Phrased Notation System

O quam metuendus est locus iste

Marenzio

Introductory Notes to the Phrased Notation System

The Phrased Notation System is a modified form of music notation which aims to guide non-specialist choirs towards historically informed performance of Renaissance polyphony. There are many elements to be considered when transcribing polyphonic Renaissance material from the original part books. An explanation of the approach taken to each of these elements is provided below.

Accidentals - Accidentals which appear in the original publication are retained in the normal place before the note to which they apply, in accordance with modern convention. Courtesy accidentals are provided as appropriate and are shown in brackets over the note to which they apply. Some of these accidentals are adjusted on foot of a preceding raised pitch. Others occur in accordance with *Musica Ficta.*

Accompaniment - Though a keyboard reduction is provided it is not suggested that this material be accompanied in performance. It is provided as an aid to rehearsal only.

Bar Lines - In general, bar lines were not used in the original part books. They are therefore not included in the choral parts here. They are, however, included within the piano reduction staves. The absence of bar lines in the choral parts facilitates a linear flow to the line without the vertical 'chopping' inflicted by bar lines, whether in their standard place or between the staves as in *Mensurstrich*.

Dynamics - The music is presented without overt dynamic marks. No such marks exist in the original. However, dynamic variation should be inferred from a) the meaning of the text b) the nature of the writing (inclusion or exclusion of voice parts) or c) the rise and fall of the musical line.

Grouping of Notes - In an effort to ensure clear alignment and an easy analysis of the geography of each line vis-a-vis the other choral lines, notes are grouped according to beats rather than the modern vocal notation convention of syllabic separation. Where longer duration notes cross a notional bar line these notes are divided into appropriate smaller durations and joined by a tie. In this way a clear alignment of beats can easily be seen without the actual use of bar lines.

Metronome Marks - Metronome marks (M.M.) are provided. These M.M. values should be seen as indicators of an appropriate tempo and not necessarily slavishly followed. Where a change of meter is involved the new M.M. establishes a relationship between the two meters. This relationship should be preserved even where the initial M.M mark is not observed due to performance demands or personal interpretation.

Phrase Marks - Phrase marks are included as an essential part of the Phrased Notation System. The phrase marks indicate the musical phrases as appropriate to each line individually. The presence of these phrase marks highlight the polyphonic nature of the writing thus creating an awareness within the mind of the singer. The phrase marks are also indicative of appropriate breath points.

Rehearsal Numbers - Rehearsal numbers are provided on the top stave throughout. These rehearsal numbers coincide with the bar numbers as shown on the piano reduction score.

Rests – The standard pulse throughout is a minim. Extended rests are therefore shown as multiple minim rests. A count (3,5,7 etc.) is included as an aid where the number of minim rests exceeds 3.

Text Presentation - The text is presented with modern capitalisation, spelling and punctuation adjustments as laid out in the *Liber Usualis*.

Text Pronunciation - As an aid to correct pronunciation, stressed syllables are presented in Bold type face. Observation of these stressed syllables will promote clarity regarding the micro meters contained within the music. The pronunciation style adopted is that of Ecclesiastical Latin.

Time Signatures - Time signatures are not used as these are inappropriate for use without associated bar lines. A digit 2 or 3 is inserted to indicate a duple or triple meter as appropriate.

Translation - A literal translation is provided under each word as an aid to understanding not only the text but also the relationship between the text and the music. Such an understanding plays a vital role in the subtle dynamic variations within the composition. It also plays a significant role in properly realising the meaning of the text and any word painting created by the composer. For example, the words *fontes aquarum* (streams of water) may be set to music in extended phrases and flowing scale passages.

To the Conductor - Conductors should note that unlike standard modern notation the tactus or beat should in general indicate a minim in the duple sections.

It should also be noted that the style of conducting should not be a didactic, pointed beat but rather a gentler less articulated one. Such a change will promote fewer indications of ‘first beat in the bar' type accents and encourage a more fluid line, as is appropriate. Adopting a standard modern beat pattern will reinforce in singers their inclination to sing in the manner of barred music and should therefore be avoided.

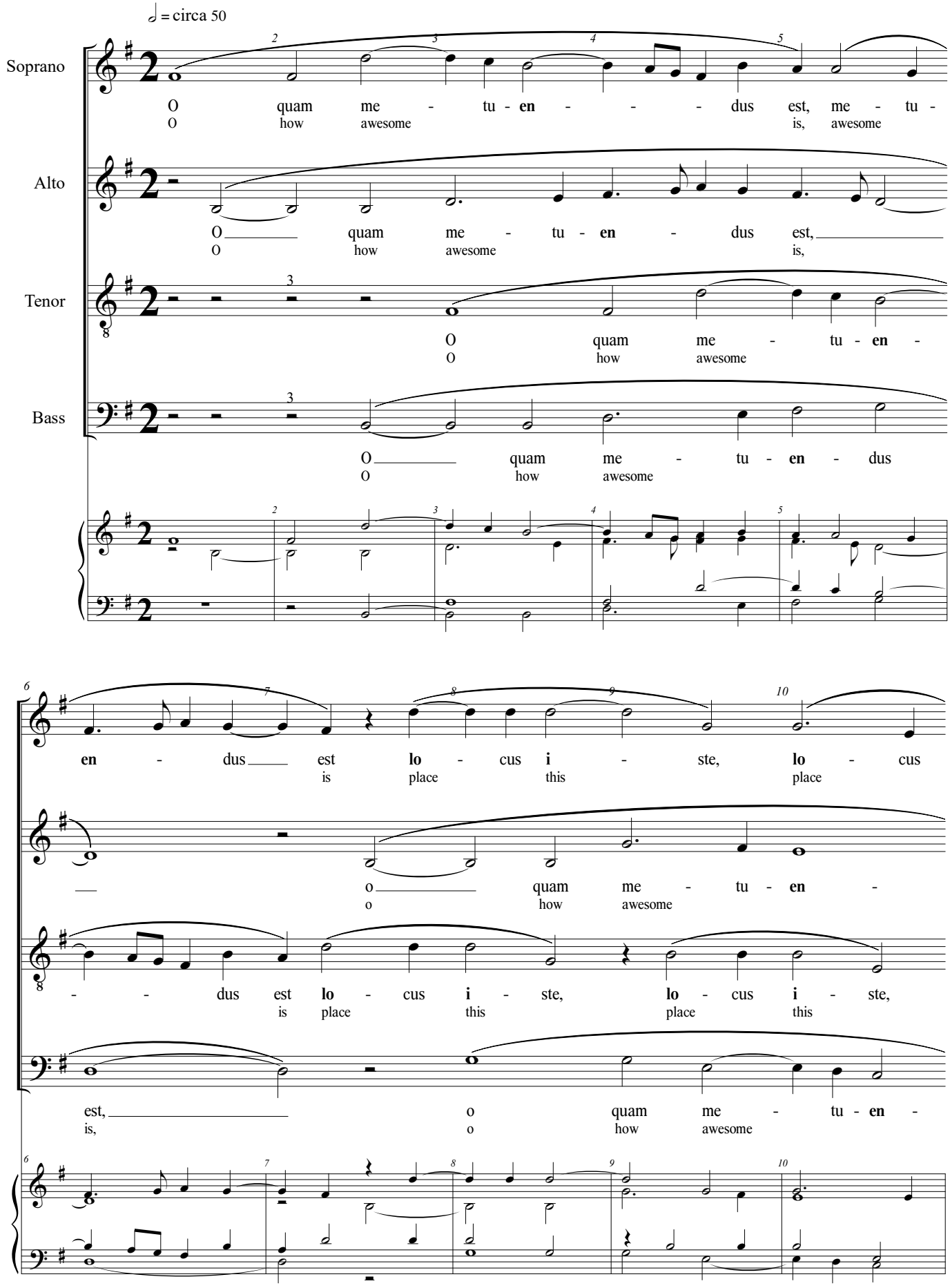
Dr Kevin O'Carroll

O quam metuendus est locus iste!
Vere non est hic aliud, nisi domus Dei,
et parta coeli.

O how awesome is this place!
In truth this is none other than the house of God,
and the gate of heaven.

O quam metuendus est locus iste

Luca marenzio
(1550 - 1599)



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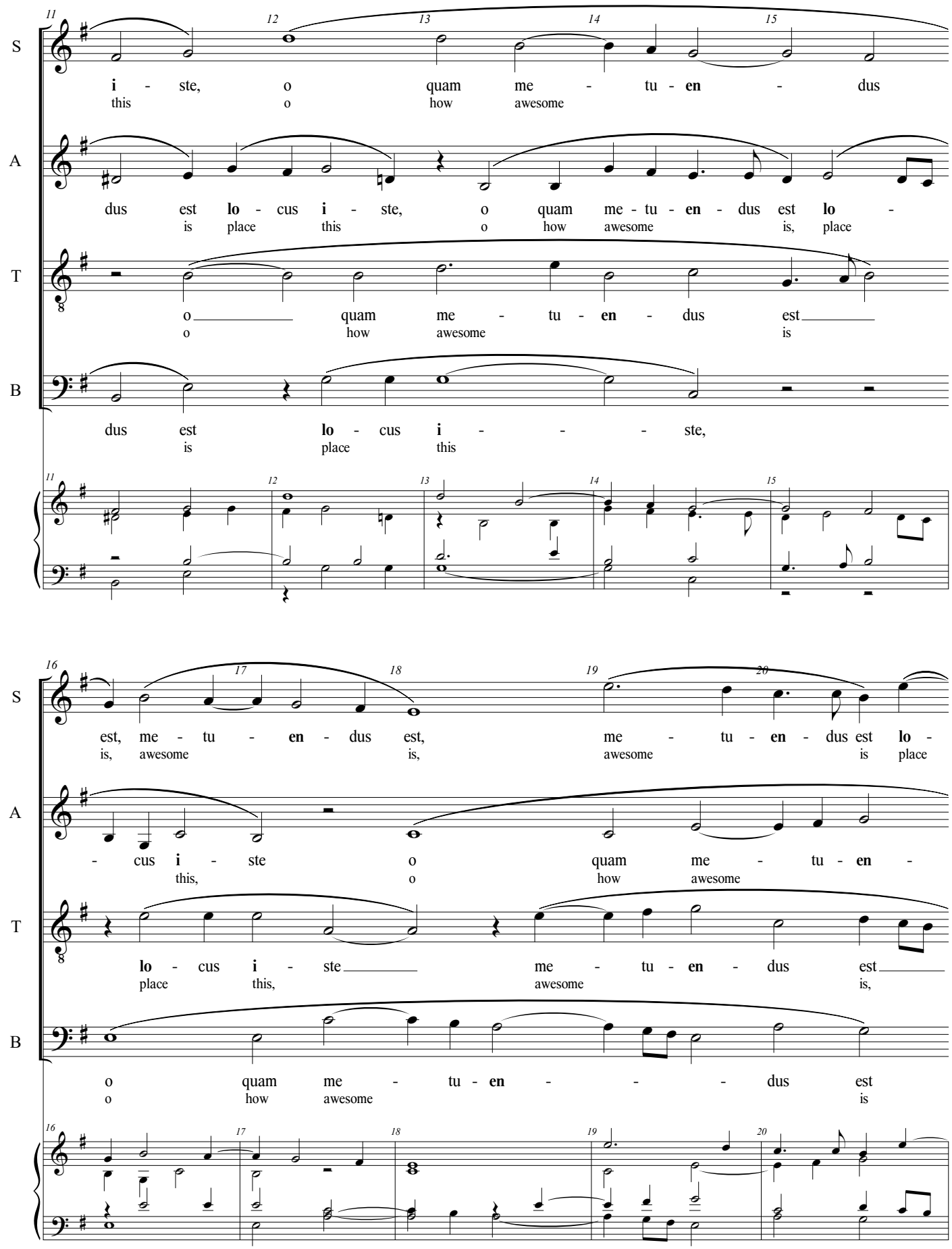
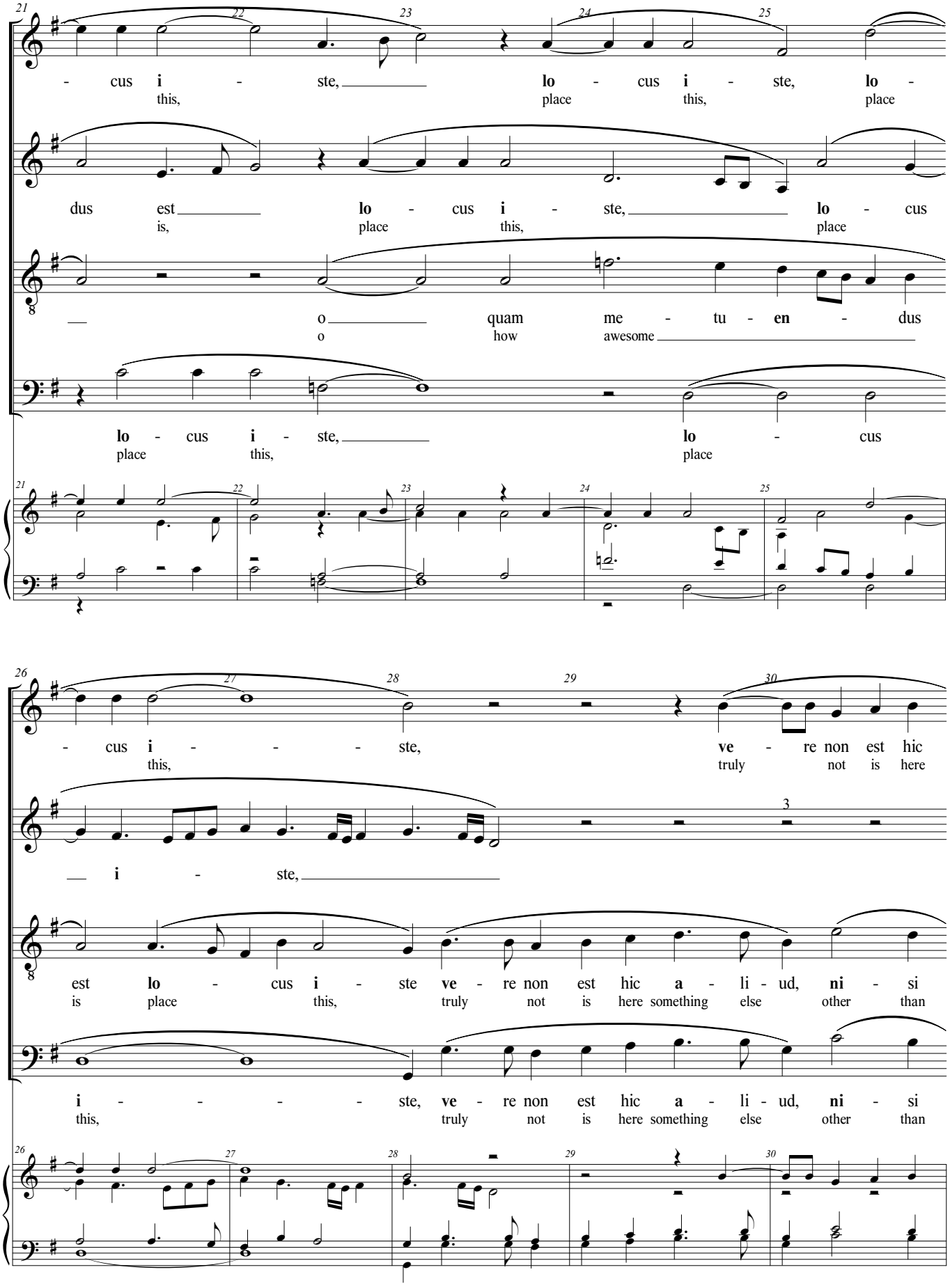
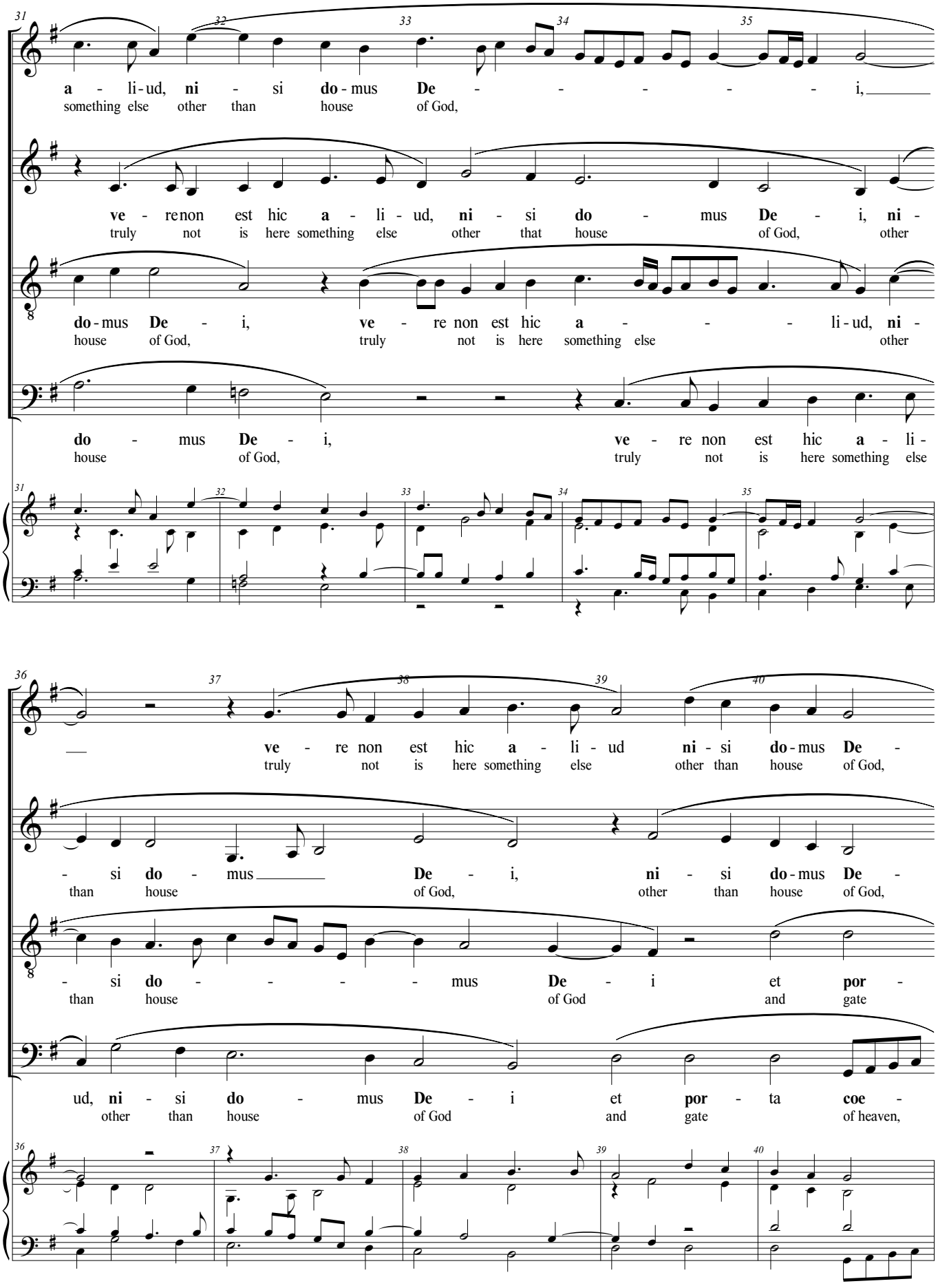
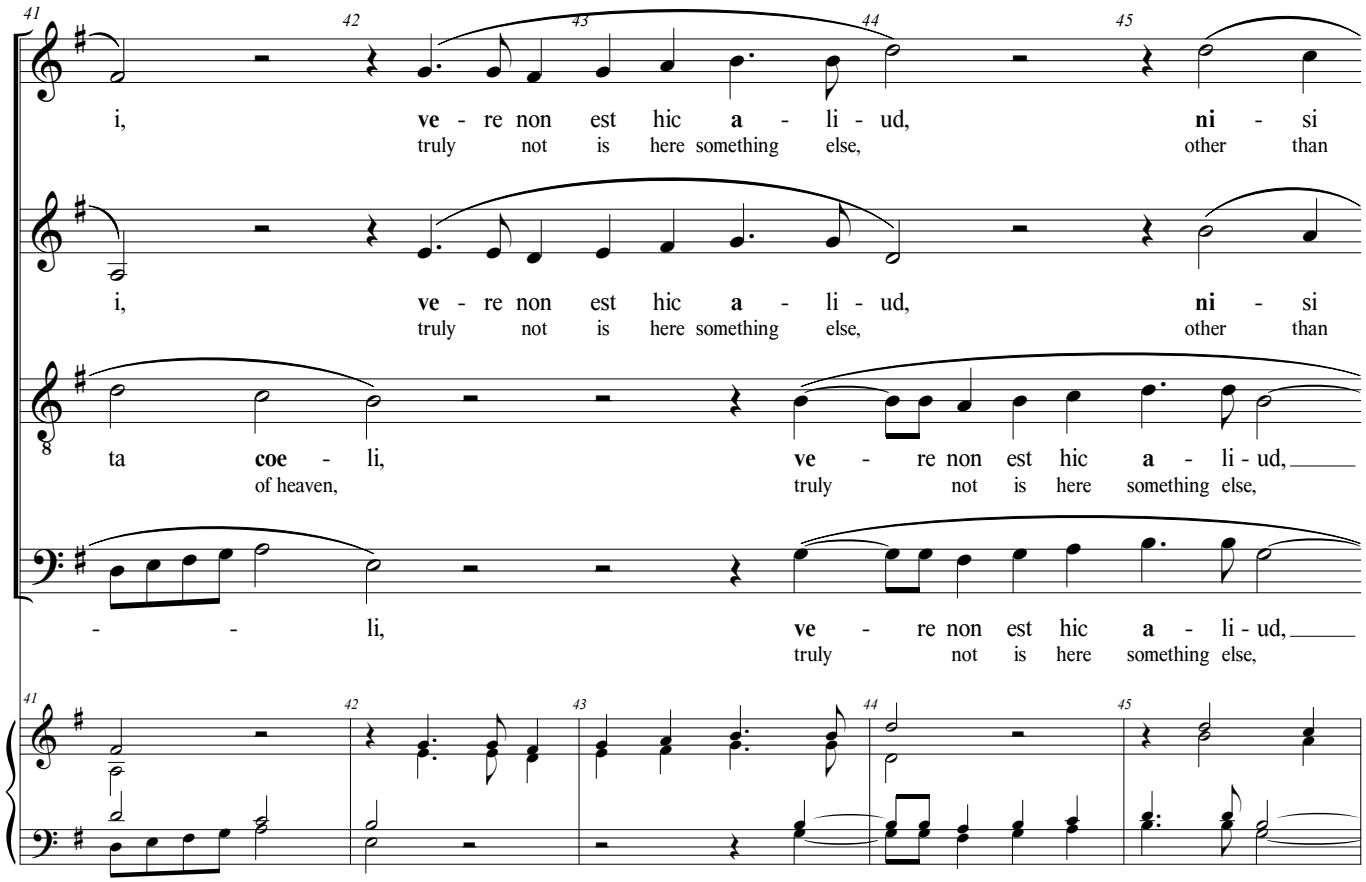
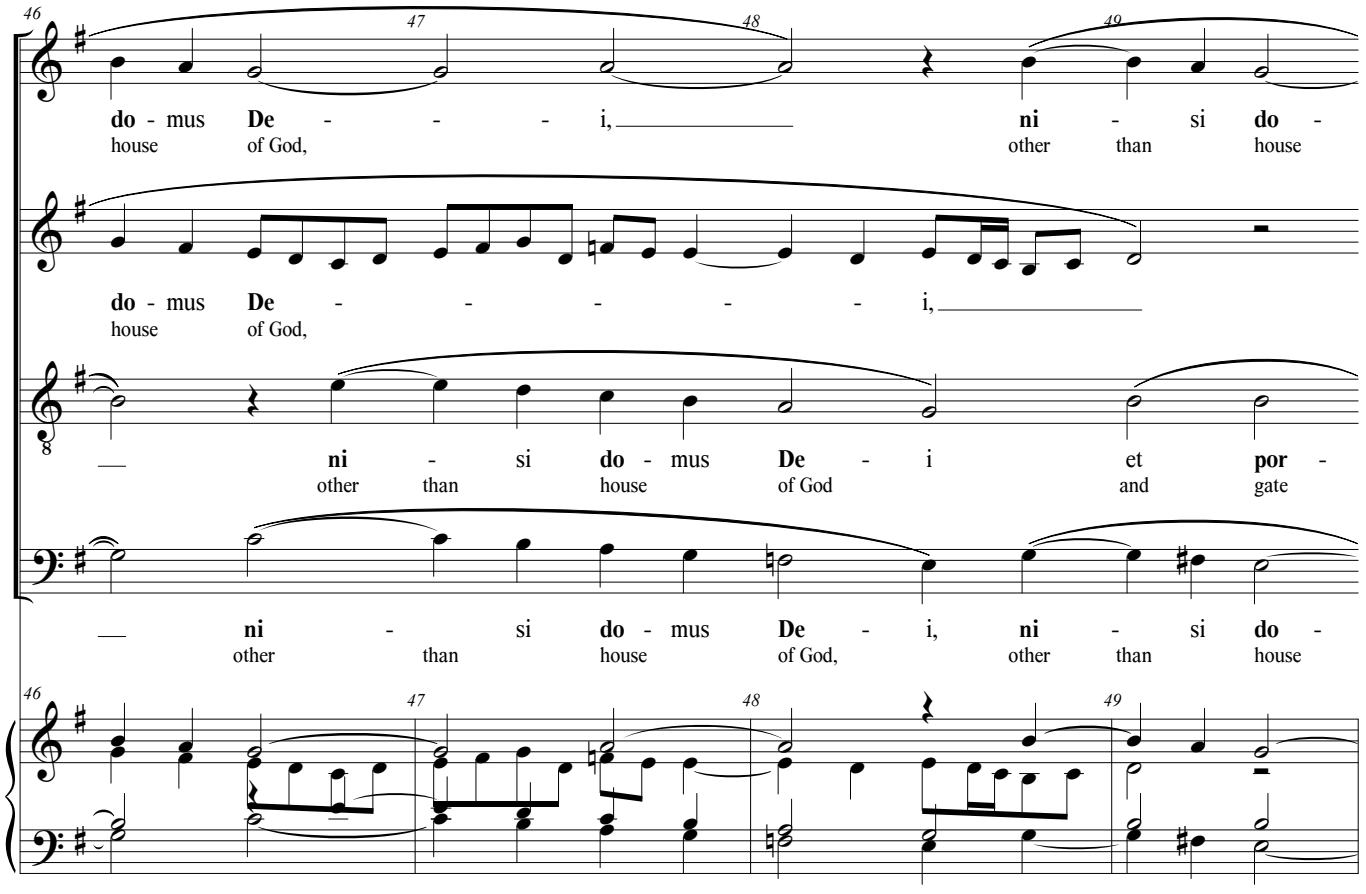
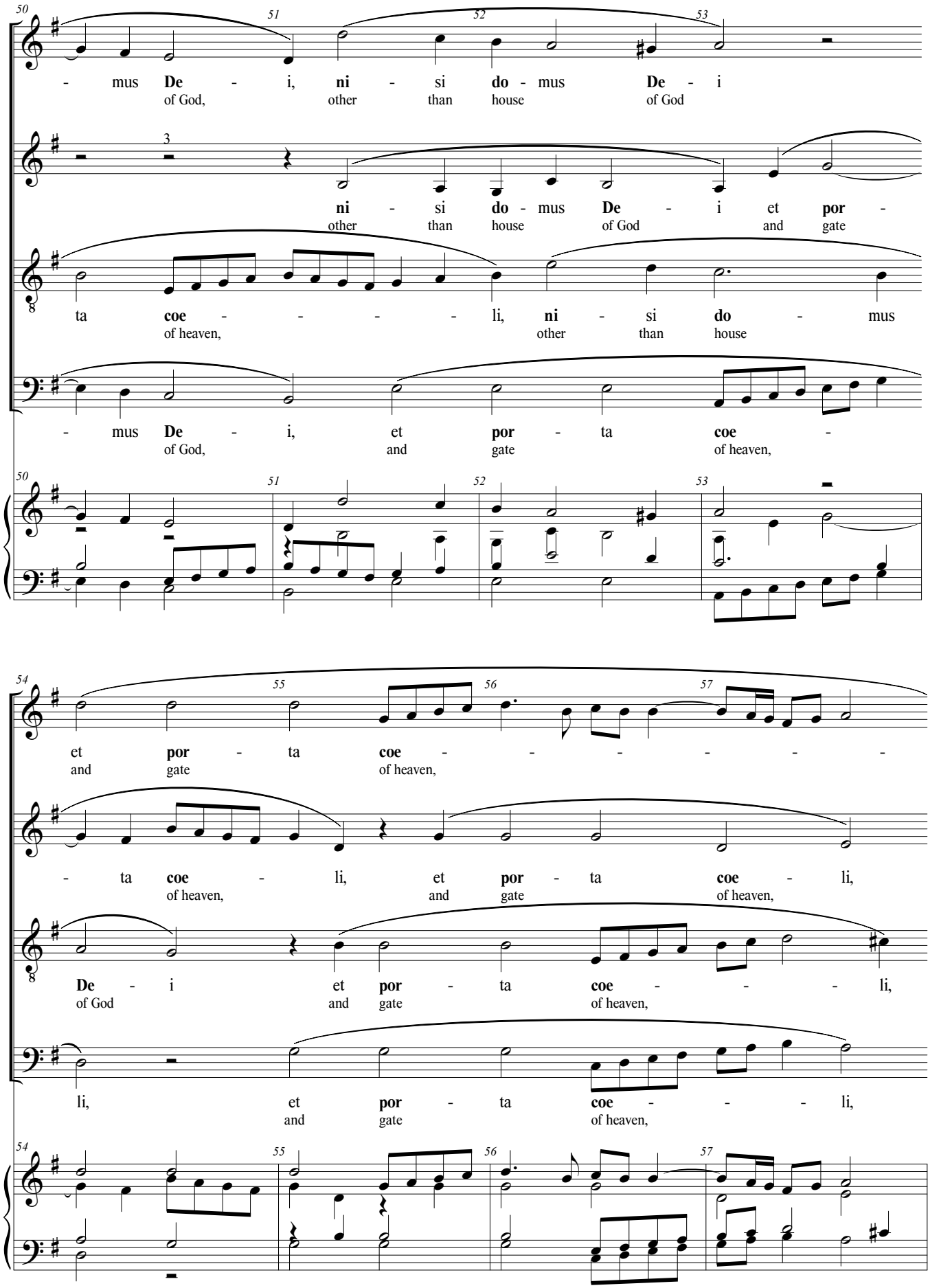

S
A
T
B
i - ste, o quam me - tu - en - dus
this o how awesome
dus est lo - cus i - ste, o quam me - tu - en - dus est lo -
is place this o how awesome is, place
o quam me - tu - en - dus est
o how awesome is
dus est lo - cus i - - - ste,
is place this
est, me - tu - en - dus est, me - tu - en - dus est lo -
is, awesome is, awesome is place
- cus i - ste o quam me - tu - en -
this, o how awesome
lo - cus i - ste me - tu - en - dus est
place this, awesome is,
o quam me - tu - en - - - dus est
o how awesome is

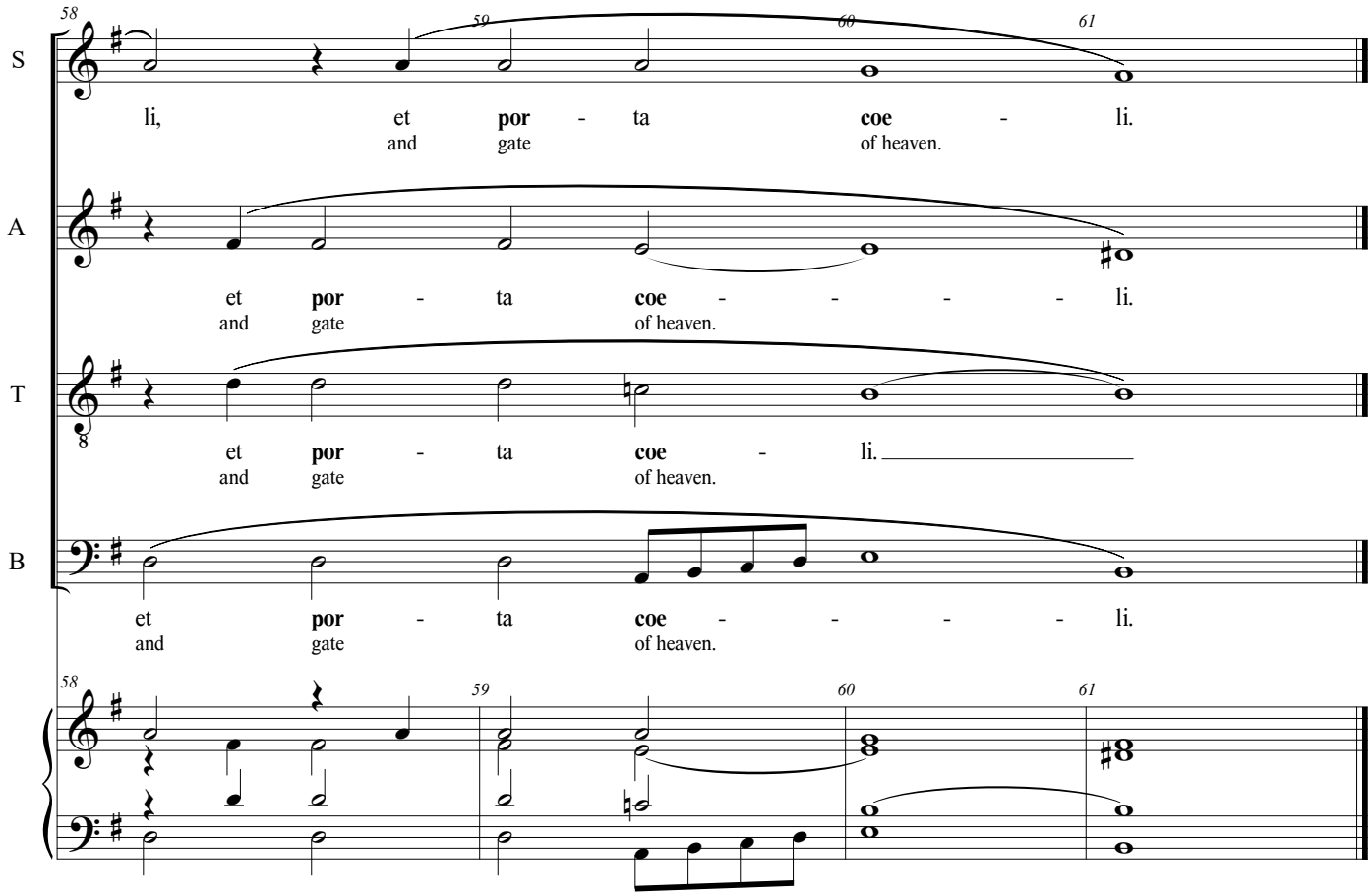

S
- cus i - ste, lo - cus i - ste, lo -
this, place this, place
A
dus est lo - cus i - ste, lo - cus
is, place this, place
T
o quam me - tu - en - dus
o how awesome
B
lo - cus i - ste, lo - cus
place this, place
S
- cus i - - - ste, ve - re non est hic
this, truly not is here
A
i - ste,
T
est lo - cus i - ste ve - re non est hic a - li - ud, ni - si
is place this, truly not is here something else other than
B
i - - - - ste, ve - re non est hic a - li - ud, ni - si
this, truly not is here something else other than


S
a - li-ud, ni - si do-mus De - - - - - - i,
something else other than house of God,
A
ve - re non est hic a - li - ud, ni - si do - mus De - i, ni -
truly not is here something else other that house of God, other
T
do-mus De - i, ve - re non est hic a - - - - li-ud, ni -
house of God, truly not is here something else other
B
do - mus De - i, ve - re non est hic a - li -
house of God, truly not is here something else
S
ve - re non est hic a - li - ud ni - si do-mus De -
truly not is here something else other than house of God,
A
- si do - mus De - i, ni - si do-mus De -
than house of God, other than house of God,
T
- si do - - - - - mus De - i et por -
than house of God and gate
B
ud, ni - si do - mus De - i et por - ta coe -
other than house of God and gate of heaven,


S
i, ve - re non est hic a - li - ud, ni - si
truly not is here something else, other than
A
i, ve - re non est hic a - li - ud, ni - si
truly not is here something else, other than
T
ta coe - li, ve - re non est hic a - li - ud,
of heaven, truly not is here something else,
B
- - li, ve - re non est hic a - li - ud,
truly not is here something else,


S
do - mus De - - - - i, ni - si do -
house of God, other than house
A
do - mus De - - - - - - i,
house of God,
T
ni - si do - mus De - i et por -
other than house of God and gate
B
ni - si do - mus De - i, ni - si do -
other than house of God, other than house


S
A
T
B
50
51
52
53
- mus De - i, ni - si do - mus De - i
of God, other than house of God
3
ni - si do - mus De - i et por -
other than house of God and gate
ta coe - - - - - li, ni - si do - mus
of heaven, other than house
- mus De - i, et por - ta coe -
of God, and gate of heaven,
54
55
56
57
et por - ta coe - - - - - -
and gate of heaven,
- ta coe - li, et por - ta coe - li,
of heaven, and gate of heaven,
De - i et por - ta coe - - - li,
of God and gate of heaven,
li, et por - ta coe - - - li,
and gate of heaven,


58
59
60
61
S
li, et por - ta coe - li.
and gate of heaven.
A
et por - ta coe - - - - li.
and gate of heaven.
T
et por - ta coe - li.
and gate of heaven.
B
et por - ta coe - - - - li.
and gate of heaven.