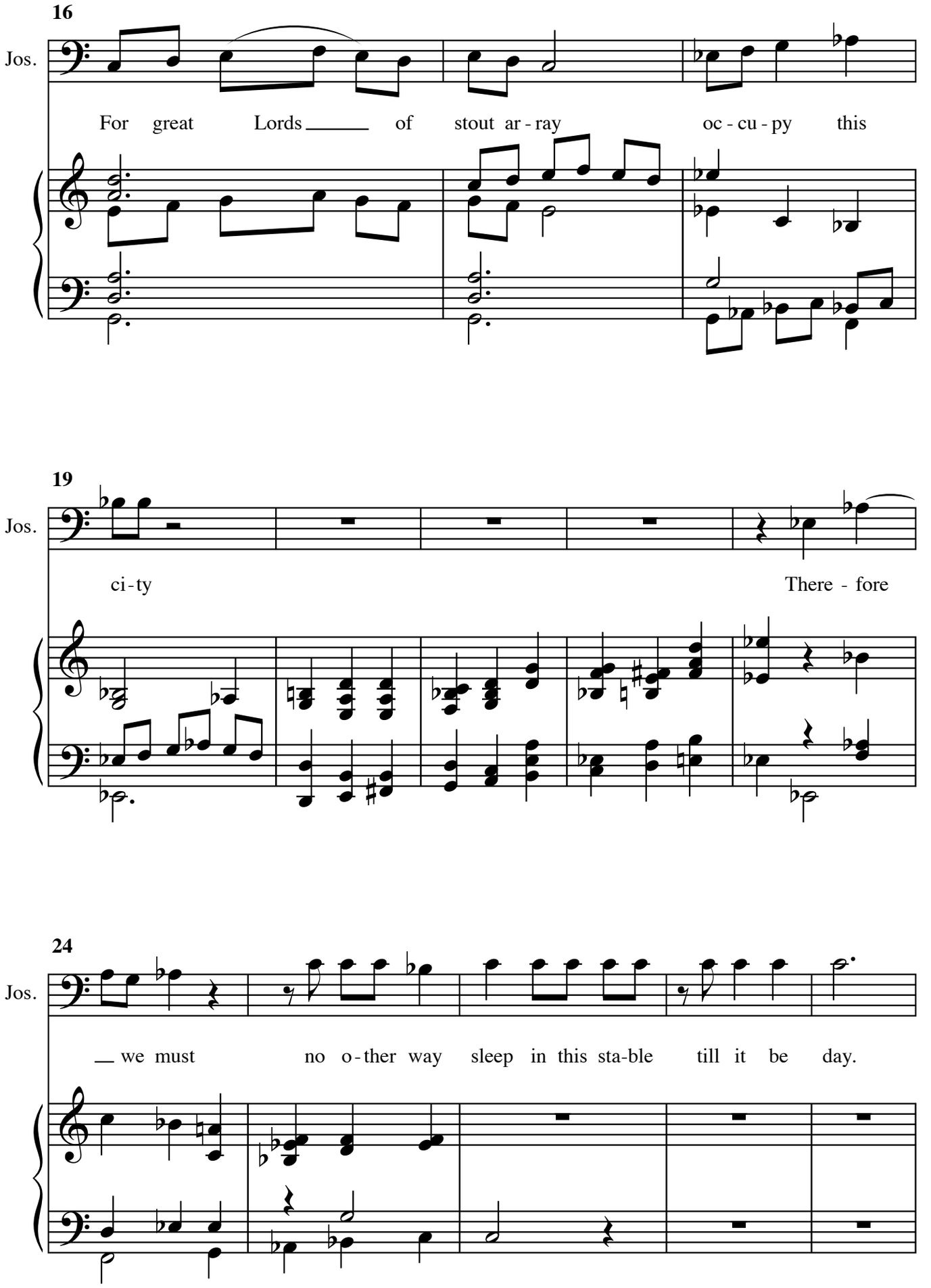

♩ = 92
65
S
A
T
B
In Beth - le - hem it did be - gin
In Beth - le - hem it did be - gin to mend the
In Beth - le - hem it did be - gin
68
To mend the crack of sin
crack of man - nes sin. mend the crack of sin. That
to mend the crack of man-nes sin. That
to mend the crack of man - nes sin. That to this pair God did com-


71
S
A
T
B
The care of his great
to this pair God did com - mend care His great
to this pair God did com - mend The care of His great
mend The care of His great
74
Son.
Son.
Son.
Son.

Scene 3

Mary and Joseph, same tempo as carol




16
Jos.
For great Lords of stout ar - ray oc - cu - py this
19
Jos.
ci - ty There - fore
24
Jos.
we must no o - ther way sleep in this sta-ble till it be day.

K

29

Mary: Help me down then my dear for I hope my hour is

Jos.

34

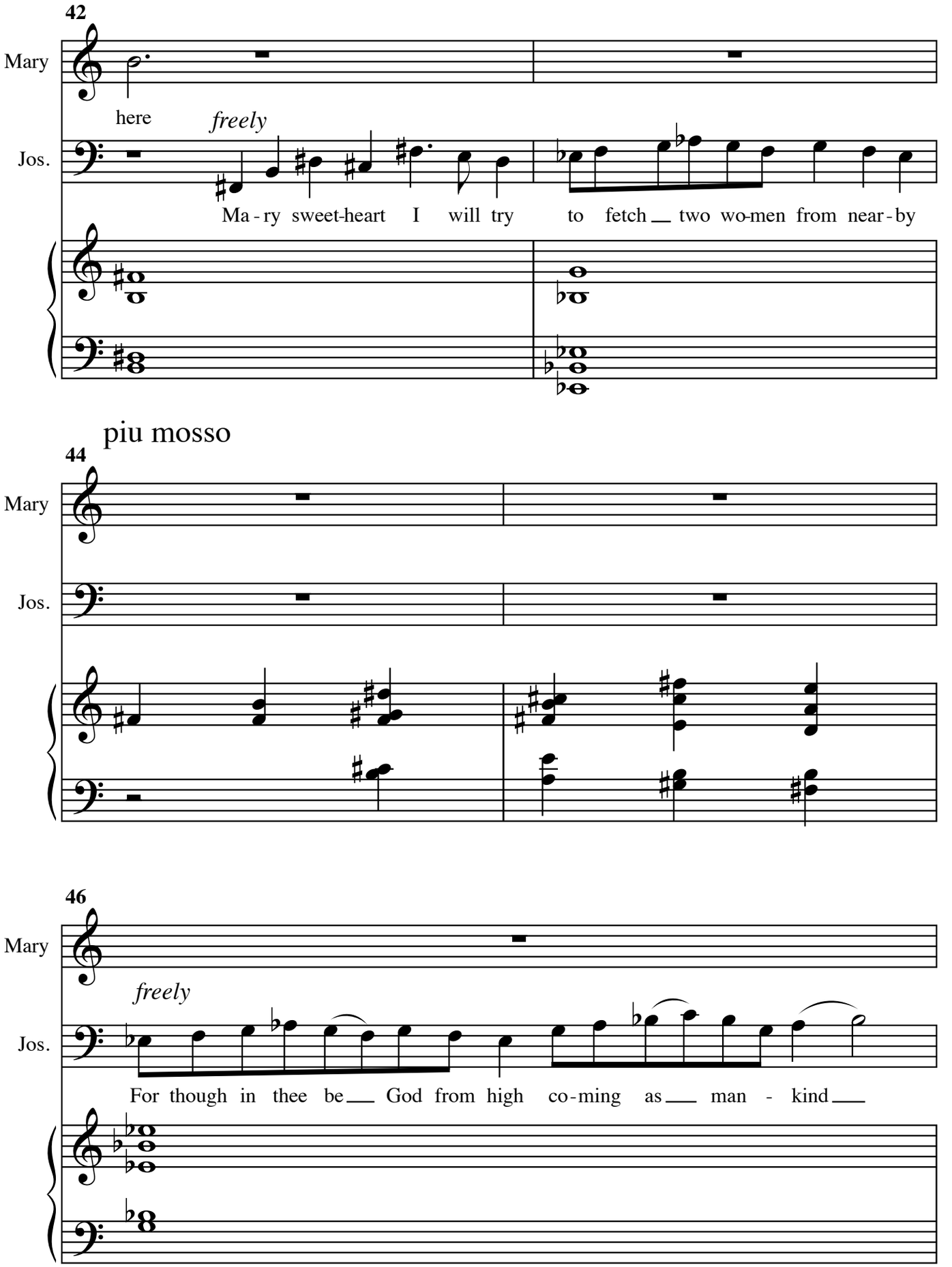
Mary: near Christ in this sta - ble that is here ___

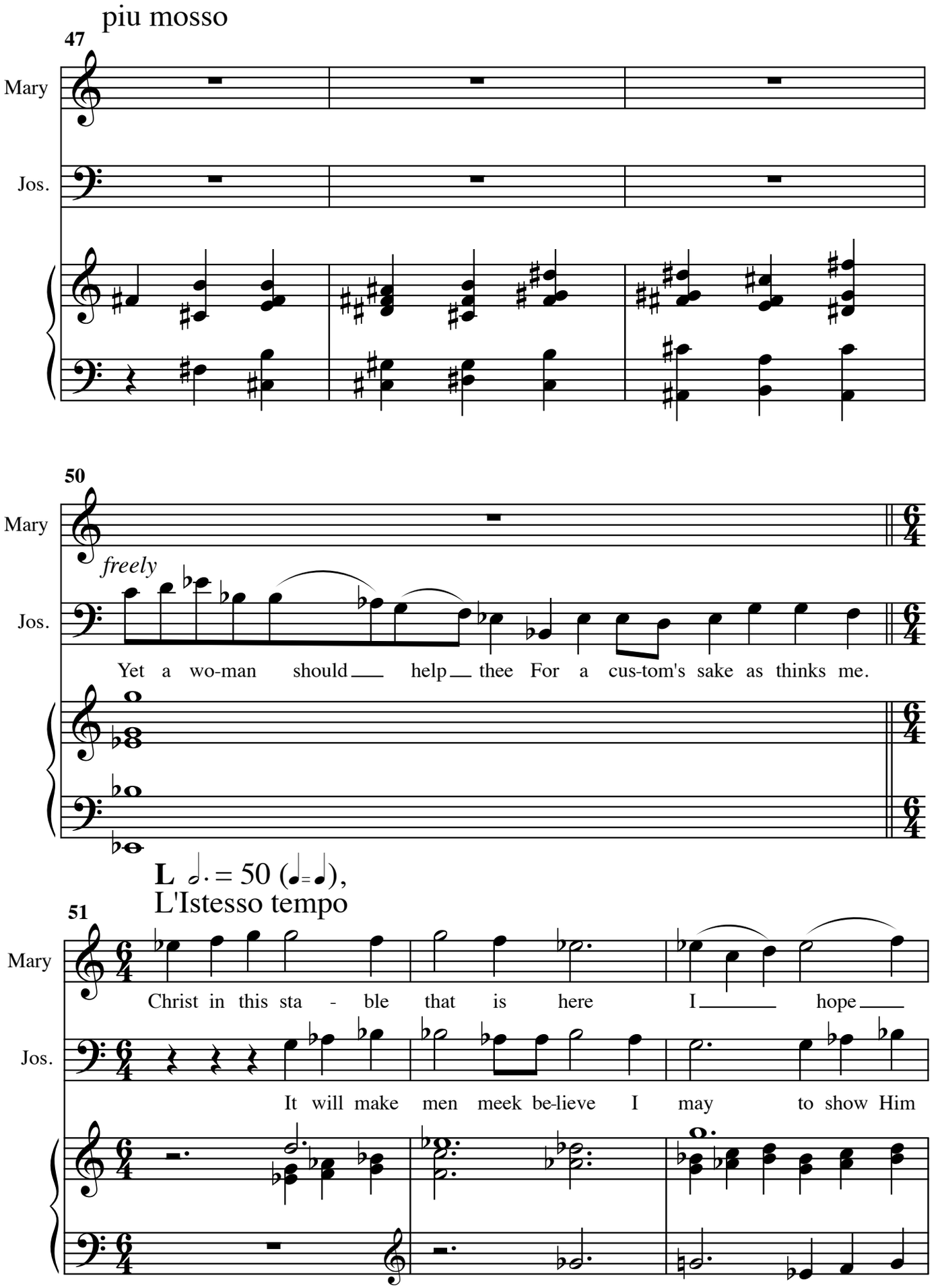
Jos.: It will ___ make men meek be-lieve I may to

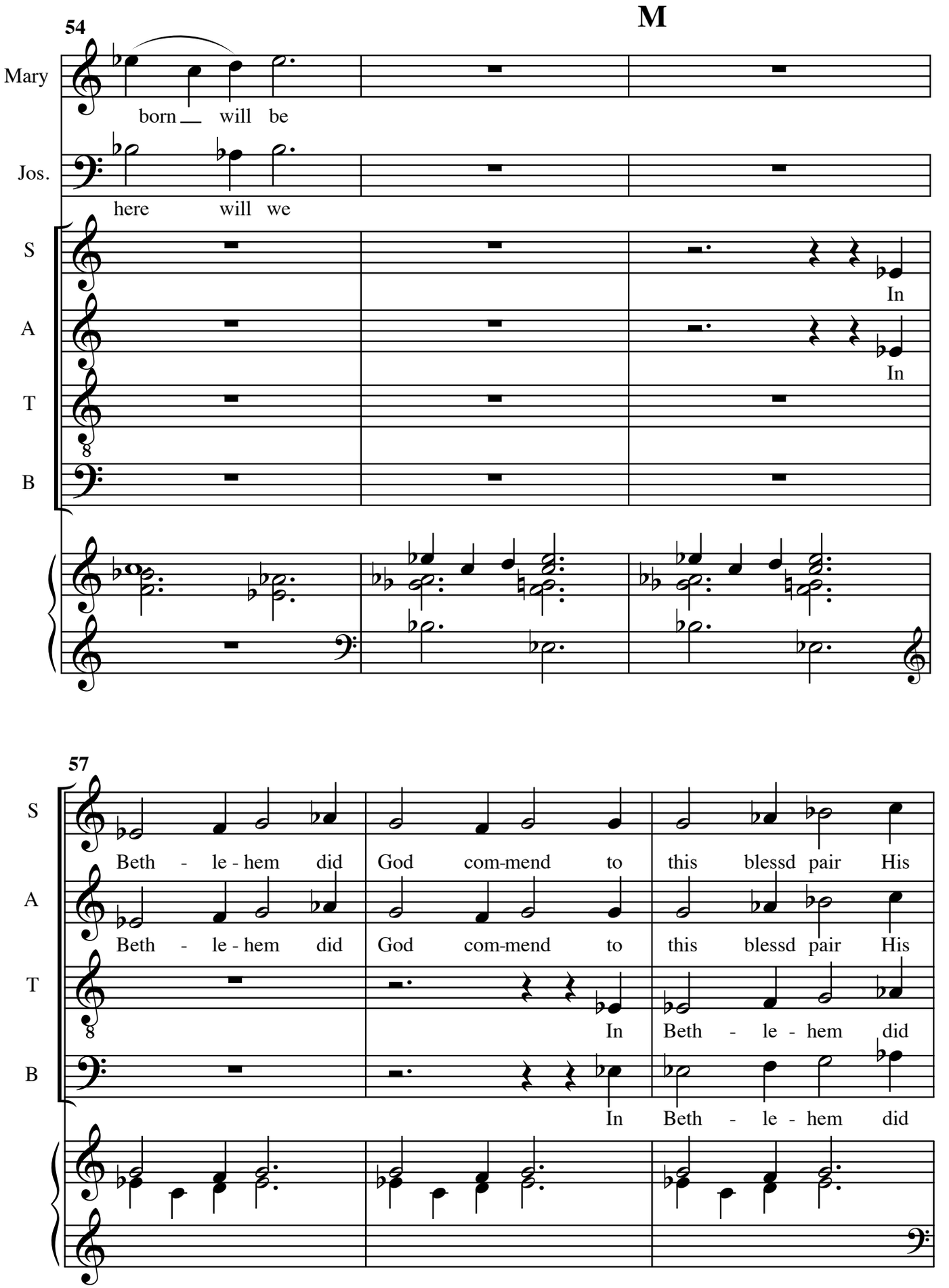
39

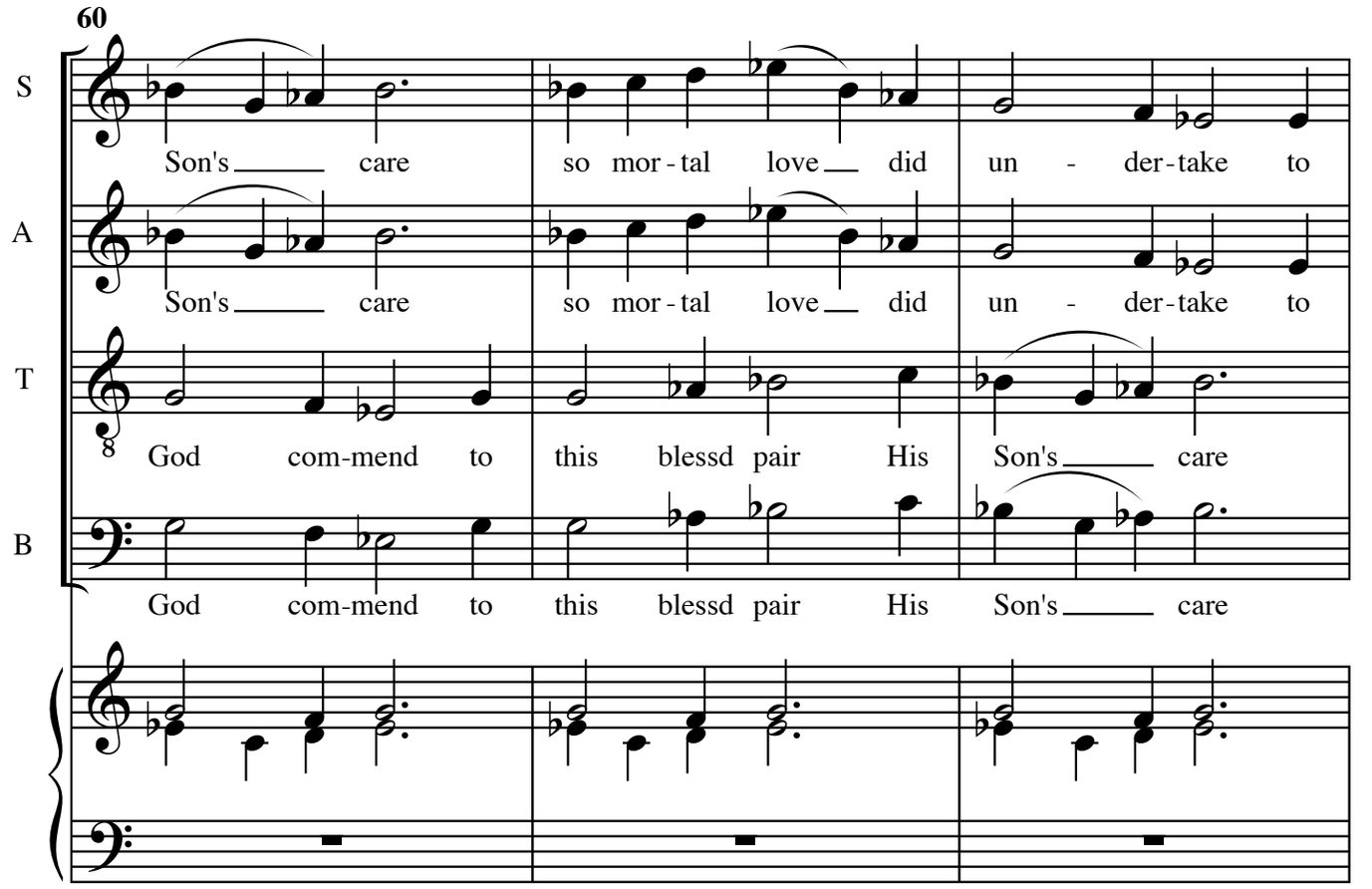
Mary: ___ Christ in this sta - ble

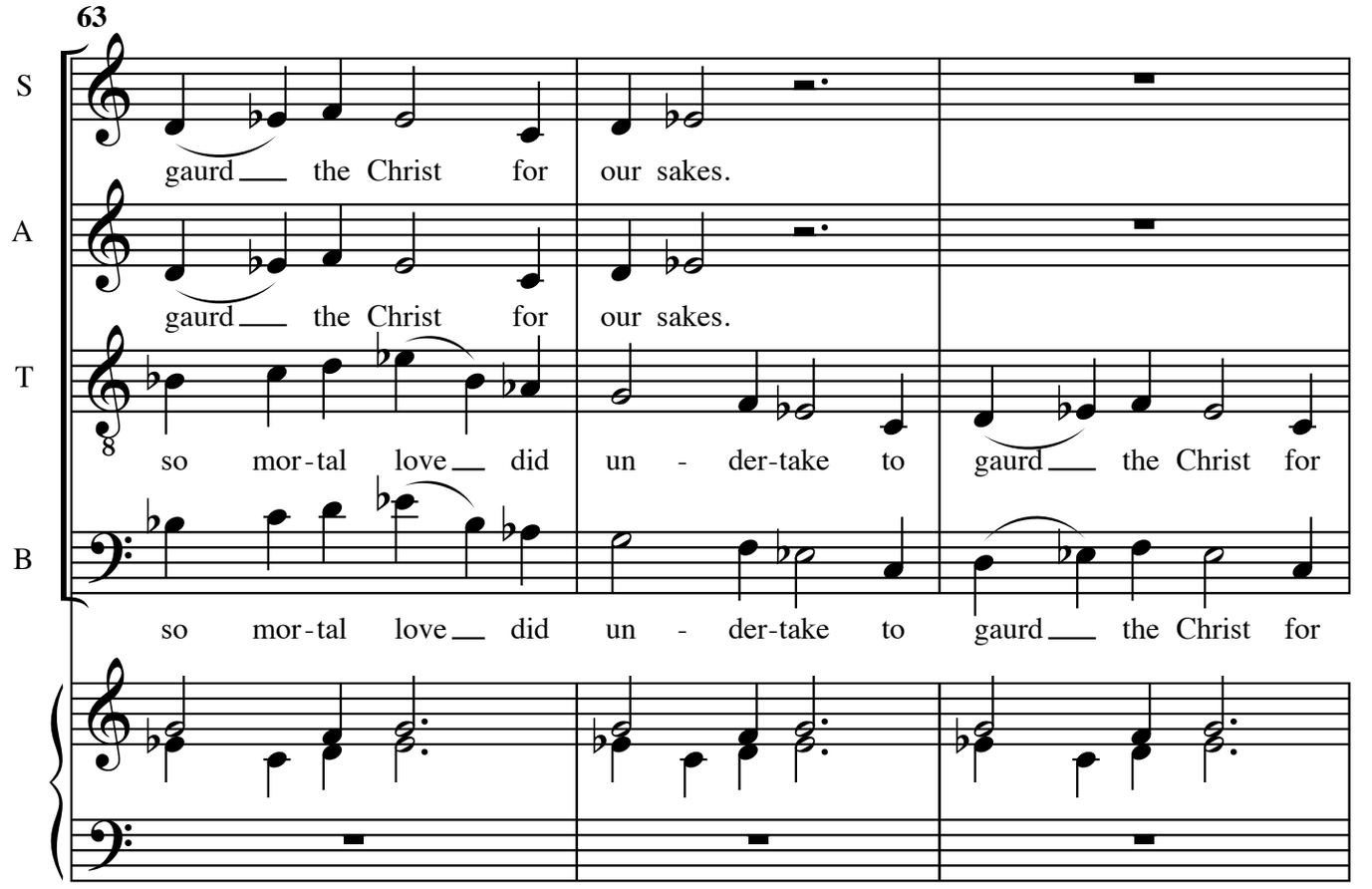
Jos.: show him here will we (we) ___

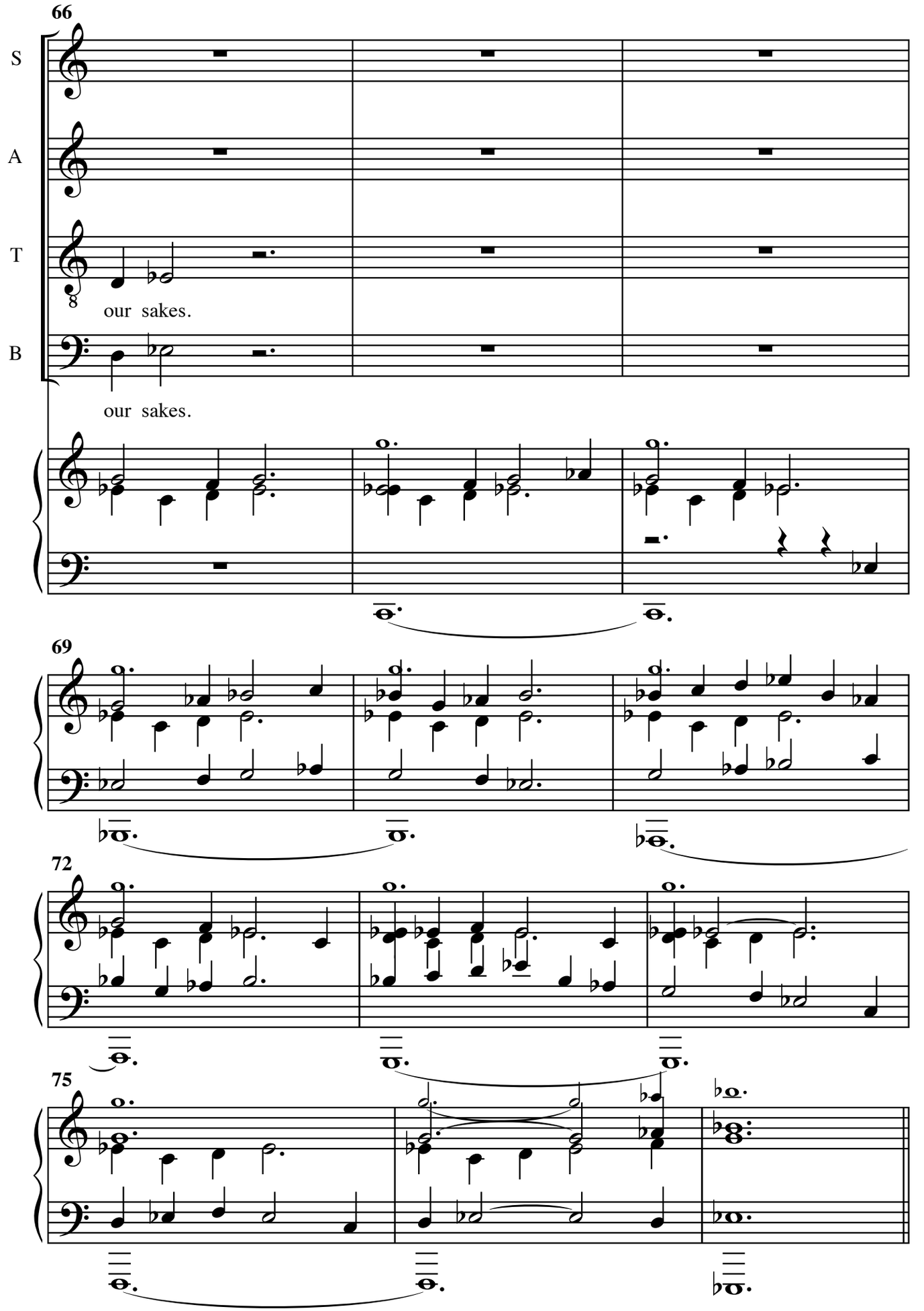

42
Mary
here
freely
Jos.
Ma - ry sweet-heart I will try to fetch two wo-men from near - by
piu mosso
44
Mary
Jos.
46
Mary
freely
Jos.
For though in thee be God from high co - ming as man - kind

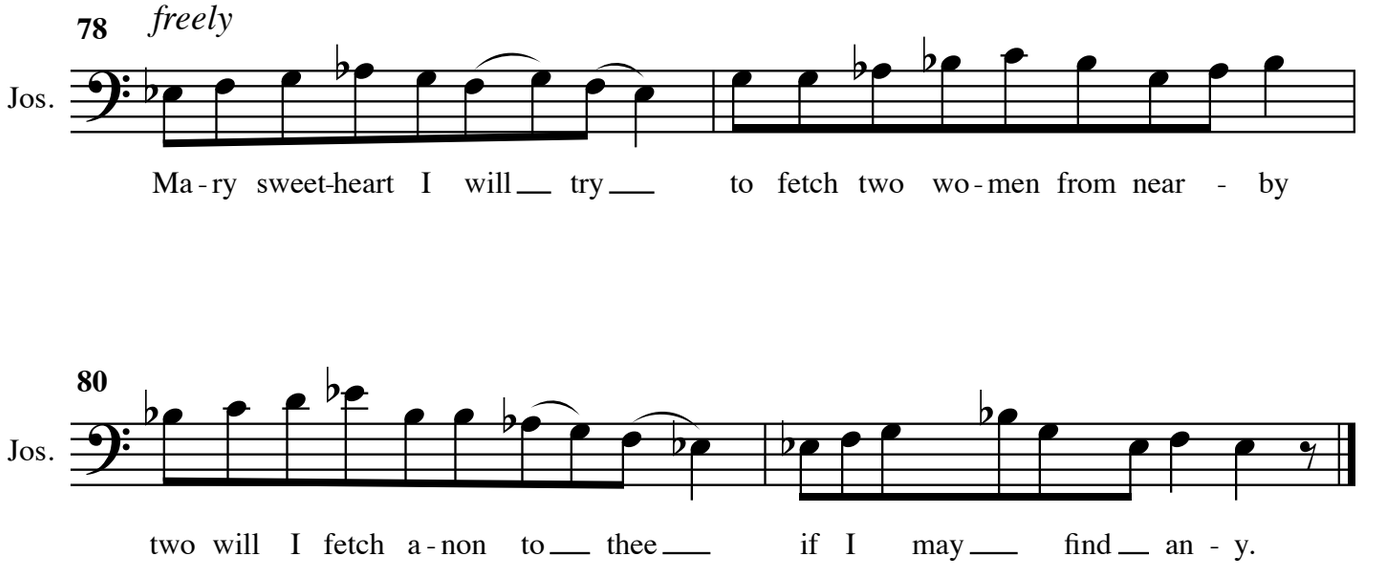

piu mosso
47
Mary
Jos.
50
Mary
freely
Jos.
Yet a wo-man should help thee For a cus-tom's sake as thinks me.
L
= 50 (=),
L'Istesso tempo
51
Mary
Christ in this sta - ble that is here I hope
Jos.
It will make men meek be-lieve I may to show Him


M
54
Mary
born will be
Jos.
here will we
S
A
T
B
In
In
57
Beth - le - hem did God com-mend to this blessd pair His
Beth - le - hem did God com-mend to this blessd pair His
In Beth - le - hem did
In Beth - le - hem did

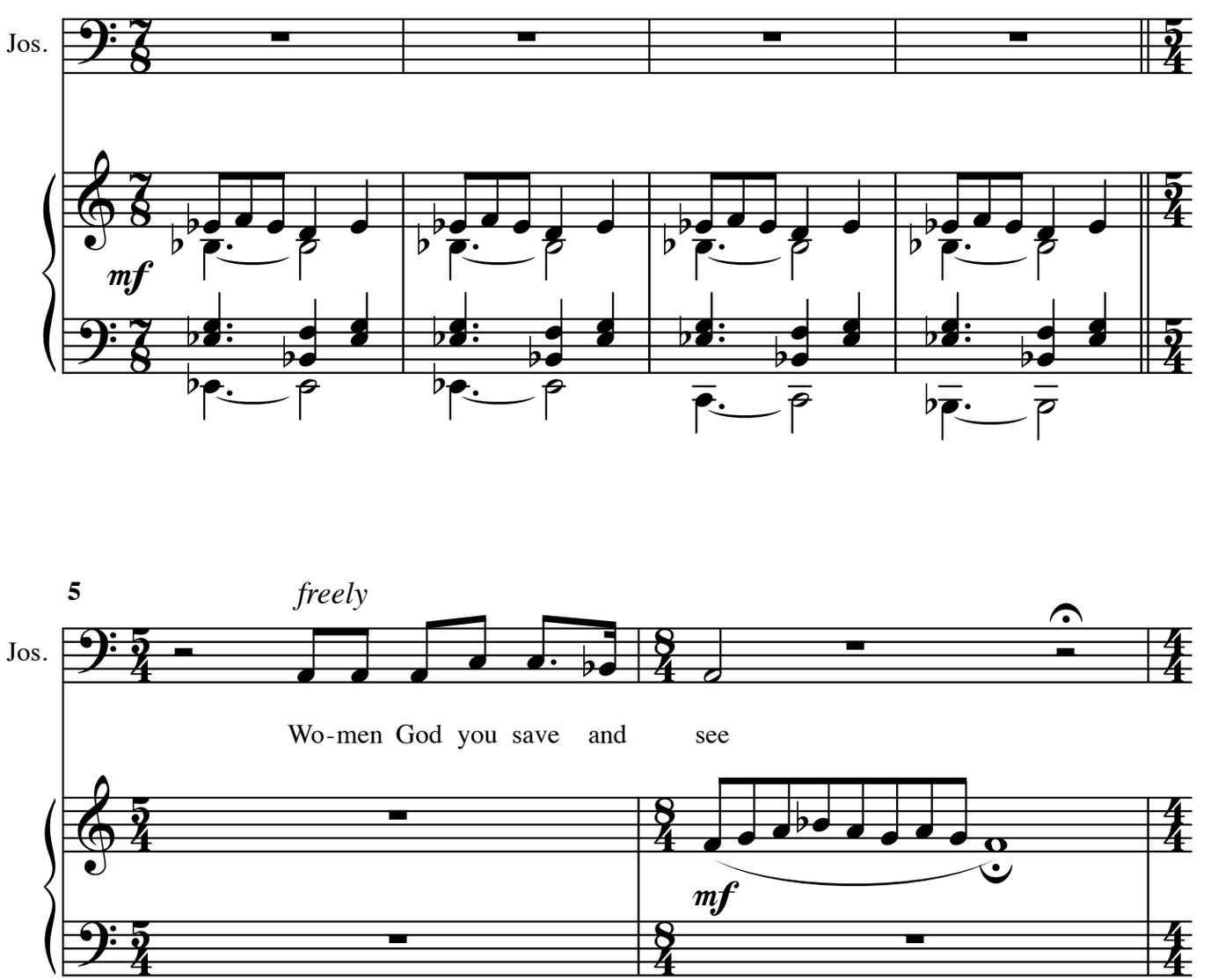

60
S
Son's care so mor-tal love did un-der-take to
A
Son's care so mor-tal love did un-der-take to
T
God com-mend to this blessd pair His Son's care
B
God com-mend to this blessd pair His Son's care

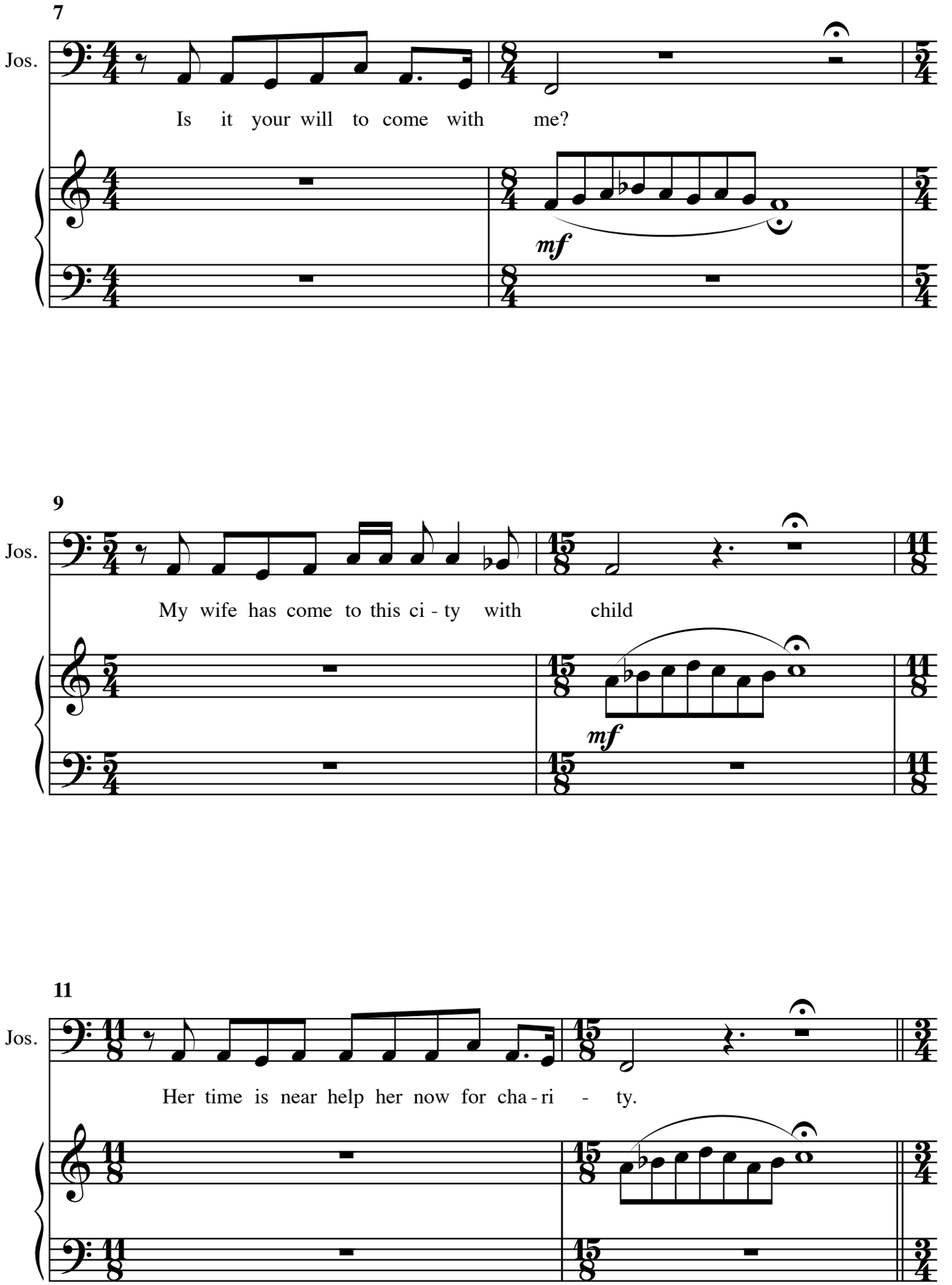

63
S
gaurd the Christ for our sakes.
A
gaurd the Christ for our sakes.
T
so mor-tal love did un-der-take to gaurd the Christ for
B
so mor-tal love did un-der-take to gaurd the Christ for

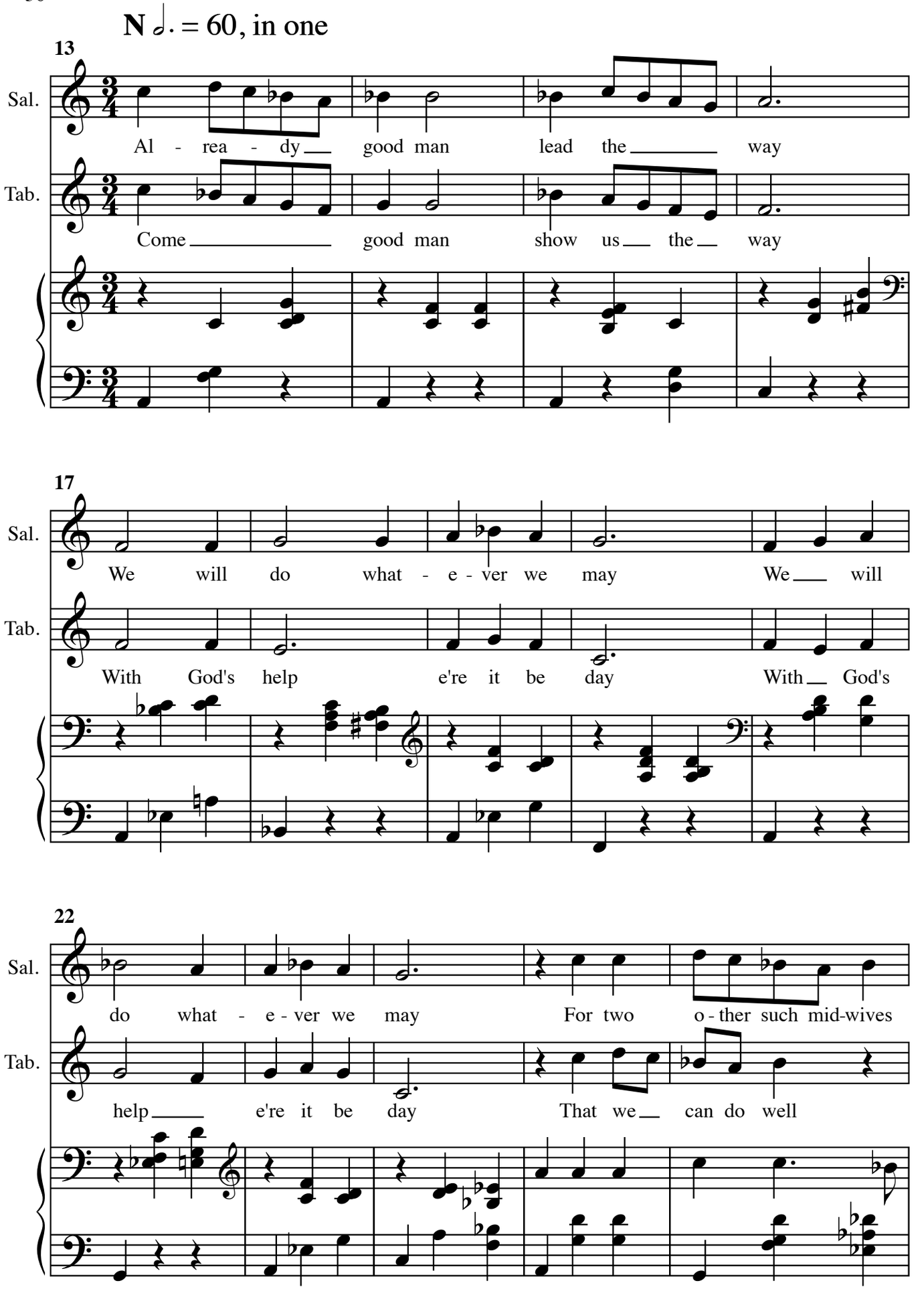

66
S
A
T
B
our sakes.
our sakes.
69
72
75

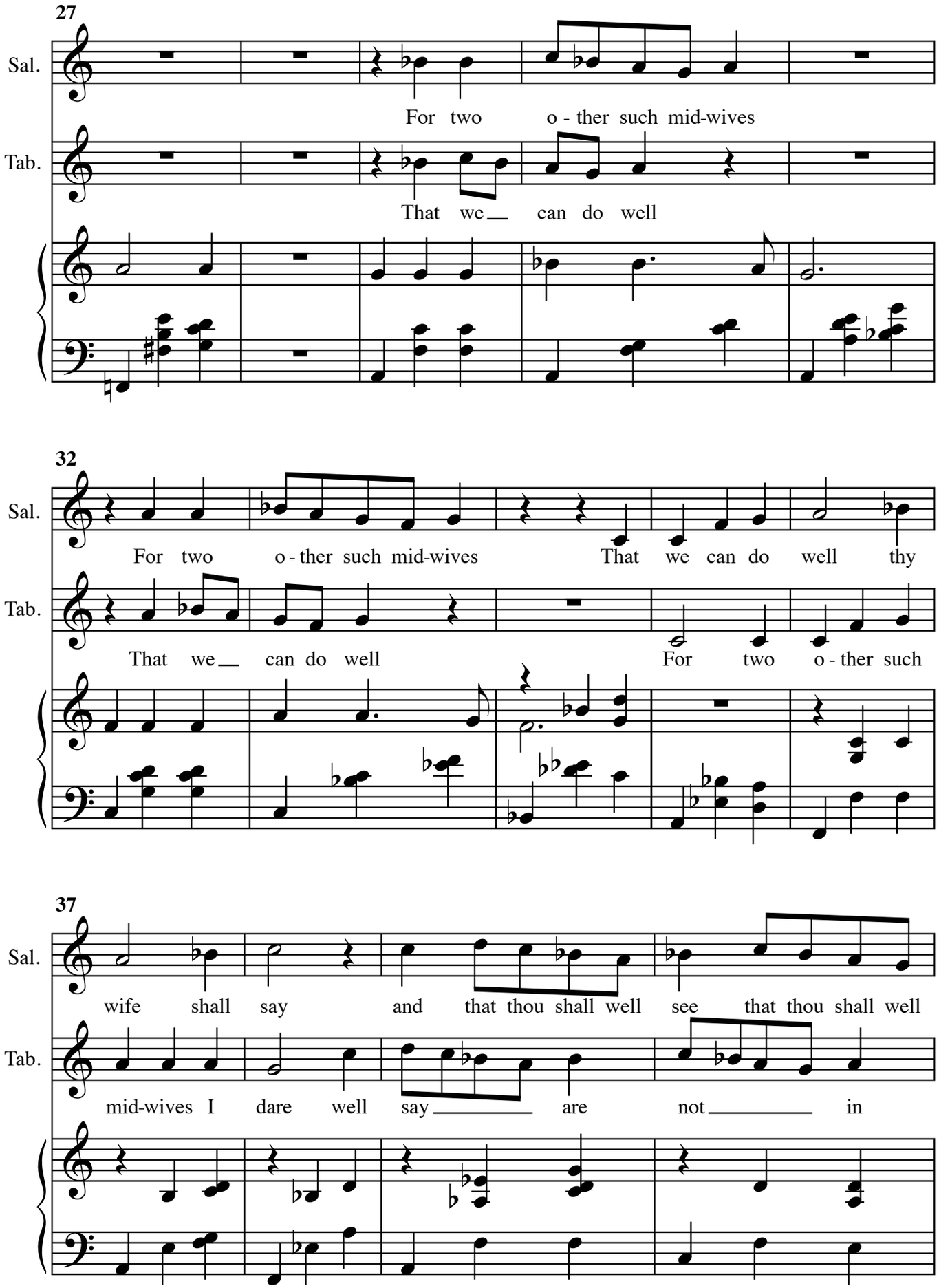

78
freely
Jos.
Ma - ry sweet-heart I will try to fetch two wo - men from near - by
80
Jos.
two will I fetch a - non to thee if I may find an - y.

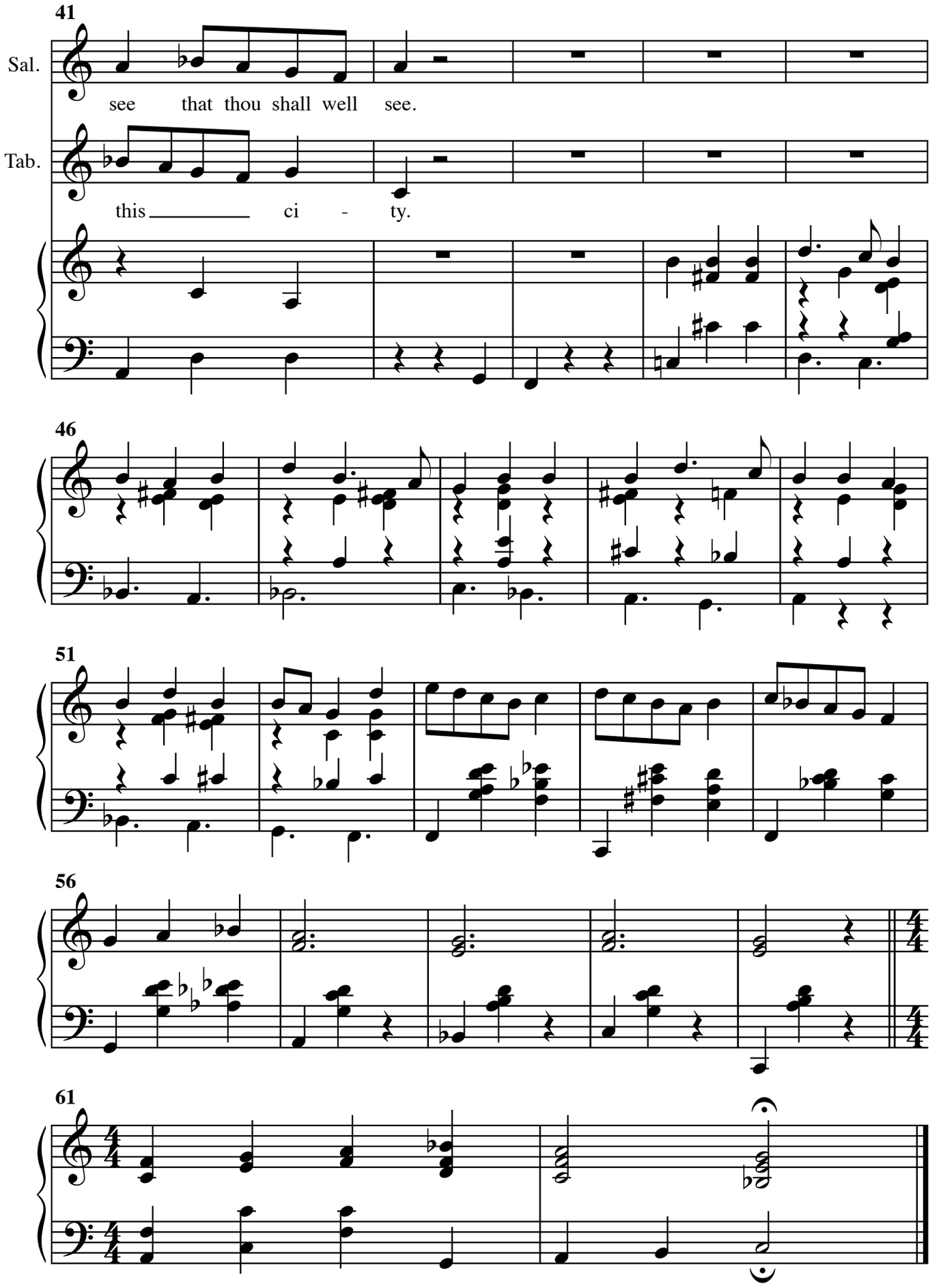
Scene 4

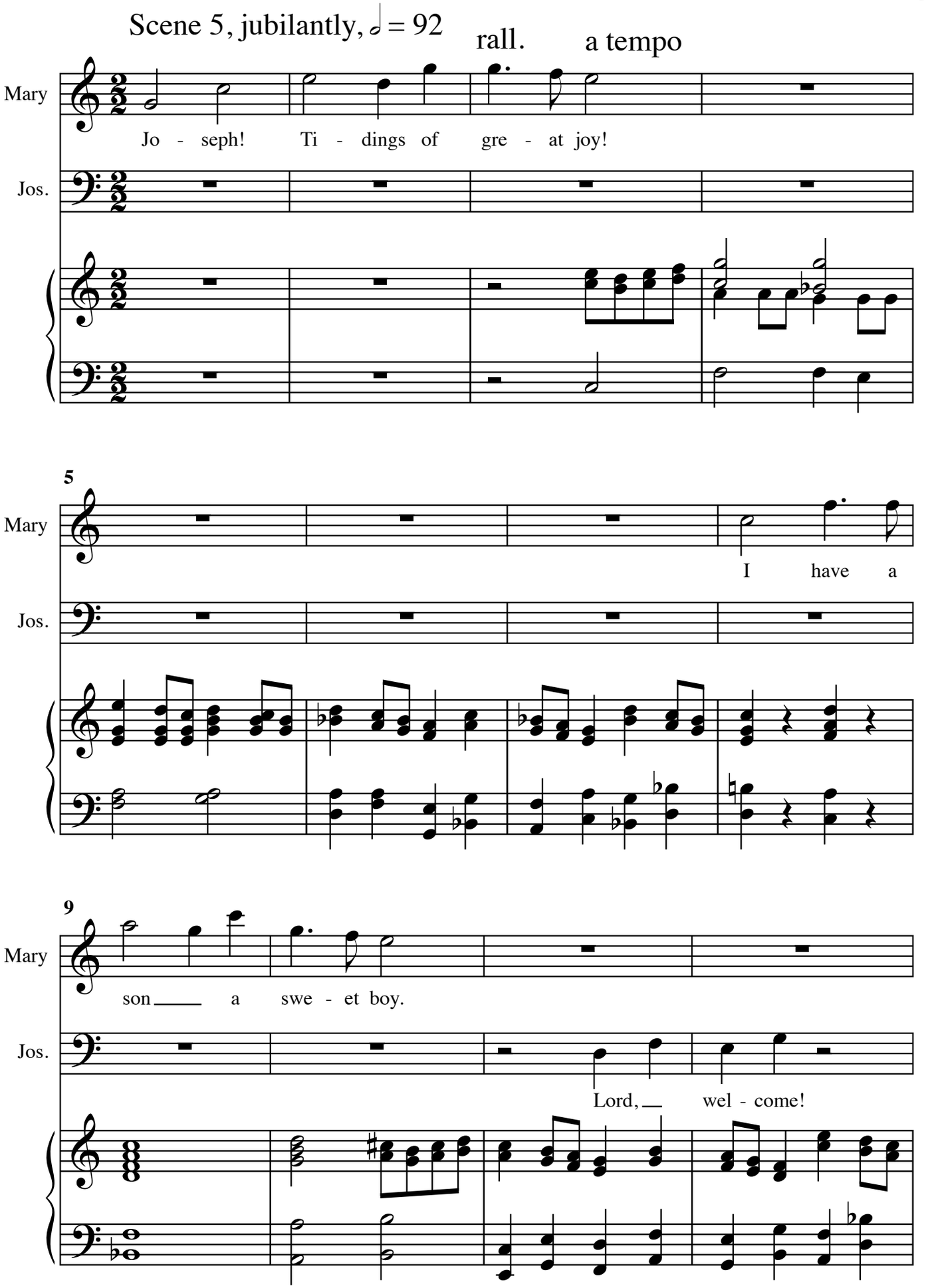

Jos.
mf
5
freely
Jos.
Wo - men God you save and see
mf

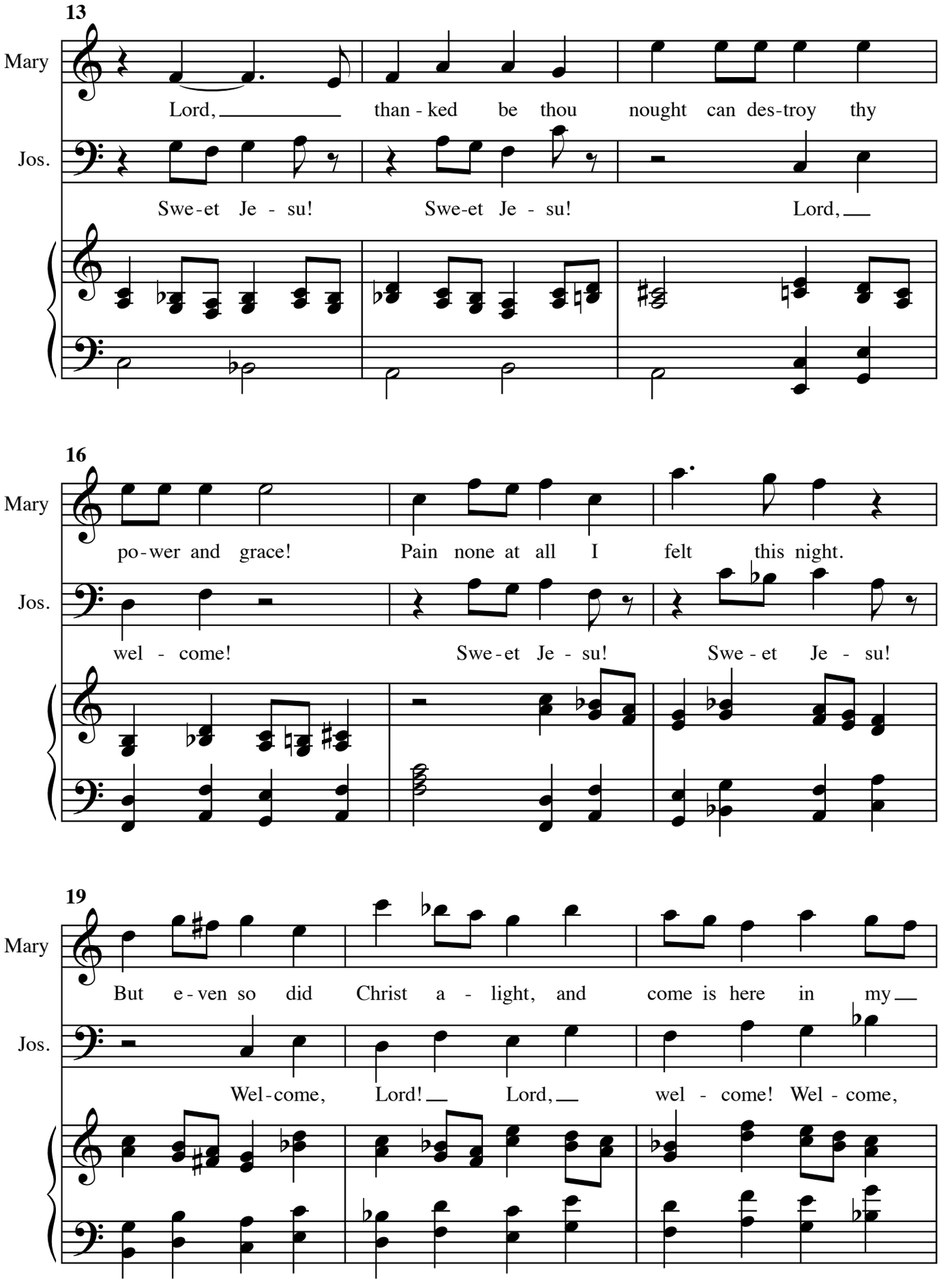

7
Jos.
Is it your will to come with me?
mf
9
Jos.
My wife has come to this ci - ty with child
mf
11
Jos.
Her time is near help her now for cha - ri - ty.

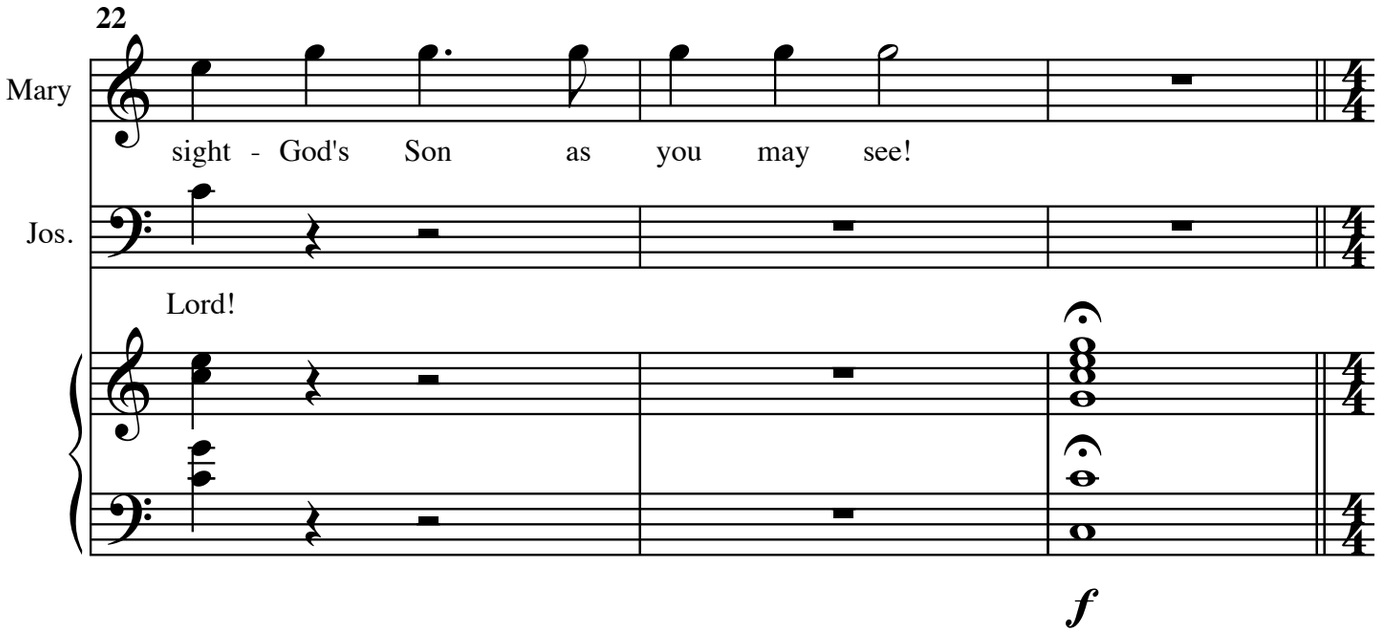

N ♩. = 60, in one
13
Sal.
Al - rea - dy good man lead the way
Tab.
Come good man show us the way
17
Sal.
We will do what - e - ver we may We will
Tab.
With God's help e're it be day With God's
22
Sal.
do what - e - ver we may For two o - ther such mid-wives
Tab.
help e're it be day That we can do well

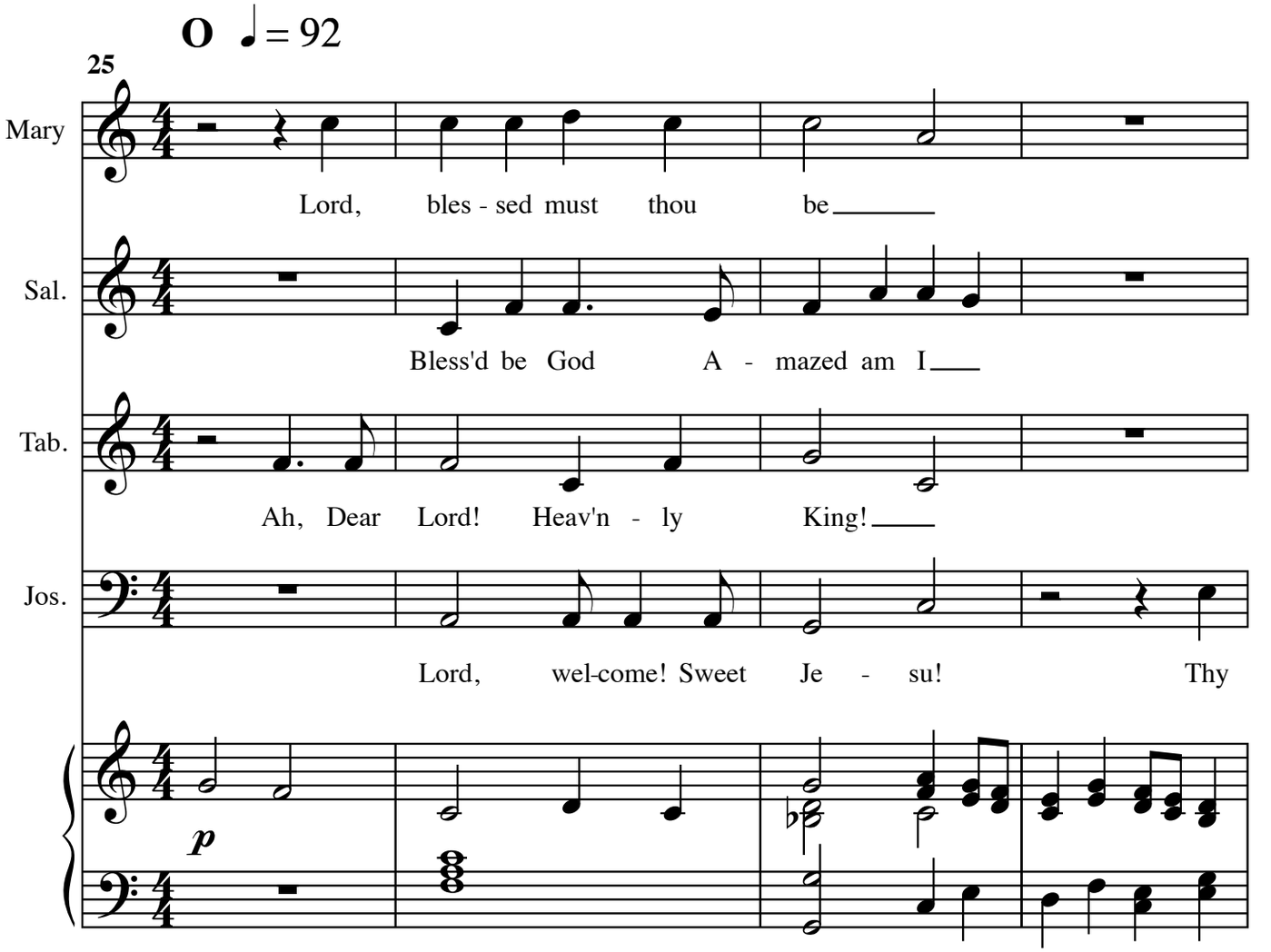

27
Sal.
For two o - ther such mid-wives
Tab.
That we can do well
32
Sal.
For two o - ther such mid-wives That we can do well thy
Tab.
That we can do well For two o - ther such
37
Sal.
wife shall say and that thou shall well see that thou shall well
Tab.
mid-wives I dare well say are not in

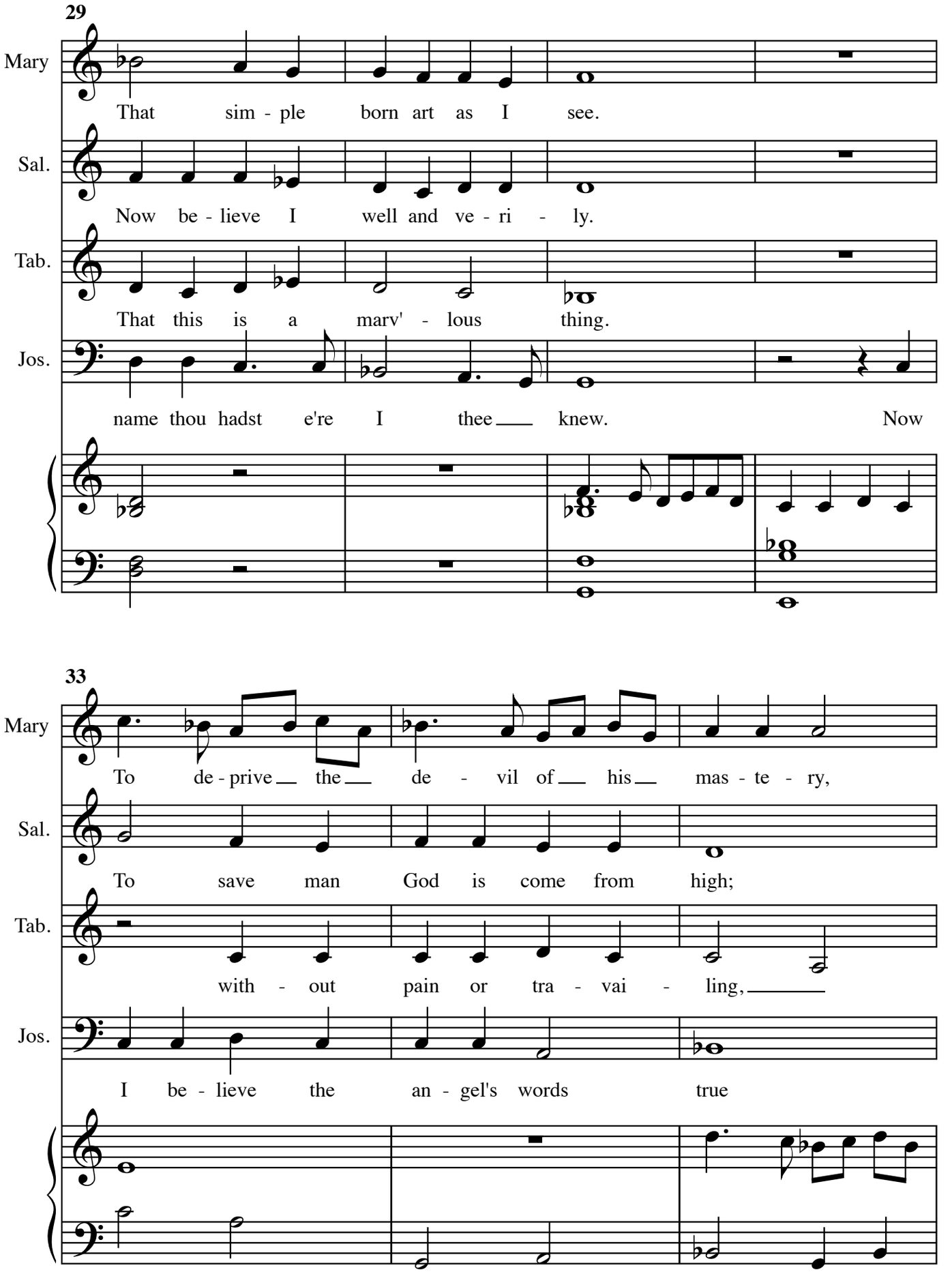

41
Sal.
see that thou shall well see.
Tab.
this ci - ty.
46
51
56
61

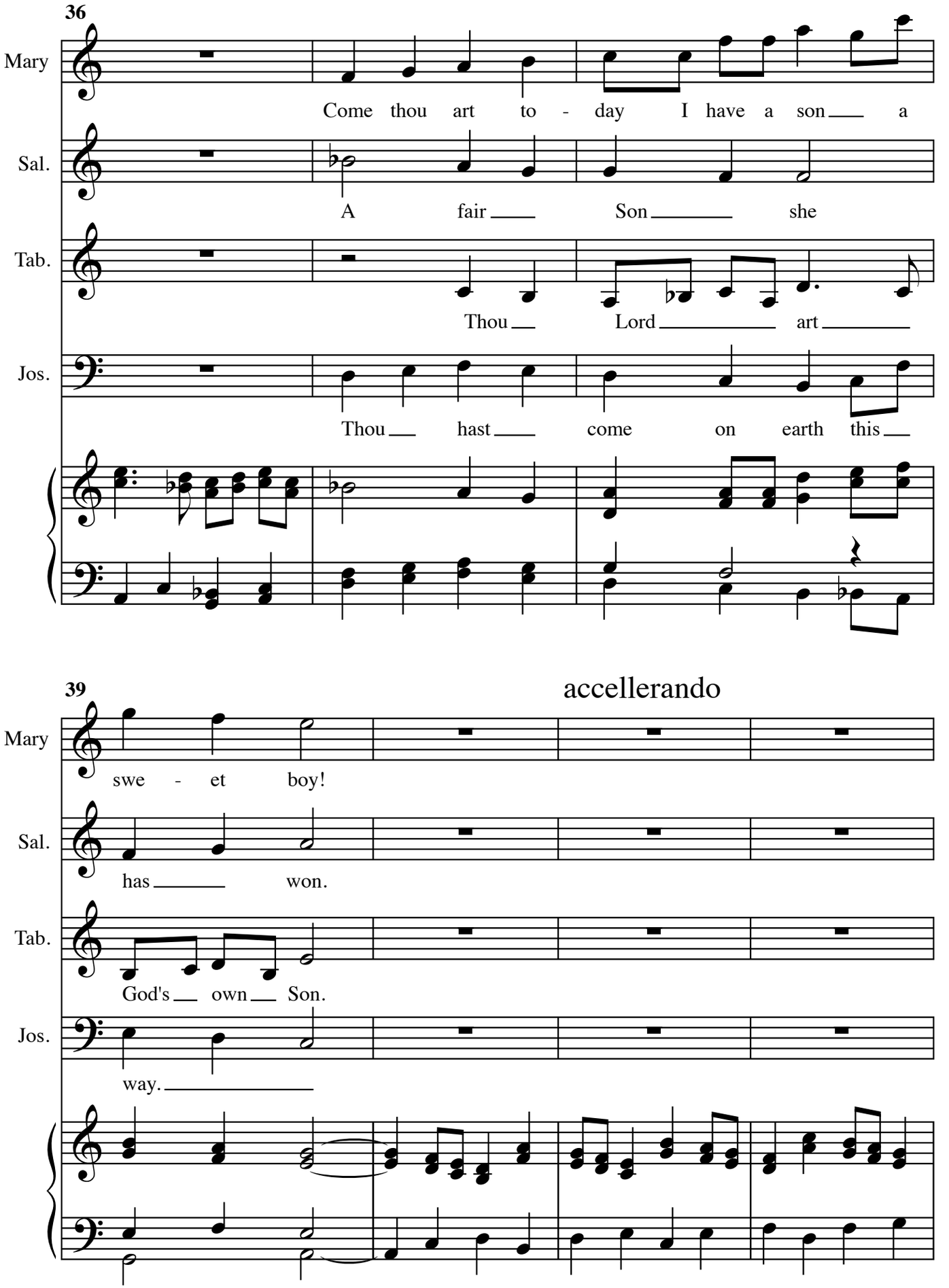

Scene 5, jubilantly, ♩ = 92
rall.
a tempo
Mary
Jos.
Jo - seph! Ti - dings of gre - at joy!
5
I have a
9
son a swe - et boy.
Lord, wel - come!

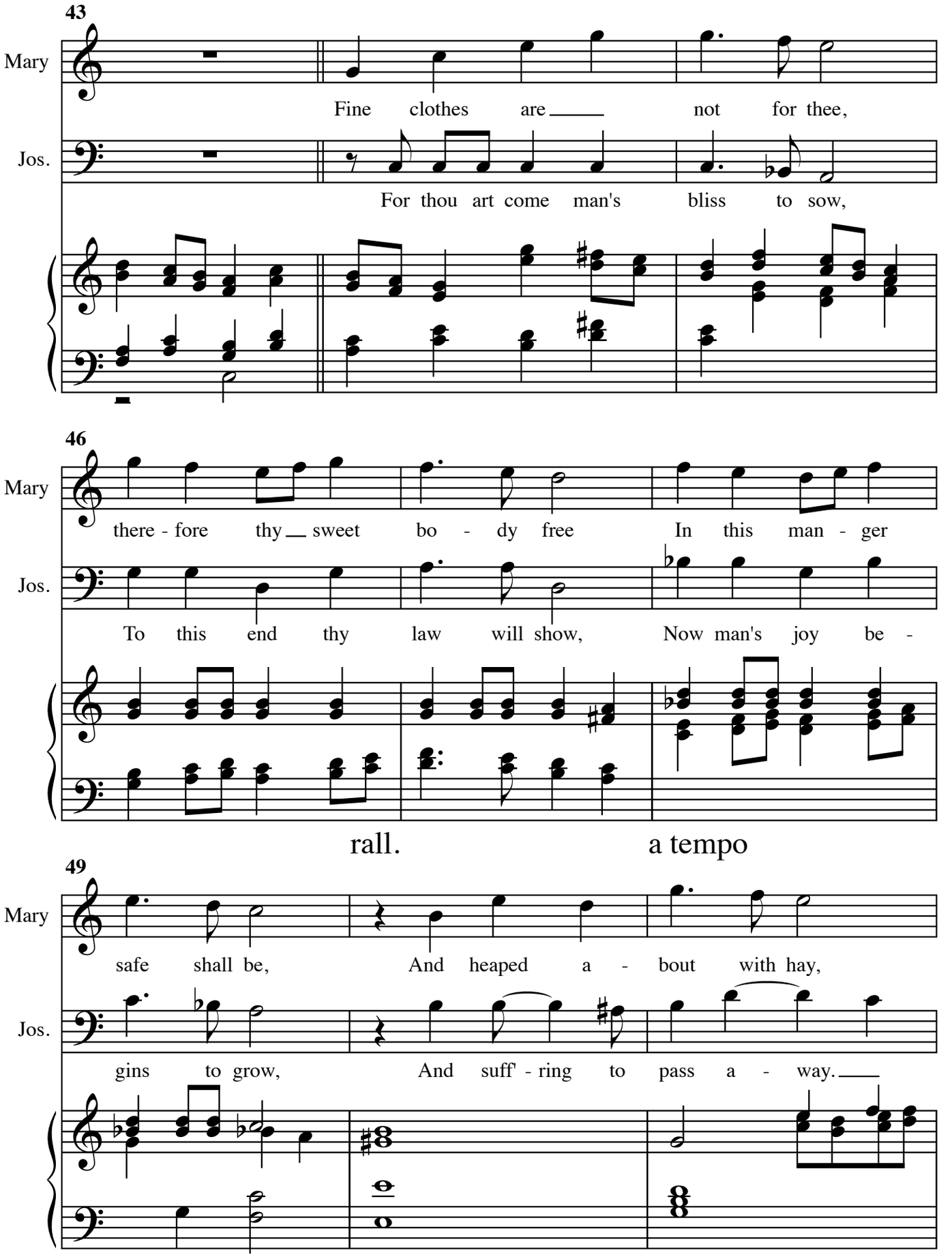

13
Mary
Lord, than - ked be thou nought can des-troy thy
Jos.
Swe-et Je - su! Swe-et Je - su! Lord,
16
Mary
po-wer and grace! Pain none at all I felt this night.
Jos.
wel - come! Swe-et Je - su! Swe-et Je - su!
19
Mary
But e-ven so did Christ a - light, and come is here in my
Jos.
Wel-come, Lord! Lord, wel - come! Wel - come,

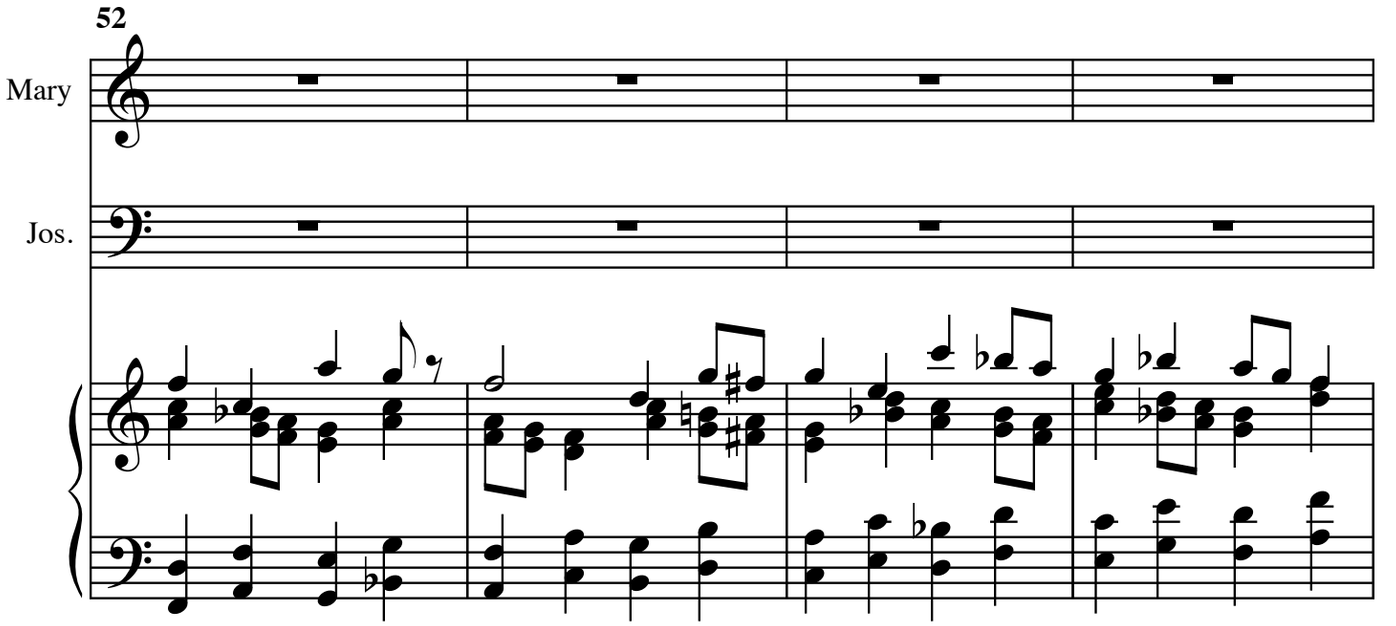

22
Mary
sight - God's Son as you may see!
Jos.
Lord!
f

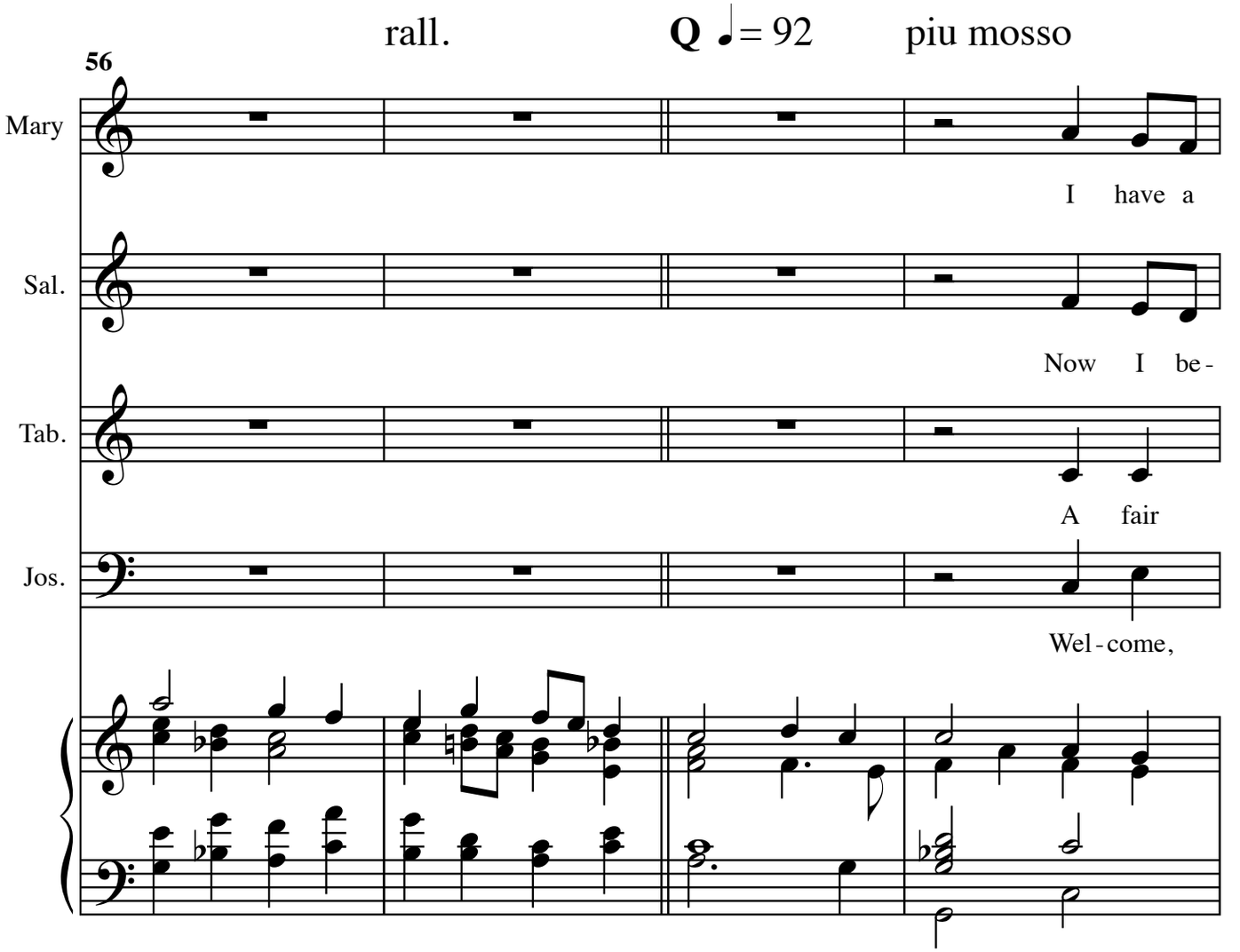

O = 92
25
Mary
Lord, bles - sed must thou be
Sal.
Bless'd be God A - mazed am I
Tab.
Ah, Dear Lord! Heav'n - ly King!
Jos.
Lord, wel-come! Sweet Je - su! Thy
p

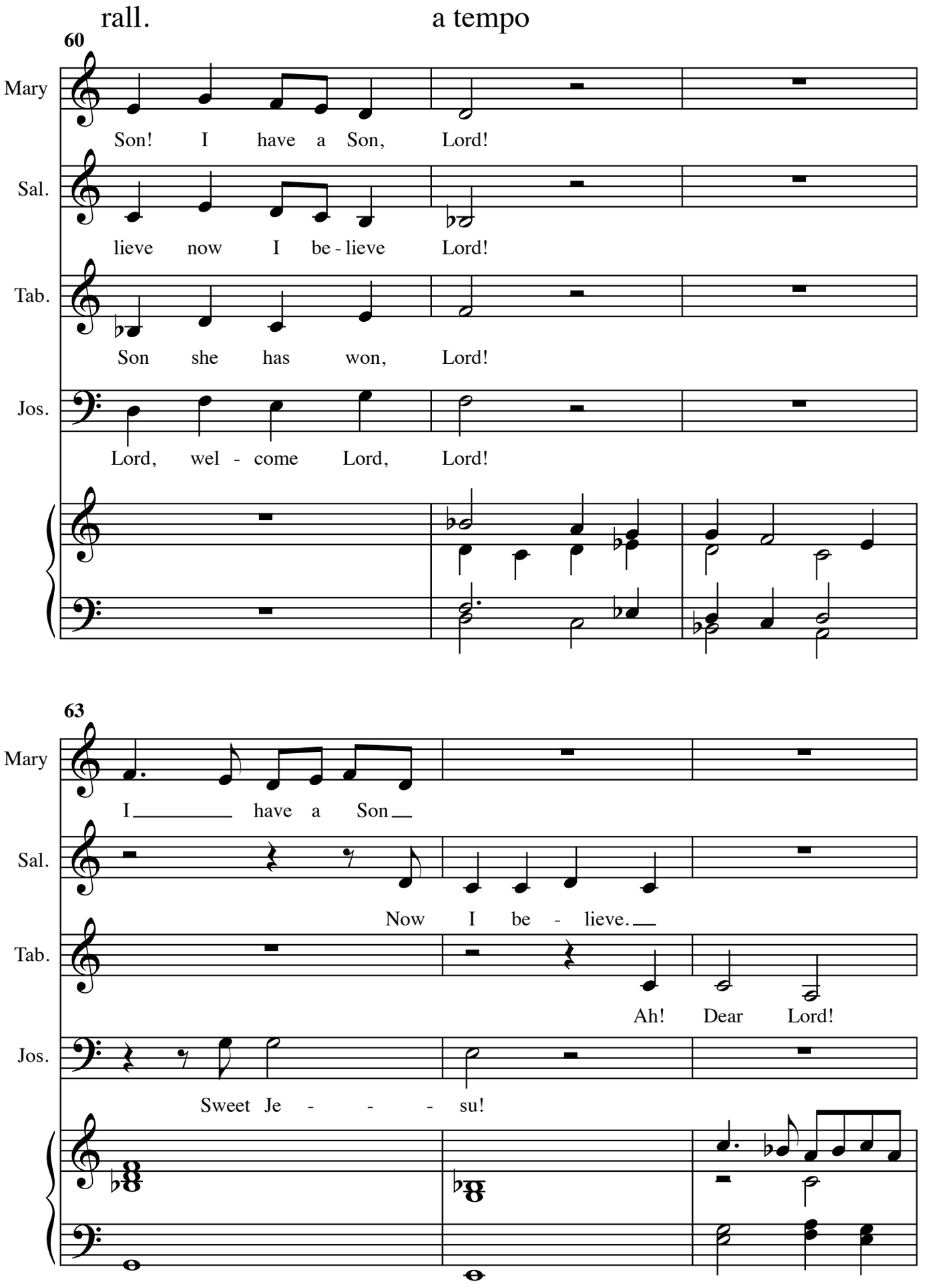

29
Mary
That sim - ple born art as I see.
Sal.
Now be - lieve I well and ve - ri - ly.
Tab.
That this is a marv' - lous thing.
Jos.
name thou hadst e're I thee knew. Now
33
Mary
To de - prive the de - vil of his mas - te - ry,
Sal.
To save man God is come from high;
Tab.
with - out pain or tra - vai - ling,
Jos.
I be - lieve the an - gel's words true

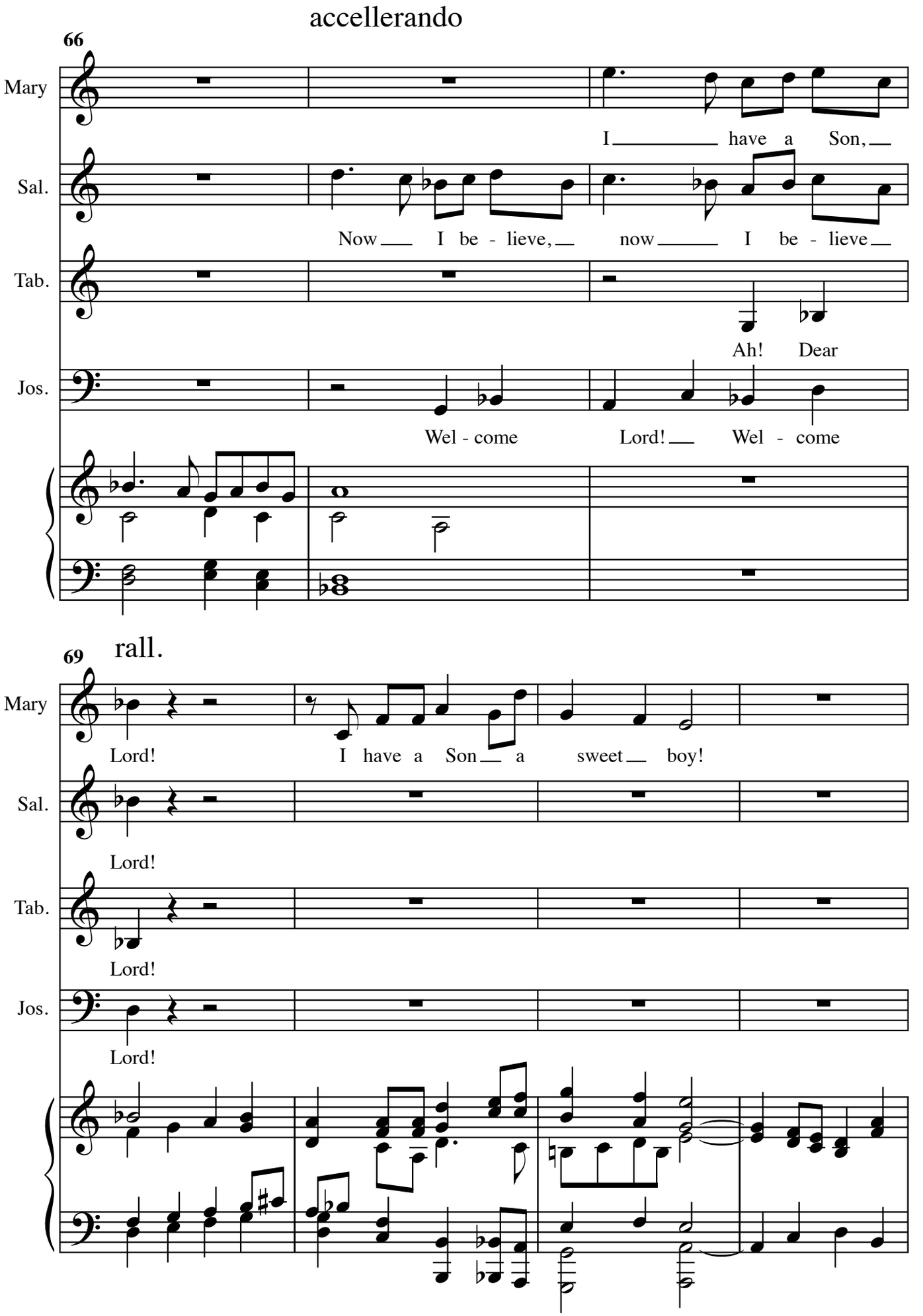

36
Mary
Come thou art to - day I have a son a
Sal.
A fair Son she
Tab.
Thou Lord art
Jos.
Thou hast come on earth this
39
accellerando
Mary
swe - et boy!
Sal.
has won.
Tab.
God's own Son.
Jos.
way.

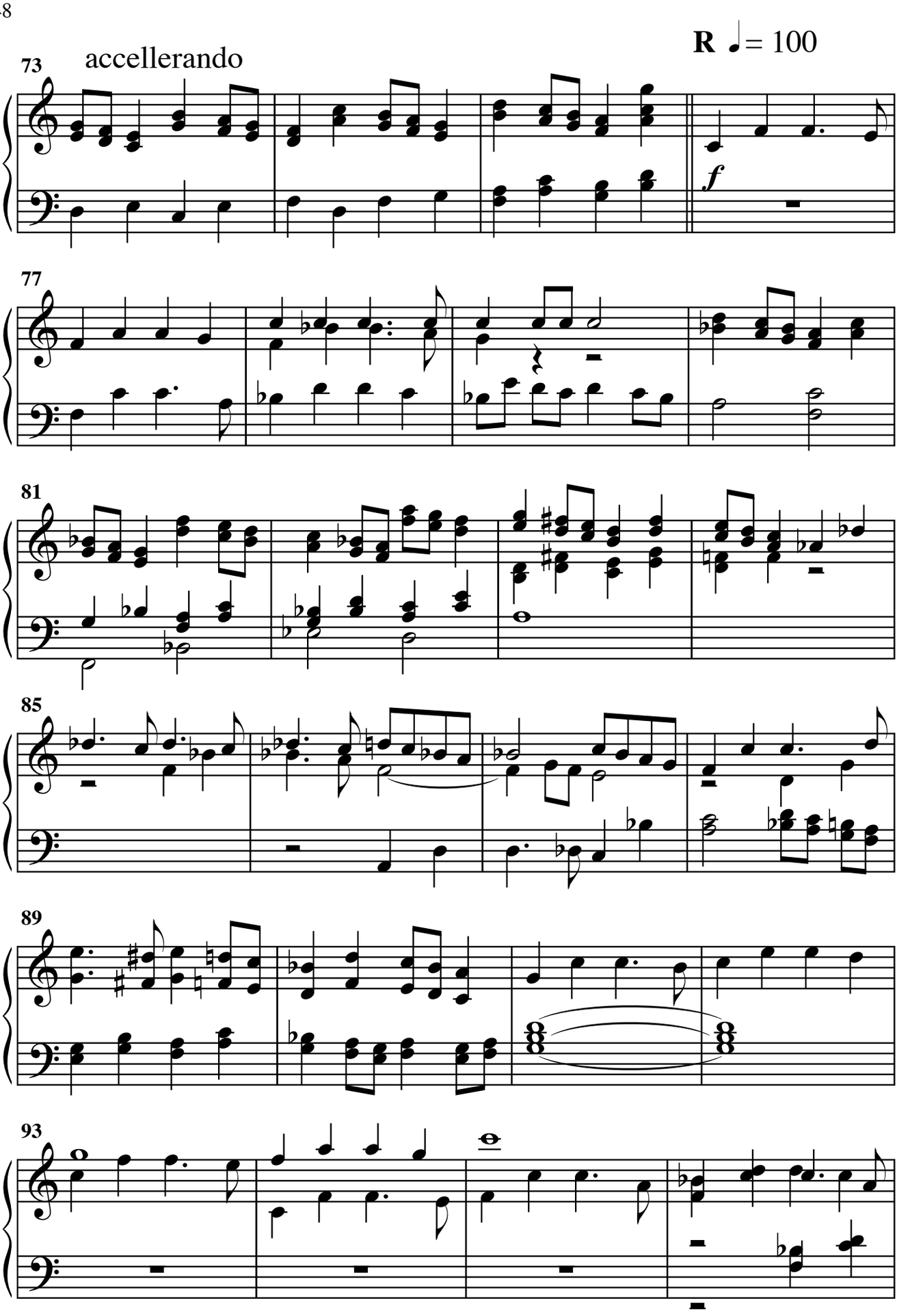

43
Mary
Fine clothes are not for thee,
Jos.
For thou art come man's bliss to sow,
46
Mary
there - fore thy sweet bo - dy free In this man - ger
Jos.
To this end thy law will show, Now man's joy be -
rall.
a tempo
49
Mary
safe shall be, And heaped a - bout with hay,
Jos.
gins to grow, And suff' - ring to pass a - way.

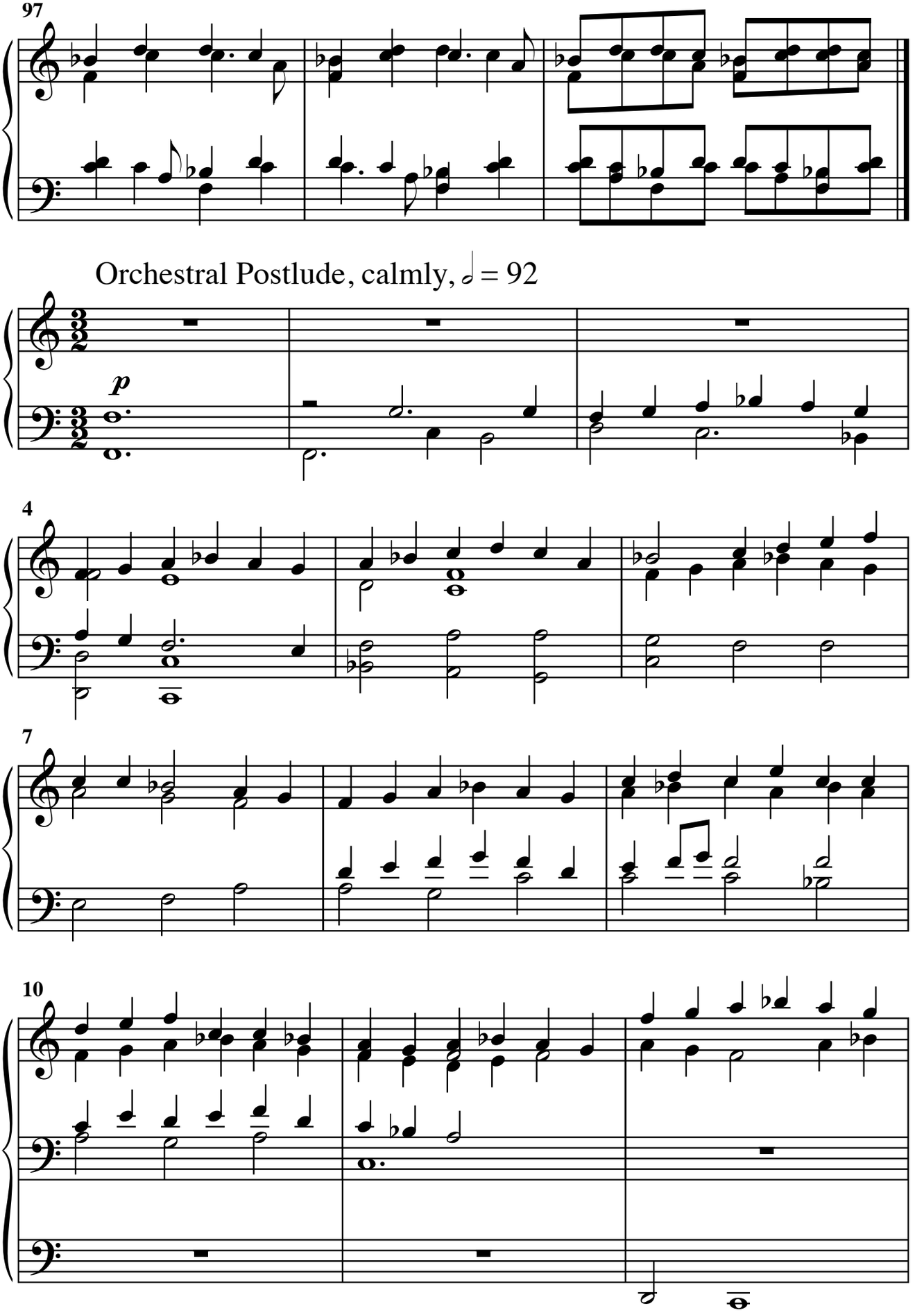

52
Mary
Jos.

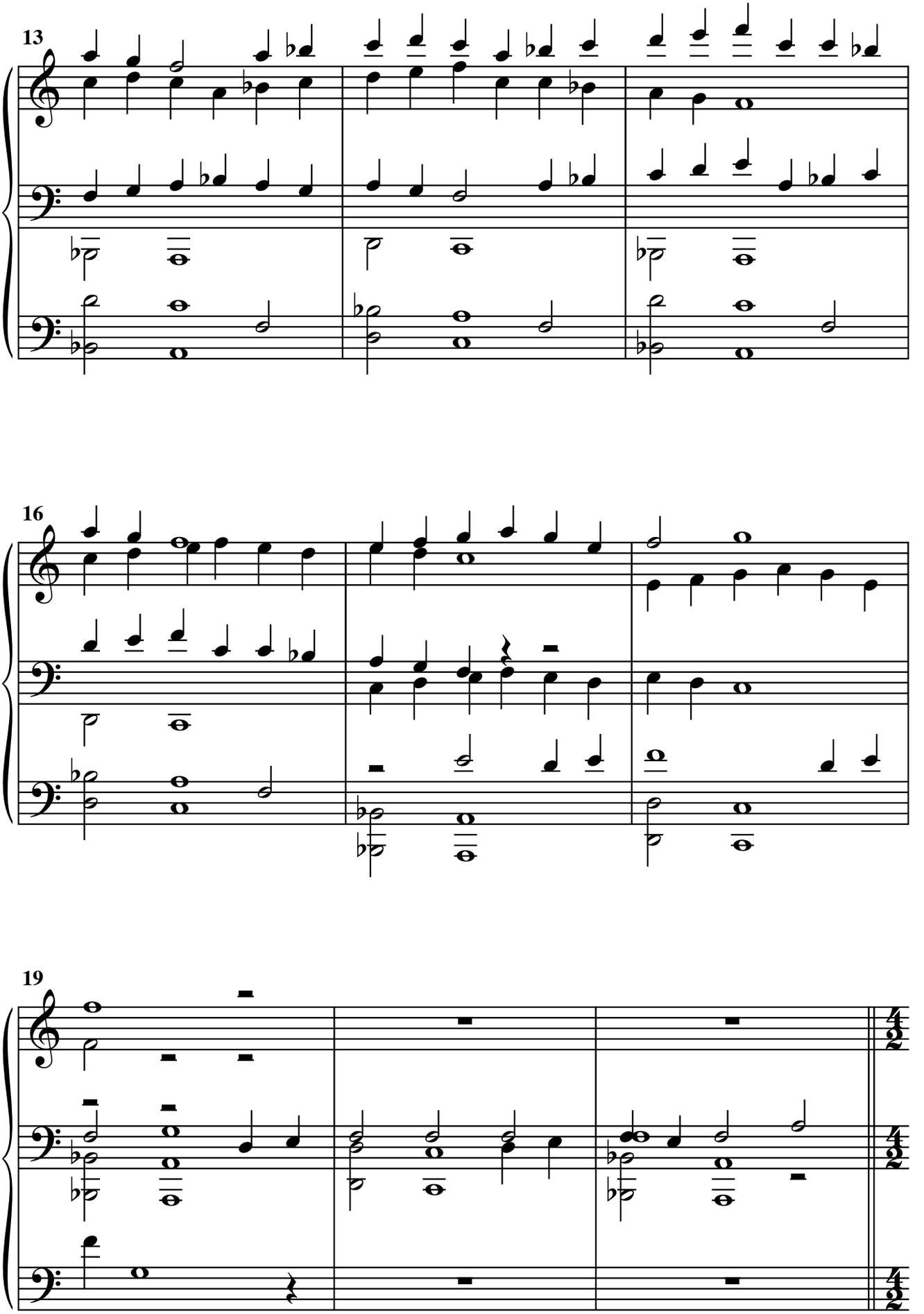

rall.
Q = 92
piu mosso
56
Mary
I have a
Sal.
Now I be-
Tab.
A fair
Jos.
Wel-come,

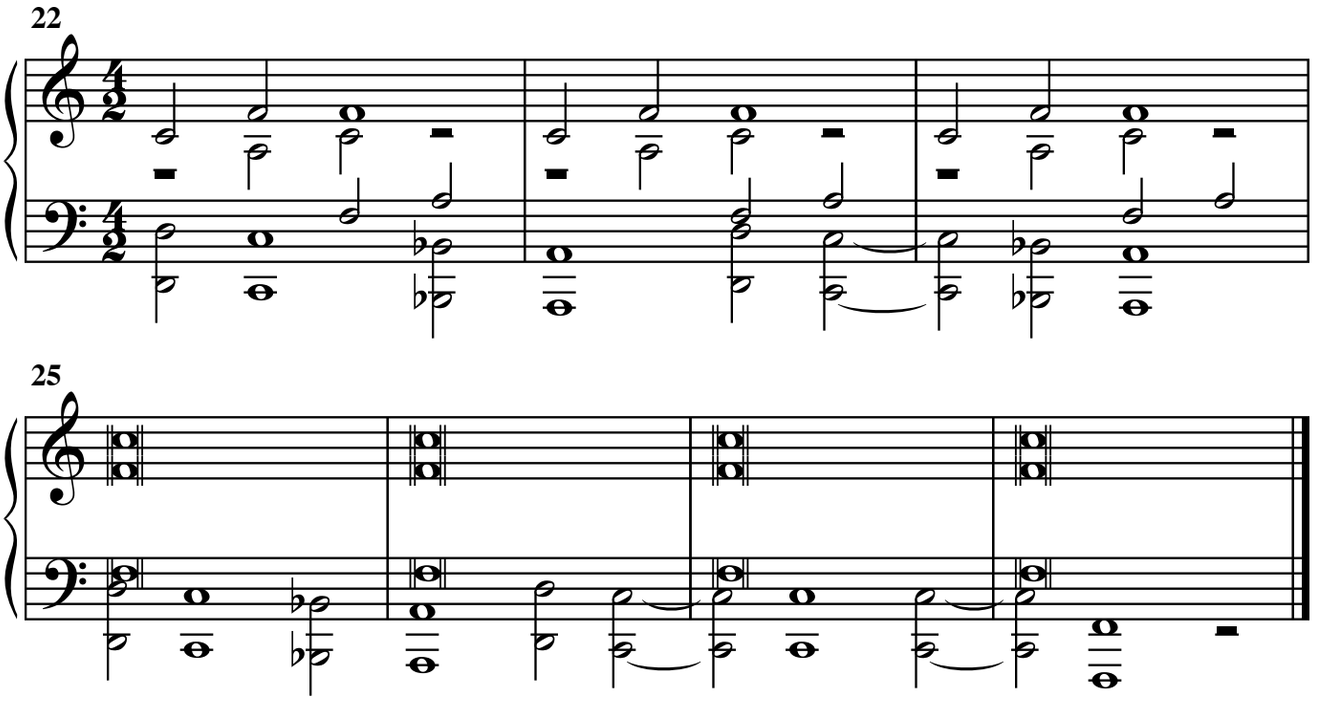

rall.
a tempo
60
Mary
Son! I have a Son, Lord!
Sal.
lieve now I be - lieve Lord!
Tab.
Son she has won, Lord!
Jos.
Lord, wel - come Lord, Lord!
63
Mary
I have a Son
Sal.
Now I be - lieve.
Tab.
Ah! Dear Lord!
Jos.
Sweet Je - - - su!


accellerando
66
Mary
I have a Son,
Sal.
Now I be - lieve, now I be - lieve
Tab.
Ah! Dear
Jos.
Wel - come Lord! Wel - come
69
rall.
Mary
Lord! I have a Son a sweet boy!
Sal.
Lord!
Tab.
Lord!
Jos.
Lord!


accellerando
R ♩= 100
73
77
81
85
89
93
f


97
Orchestral Postlude, calmly, 𝅗𝅥 = 92
p
4
7
10


13
16
19


22
25