Prism

Missa Pange Lingua

by Josquin des Préz

arranged for

guitar

duet

by

Jeffry

Hamilton

Steele

PrismMusic
4 Spring St.
Gloucester MA 01930
978-282-3106
www.jeffrysteele.com

As heard on the CD album *Guitara Illuminata*
(Centaur Records *CRC 2384*)

artwork by Carla Mattioli, Awakening Arts

Missa Pange Lingua

by Josquin des Préz

arranged for guitar duet by
Jeffry Hamilton Steele

From the liner notes to the Centaur Records CD:

Of what little is known of the life of Josquin des Préz, a few details stand out that help form a picture of his nature. He was born in Picardy (in France, close to the border with Belgium) and distinguished himself as a singer in boyhood. That he grew to be considered one of the most valued composers of the day is evidenced by the higher fees paid him compared with his contemporaries. That he valued the spiritual over the material is implicit in his choice to spend his last period at the college of Condé, near his birthplace, when he might easily have held a court position in any of a number of countries. He must have sensed the conditions required for him to produce a work of the depth of Pange Lingua.

In this arrangement – of what may have been Josquin's final work – the original score has been transposed down by a minor third, both guitars having their strings tuned as were the Renaissance lute and vihuela (the interval of the major third now occurring between the third and fourth strings instead of between the second and third strings). As it was common contemporary practice to perform vocal music on these instruments, it is not surprising that this configuration lends itself idiomatically to the vocal polyphony of that time. In fact, vihuela tablature arrangements of Josquin's vocal music provide clues in questions of musica ficta (sharps and flats added to the original score by performers in accordance with contemporary practice) – as there can be little doubt as to whether a note is sharped when the actual fret on which it is fingered has been indicated. [Although these arrangements are from another region and produced by the next generation]. Throughout most of the work, each guitar plays two of the four voices – the latter originally corresponding to counter-tenor (alto), tenor, baritone and bass ranges.

I. The piece begins with the plainchant on which the mass is based, Pange Lingua ("O my tongue, proclaim the mystery") – whose text speaks of how Jesus "concluded in a marvelous manner his life on earth." It is played once each on the nylon and steel string guitars, two successive "verses" being each heard in different octaves. The melody is in the phrygian mode – a church mode in the minor with a particularly dark intensity, owing to the second degree of the scale being a half step above the root note.

This is followed immediately by the Kyrie – the shortest movement in most masses, having the briefest text – whose three sections are in 3/4 ("Lord have mercy"), 2/4 ("Christ have mercy") and 3/4 ("Lord have mercy") respectively. Here the first phrase (ten notes) of the plainchant melody is the basis for (what begins as) a canon at the fifth. Although printed editions do not maintain the phrygian mode in each entering voice, I have taken the liberty of doing so (as was done in the first recording made of the Mass by the New York Pro Musica). This makes for alternation between two phrygian tonal centers, a fifth apart, throughout the Mass.

II. With the Gloria, a generic chant intro ("Glory be to God on high") leads us into a similar treatment of the plainchant melody, followed by a playful exchange between voices on the two-word text phrases: Laudamus te. Benedicimus te. Etc... ("We praise thee. We glorify thee."). This style continues through other declarations of praise. When the text foreshadows the Agnus Dei (Qui tollis peccata mundi...), the meter switches to 2/4 with a more plaintive canon that begins, this time, using the first four notes of the plainchant. With suscipe deprecationem ("hear our prayer"), we hear the first homophonic (all parts singing the same words at the same time) moment in the mass thus far. Note how the plea misere nobis ("have mercy on us") – also to be heard in the Agnus Dei movement – is dramatized by an octave leap in the melody. The Holy Spirit may have been a nimble one in Josquin's view, for the music takes on a dance-like (dotted rhythm)

character for the Cum Sancto Spiritu that closes the movement.

III. The Credo begins in 2/4 with what can be interpreted as a much embellished version of the first two phrases (21 notes) of the plainchant. Though very similar to the opening of the other movements, there is something particularly declarative about the lines here, reflecting strength of belief ("I believe in one God, the father almighty, etc."). The list of beliefs builds to a crescendo with the Qui propter nos homines ("Who for us men, and for our salvation, came down from heaven"). There follows the suddenly quiet peace of the Et incarnatus est ("And became incarnate by the Holy Spirit"), which closes with one of few cadences on the relative major. Played by a single guitar, it is the most extended section of homophony in the Mass. This moment may be taken to symbolize, musically, letting go of the struggle to predict our destinies and allowing God to come through fully (as did Jesus when, at baptism, he became "The Christ").

The plainchant's first phrase is next invoked for the reverential Crucifixus ("He was crucified also for us"); the ascent to heaven is reflected in rising scales; and dotted rhythms return for sitting "on the right hand of the Father". The Et in Spiritum Sanctum ("I believe in the Holy Spirit...") section reaches its apex in a duet for the two upper voices. The meter then shifts to an unshakable 3/4 meter for the acknowledgement of baptism, back to 2/4 for "the resurrection of the dead", and back to 3/4 for "the life of the world to come." The final Amen is a brief "tape loop" type canon such as will be given more extended treatment in the dona nobis pacem that closes the mass.

IV. Like the Kyrie and Gloria, the Sanctus begins in 3/4 with the first phrase of the plainchant, its first brief section coming to repose in a plagal (IV-I) cadence on the relative major. Pleni sunt coeli ("Heaven and earth are full of your glory") is set to fiery canonic writing in the two upper voices – where imitations come as close as one beat apart – often defiant of meter. In fact, breaking free of time signature constraints is a musical device Josquin appears to use more often the further from earth he would like to take us – as one may experience in the following Osanna in excelsis.

To balance the earlier duet, the next section, Benedictus qui venit ("Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord"), is sung by the two lower voices. The bass voice pauses, as though a mountain climber, to hear each of his initial phrases echoed by the baritone. Seeking this voice from the next mountain, he hikes towards it; and thus we hear the time between echoes decreasing. Could this be Josquin's depiction of the journey towards God: how we seek the being who produced the echo we have been hearing, only to find that He was singing to us from within? As is customary, the Sanctus closes with a reprise of the Osanna.

V. Also beginning in 3/4, the Agnus Dei ("Lamb of God") quotes the first three notes of the plainchant but then surprises us on the fourth note by jumping down to the sixth degree of the scale rather than the seventh (as we have heard in every previous instance) – temporarily transforming the earthly melancholy and struggle felt in the phrygian minor mode into the heaven-bound relative major. Though we may be led to expect that this section will cadence on the major, in the penultimate beat Josquin brings us back into minor. The middle section is an extended duo between the two higher voices, played on the solo classical guitar, in 2/4. Like the Pleni sunt coeli duo (from the Sanctus), the voices at first have canon entrances four beats apart, but intensity increases – as each voice becomes more anxious to be heard – and soon the entrances are coming only one beat apart. On the first miserere nobis ("have mercy on us") of this section, we twice hear a yearning phrase that Josquin will reinvoke near the close of the movement.

In the final section, each voice enters three beats apart (in 3/4) with one "Agnus Dei" each, pathos leant by wrenching half-step dissonances. Here, only three notes of the plainchant remain intact, beyond which the melody has a new shape emphasizing – or giving in to the gravity of – the root note. The meter immediately shifts to 2/4 as the treble voice begins the first six notes of the plainchant in augmentation (lengthened note values) – a technique Josquin used throughout his earlier masses but only chose this single instance to employ in this one. After the usual qui tollis peccata mundi ("who takes away the sins of the earth") we are led into the dona nobis pacem ("grant us peace"). Josquin appears to evoke three consecutive and distinct moods with each statement of this famous prayer: reticence (when the voices are paired), heroism (repeated notes followed by a brief descent culminating in the aforementioned "yearning" phrase), and, finally, bliss. The sense of inner peace evoked by this closing canon is at the same time plaintive, as if leaving behind the emotional intensity of human existence upon reaching the Kingdom of Heaven.

While this arrangement was recorded on two classical guitars, to help distinguish the lines of polyphony one was strung with Thomastik rope-core steel strings (which are optimized for nylon-string guitars). Fingering has been left to the players. While straightforward in most cases, a few large stretches will be required to maintain the independence of voices when they come to a unison.

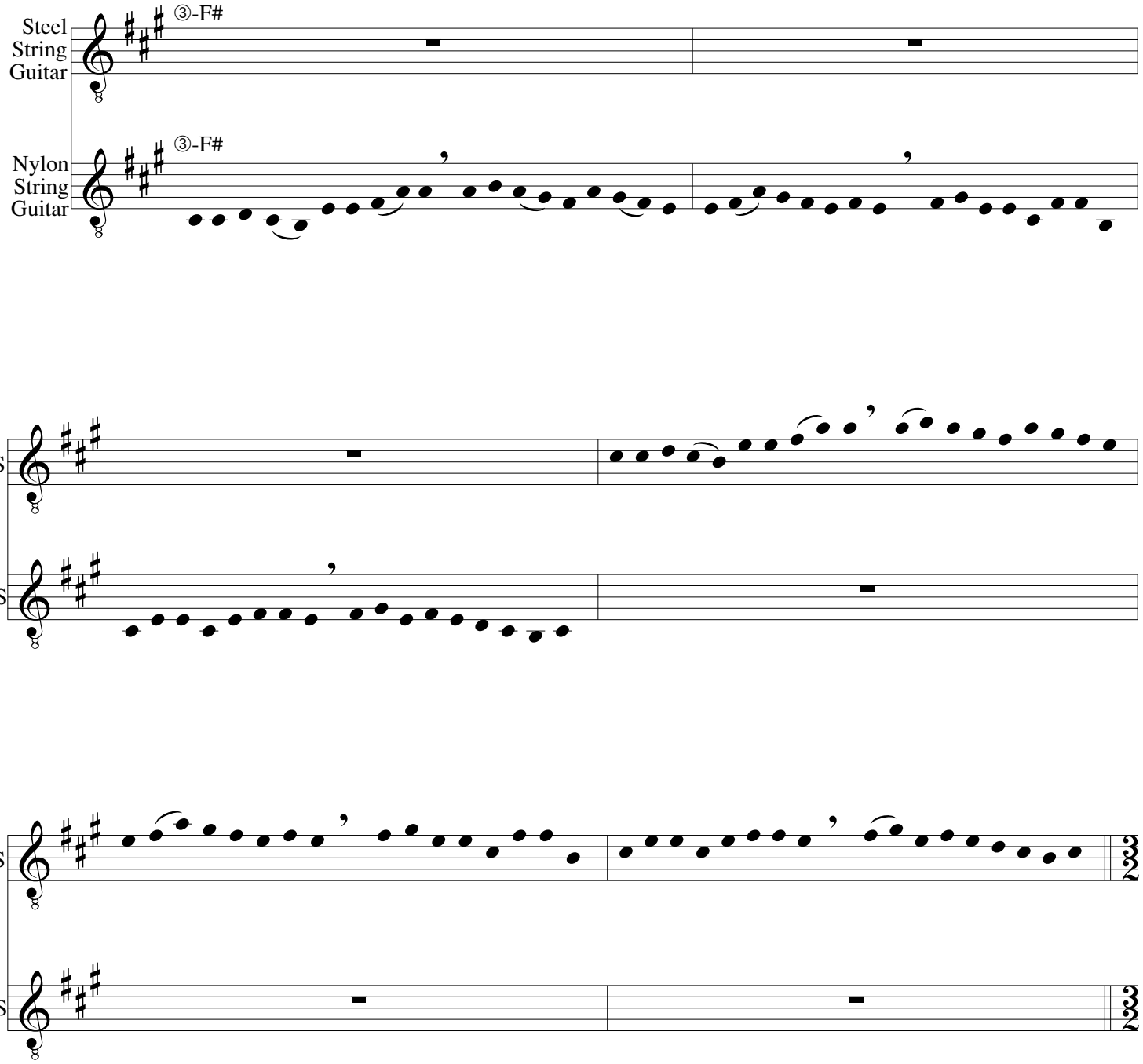
Jeffry Hamilton Steele

MISSA PANGE LINGUA

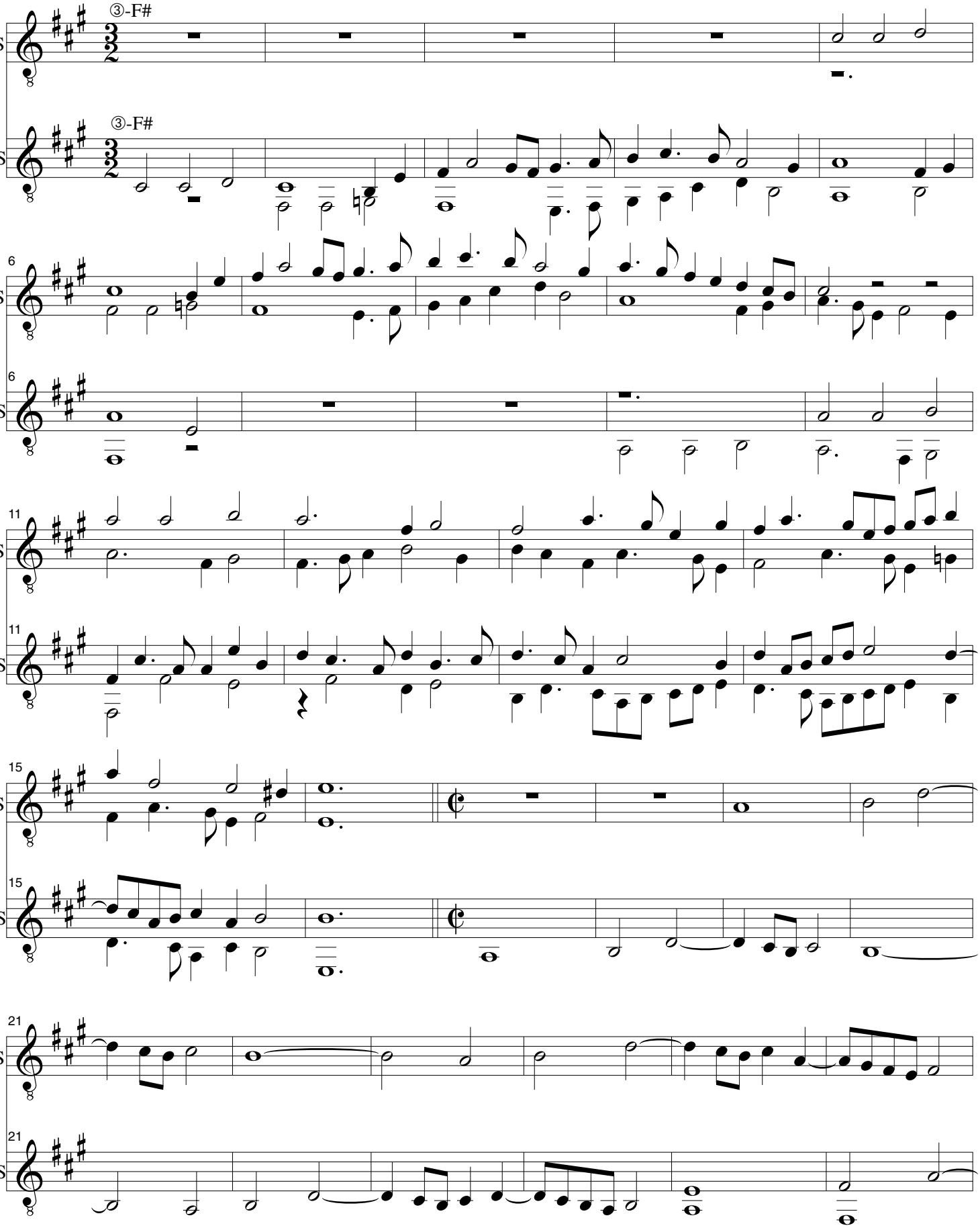
Arranged for Two Guitars by
JEFFRY HAMILTON STEELE

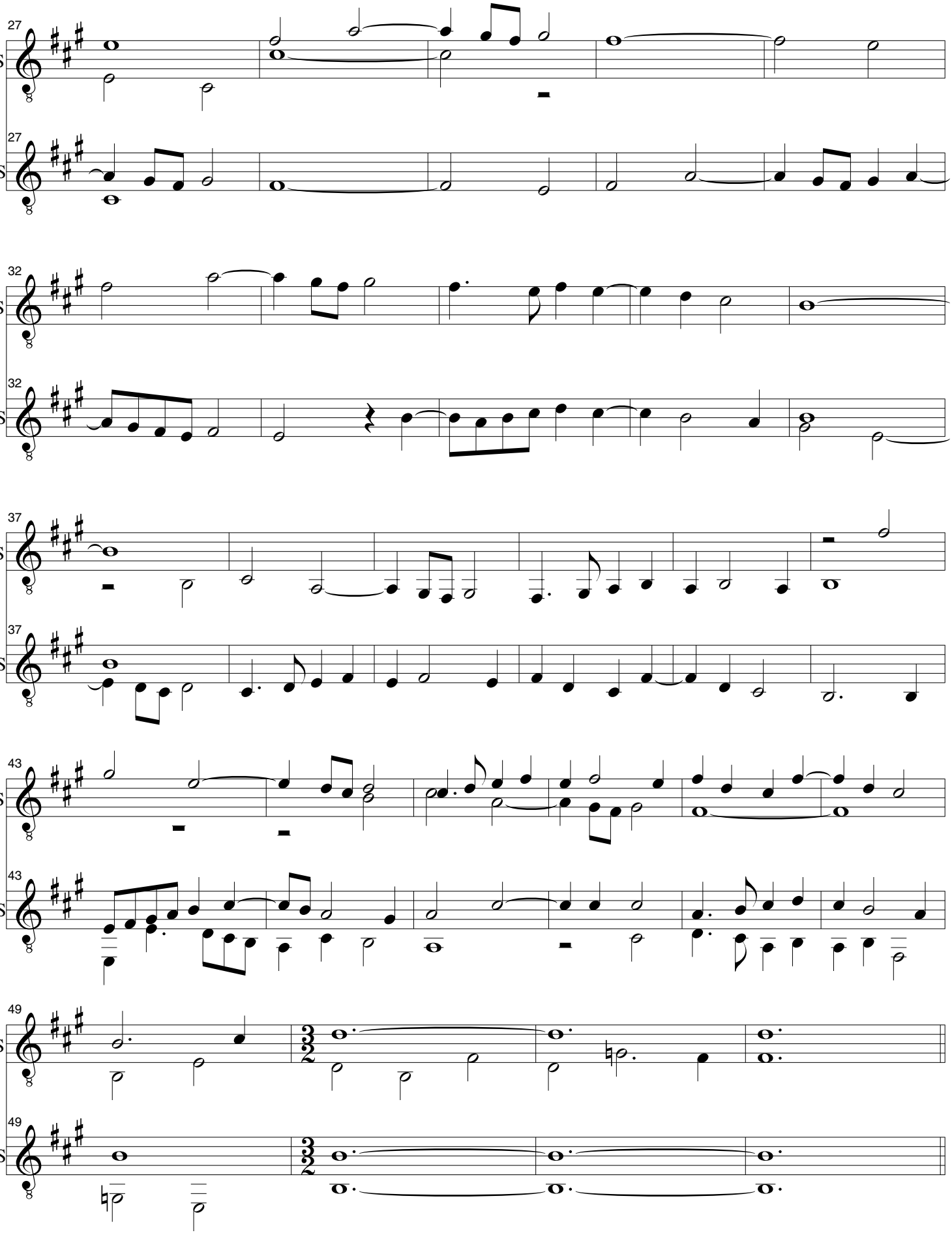
JOSQUIN DES PRÉZ

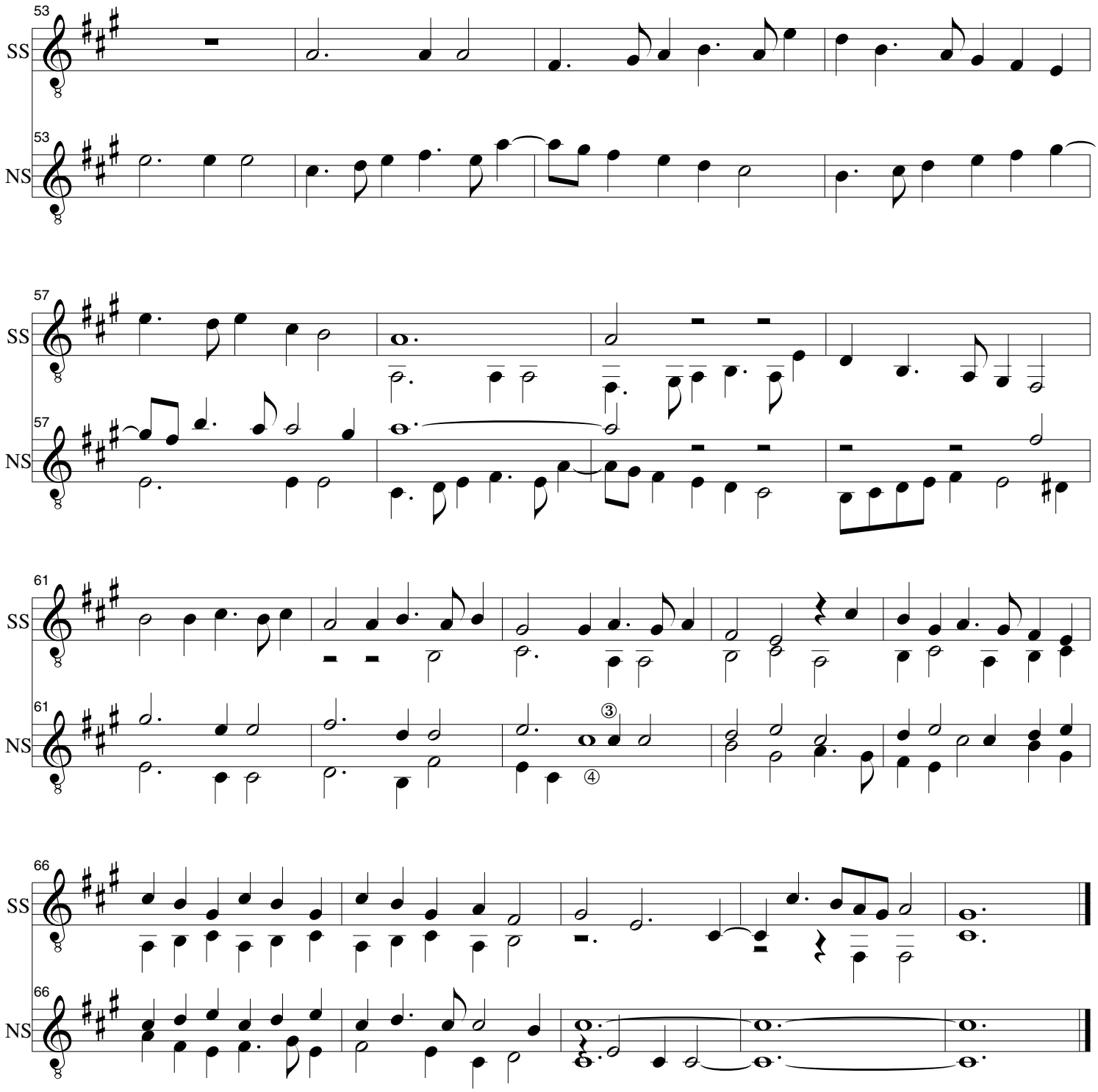
Plainchant



Kyrie

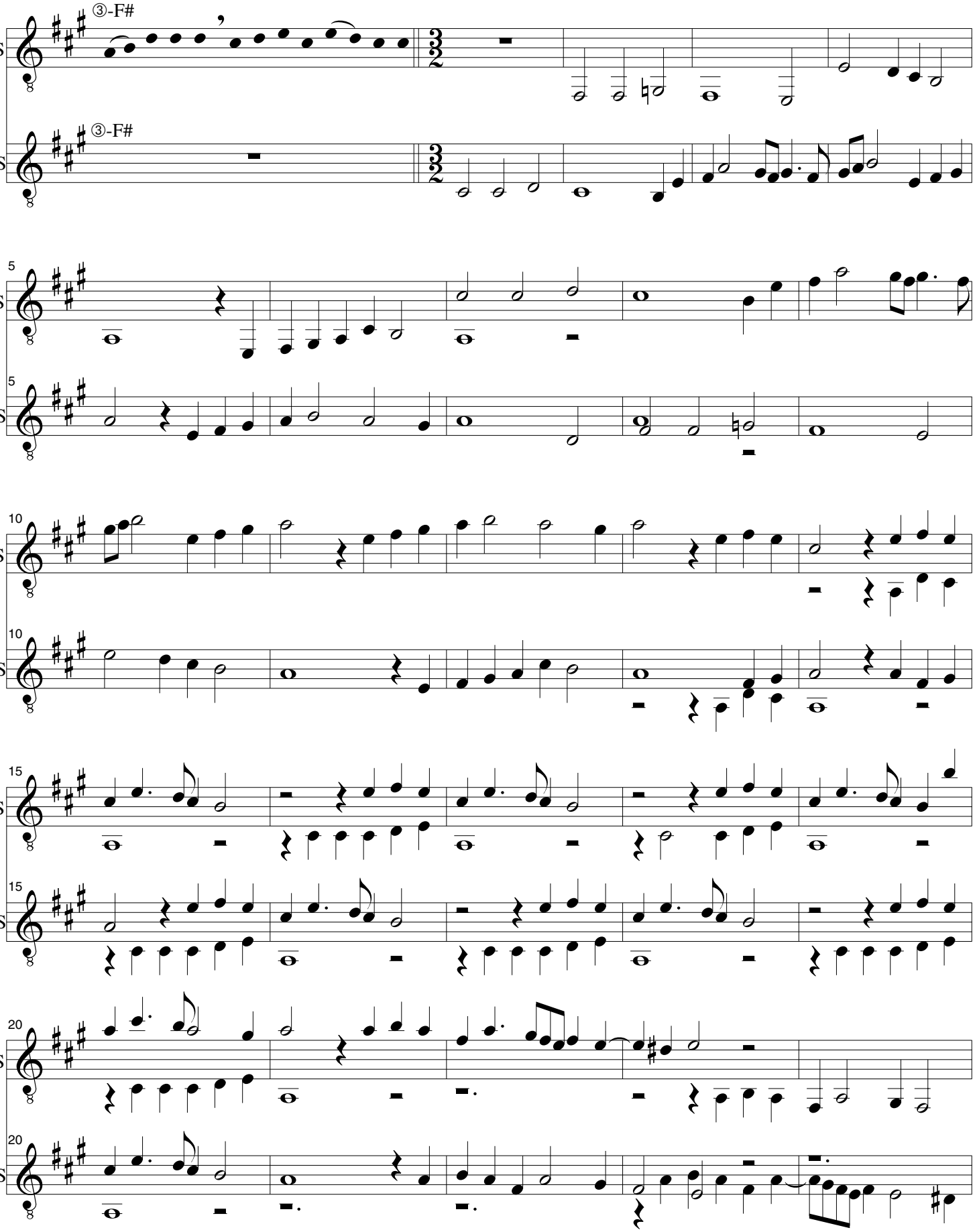


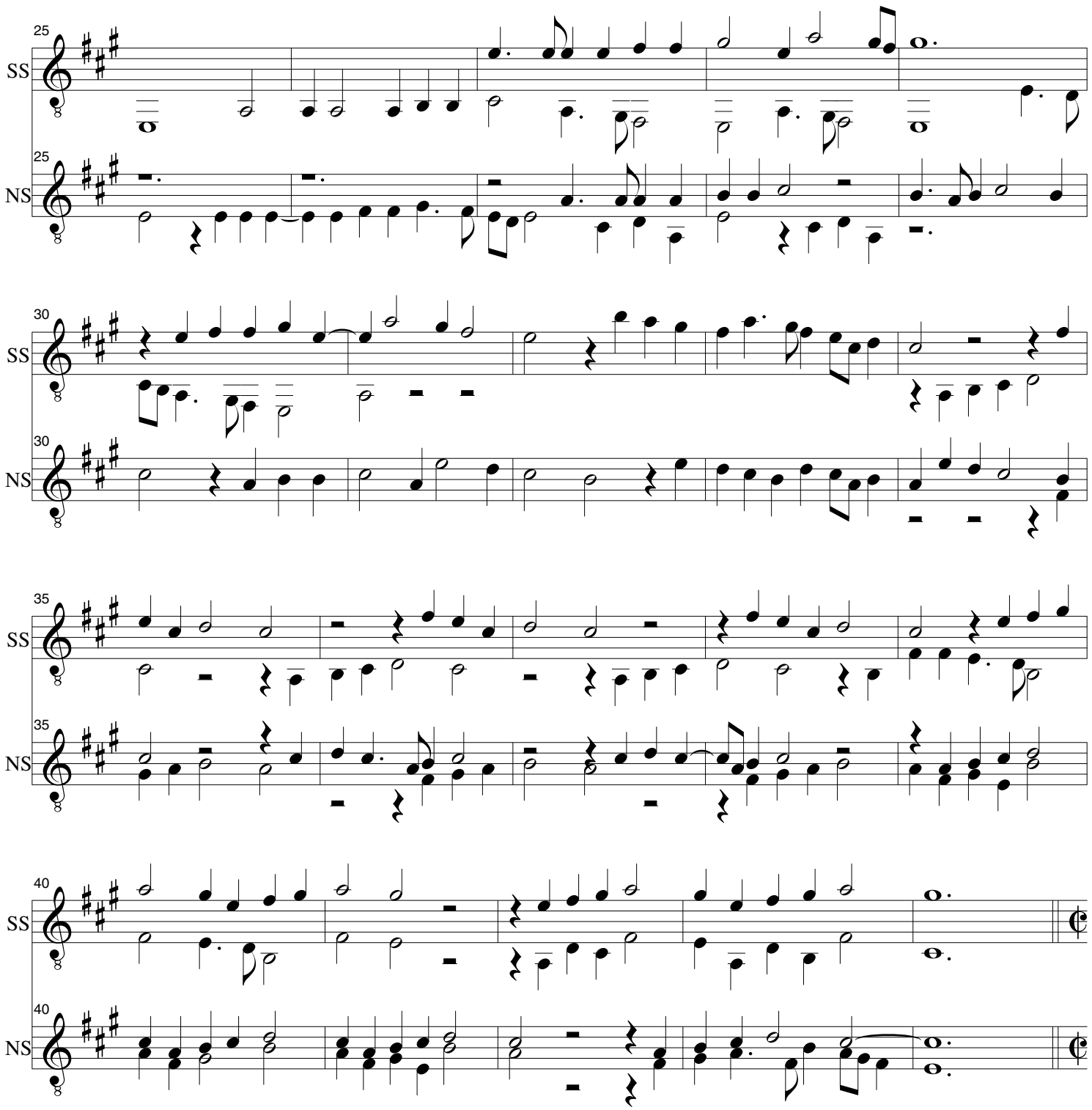

27
SS
27
NS
32
SS
32
NS
37
SS
37
NS
43
SS
43
NS
49
SS
49
NS

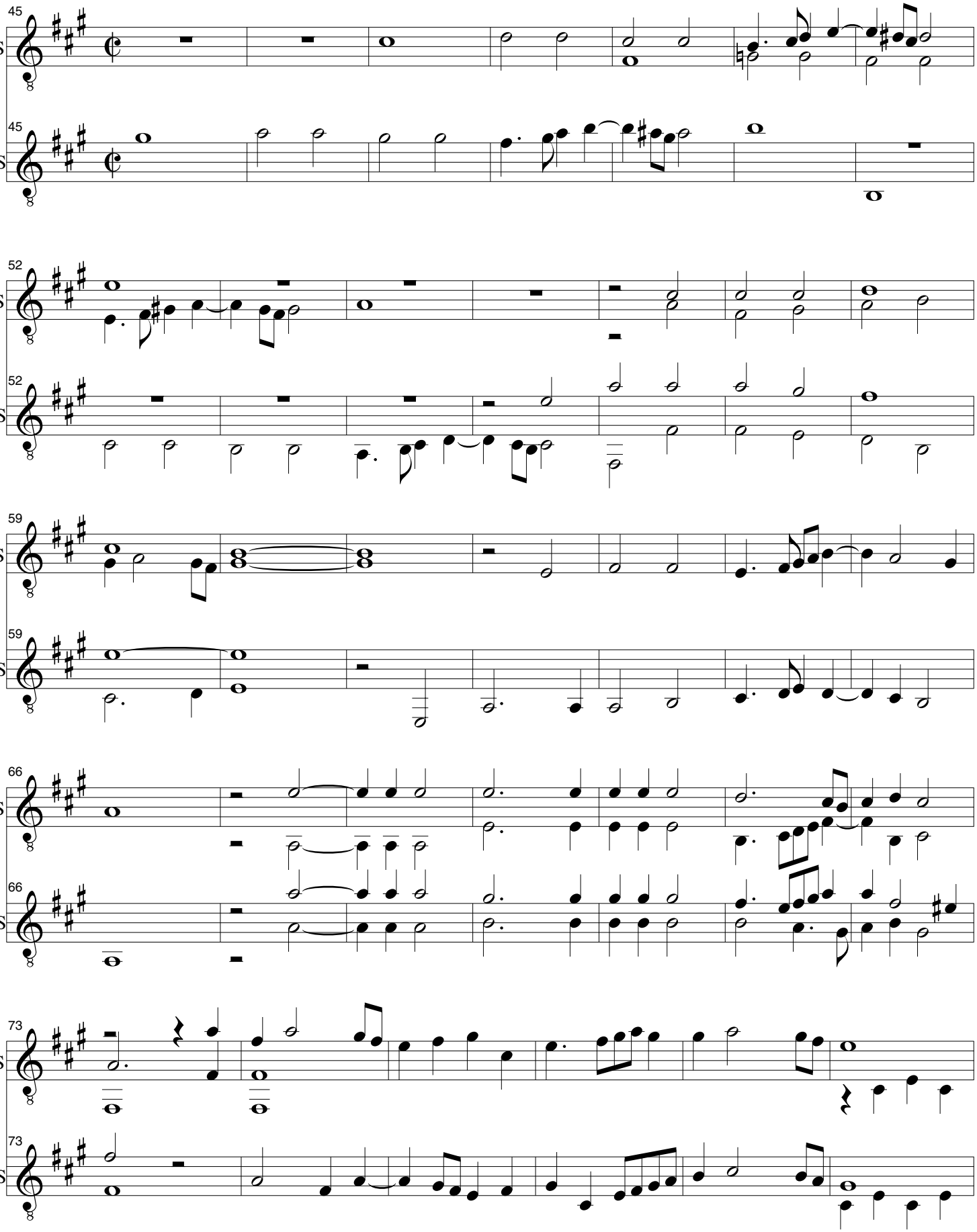

53
SS
53
NS
57
SS
57
NS
61
SS
61
NS
③
④
66
SS
66
NS

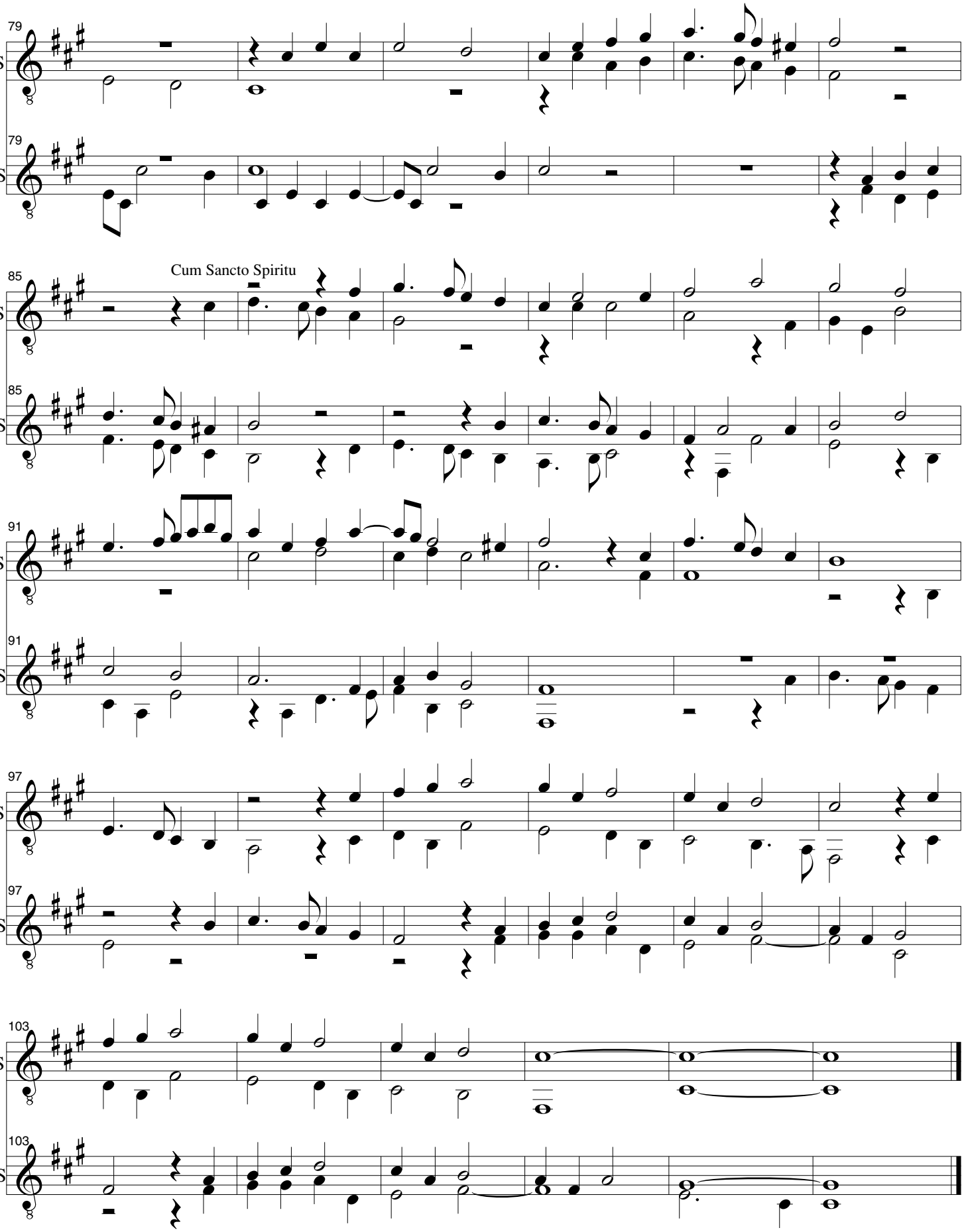
This page intentionally left blank to facilitate page turns.

Gloria

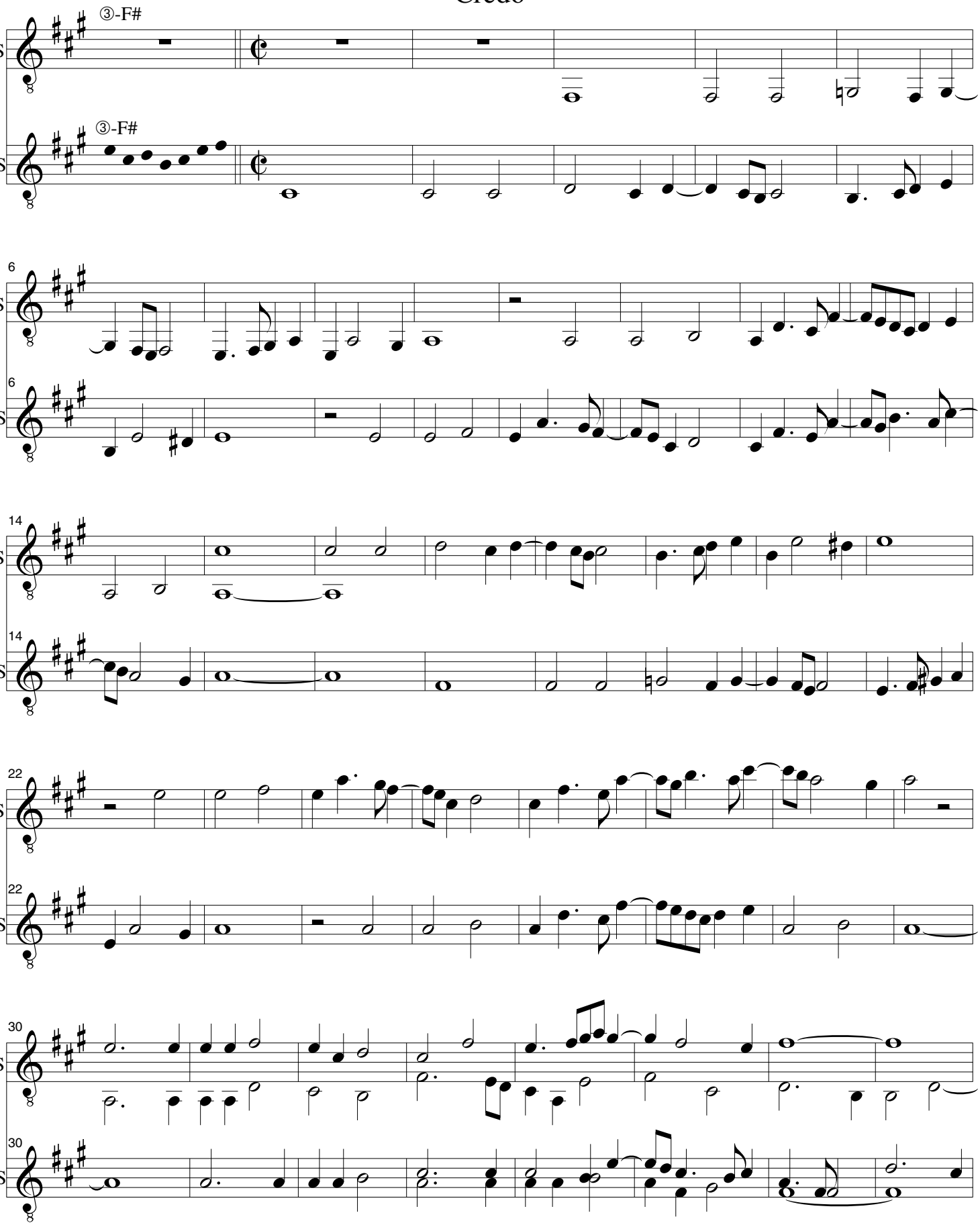


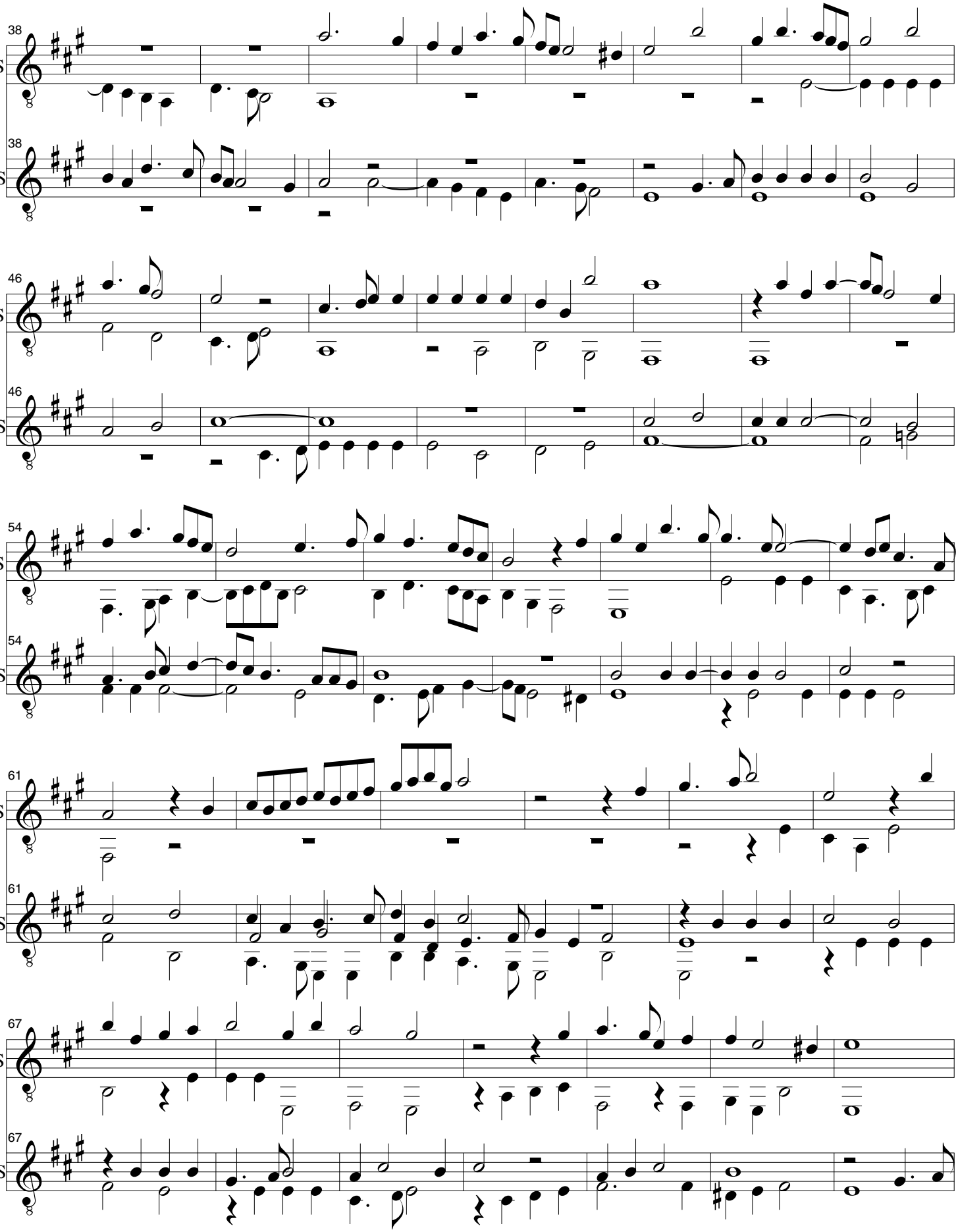

25
SS
25
NS
30
SS
30
NS
35
SS
35
NS
40
SS
40
NS

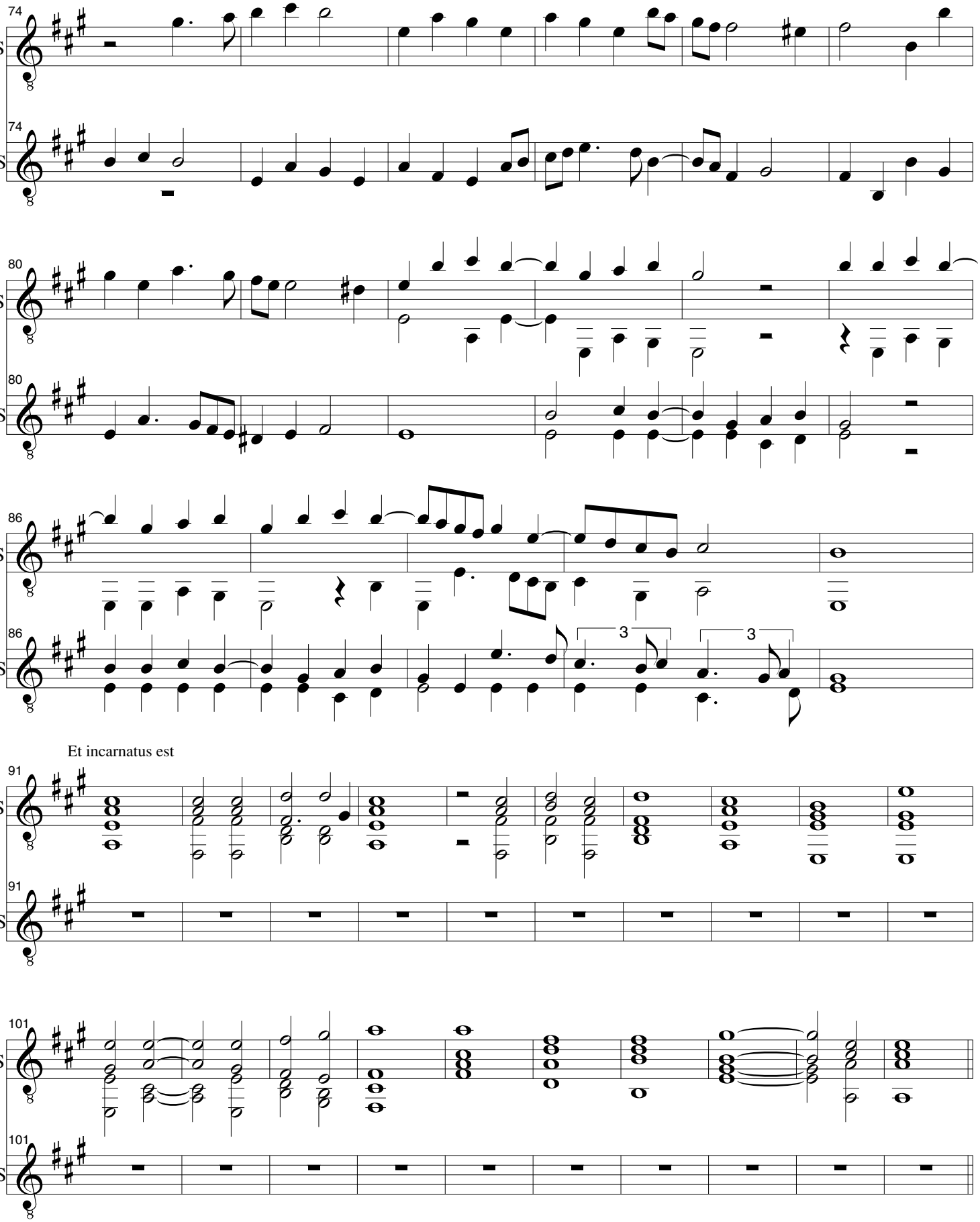

45
SS
45
NS
52
SS
52
NS
59
SS
59
NS
66
SS
66
NS
73
SS
73
NS

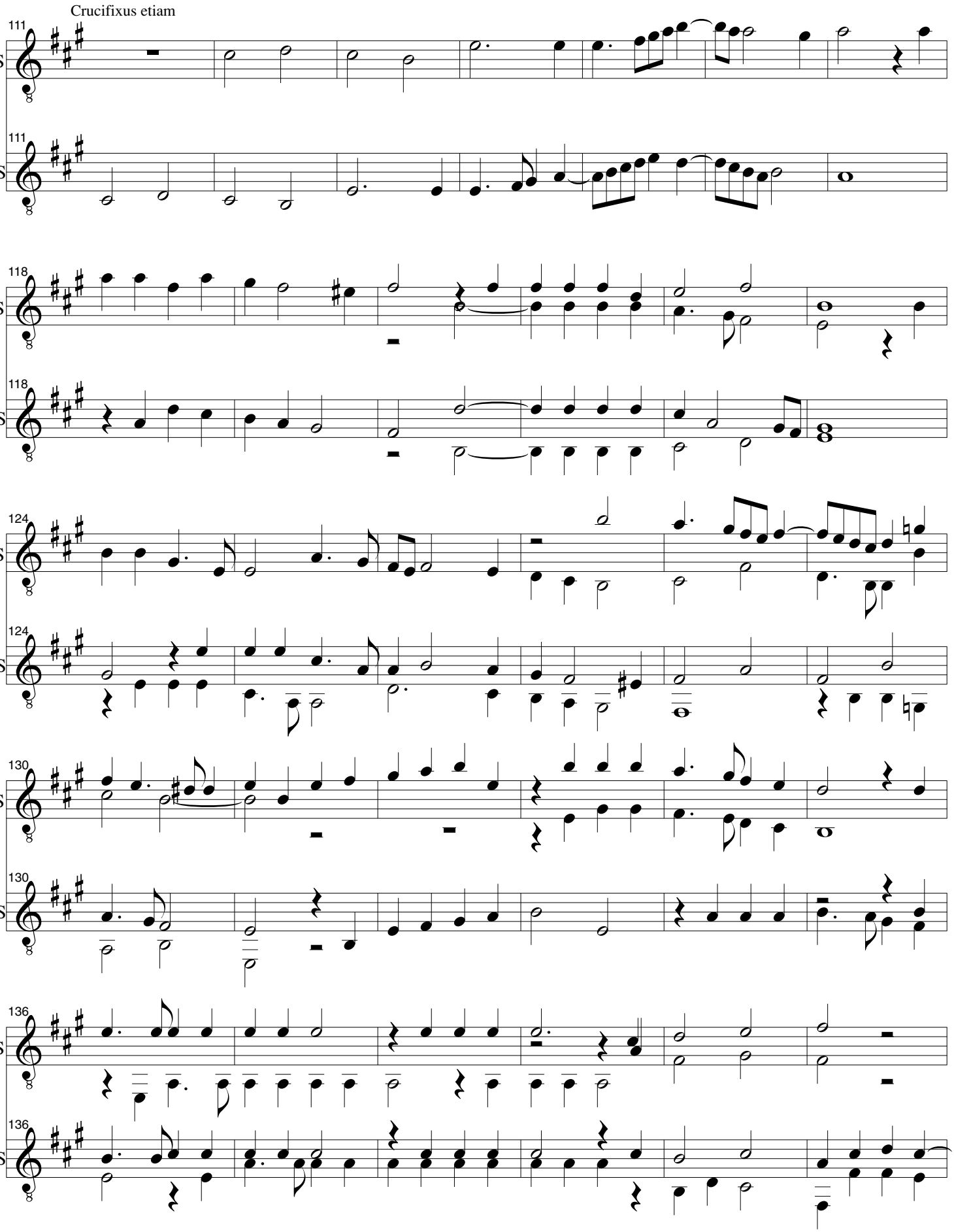

79
SS
79
NS
Cum Sancto Spiritu
85
SS
85
NS
91
SS
91
NS
97
SS
97
NS
103
SS
103
NS

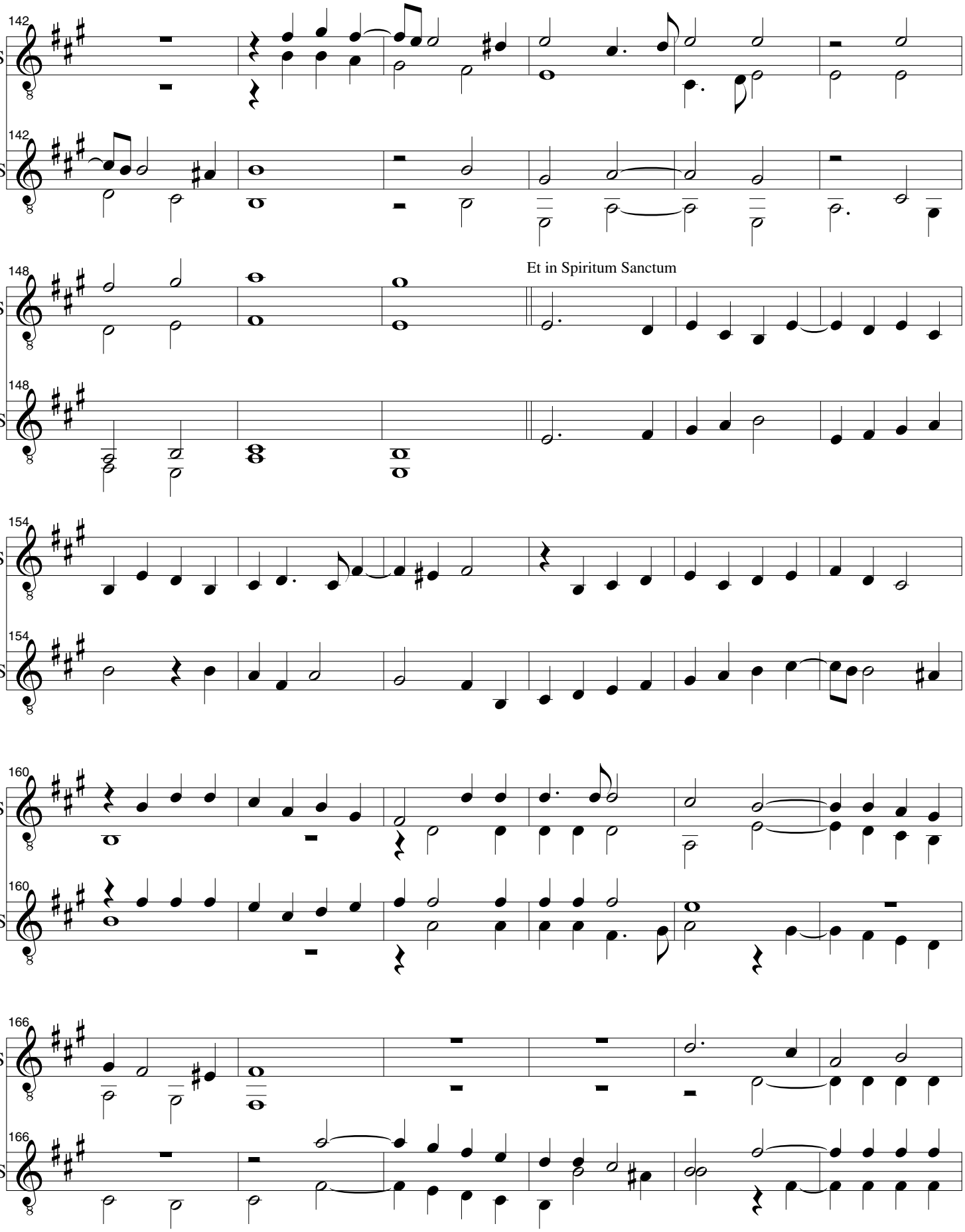
Credo

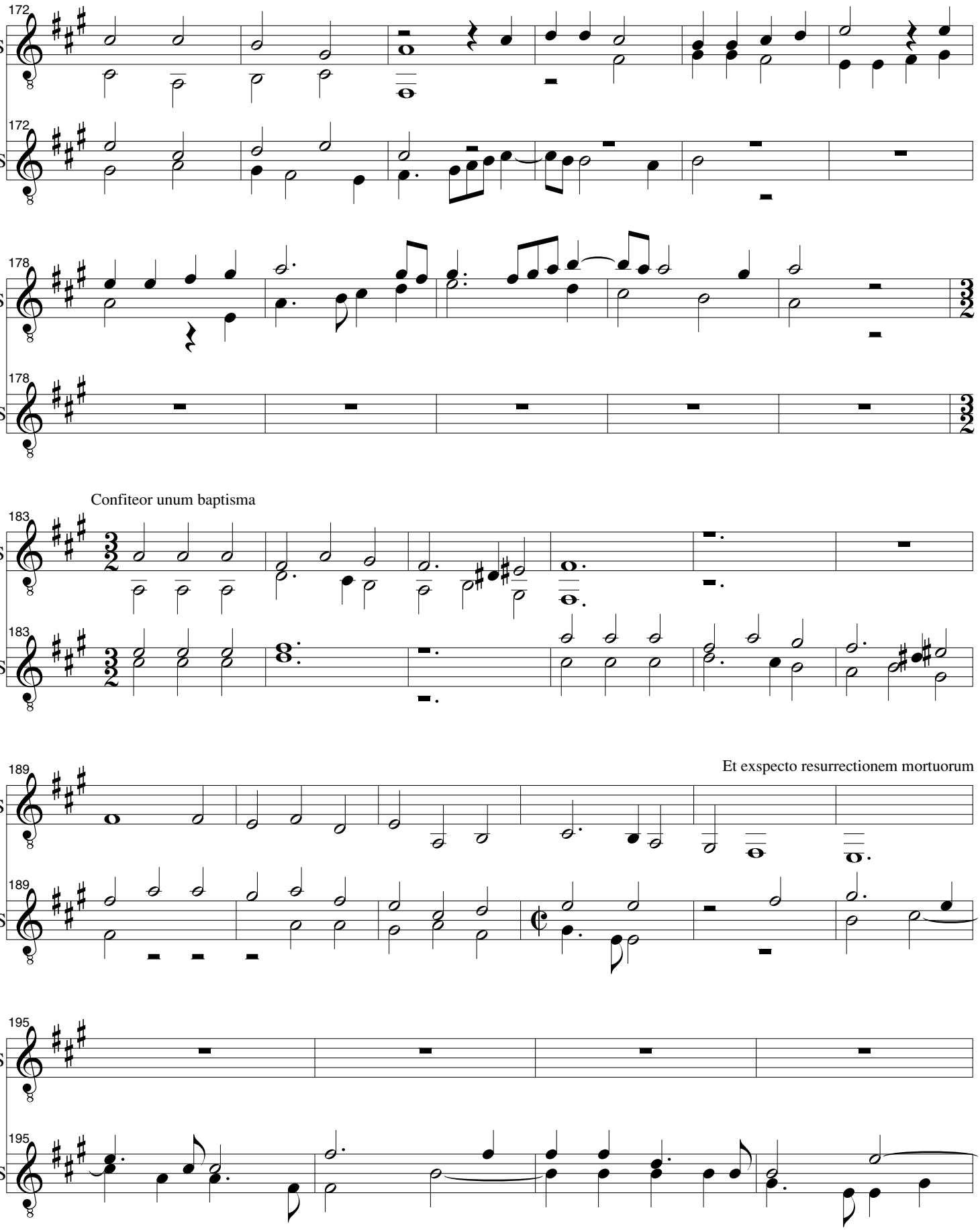


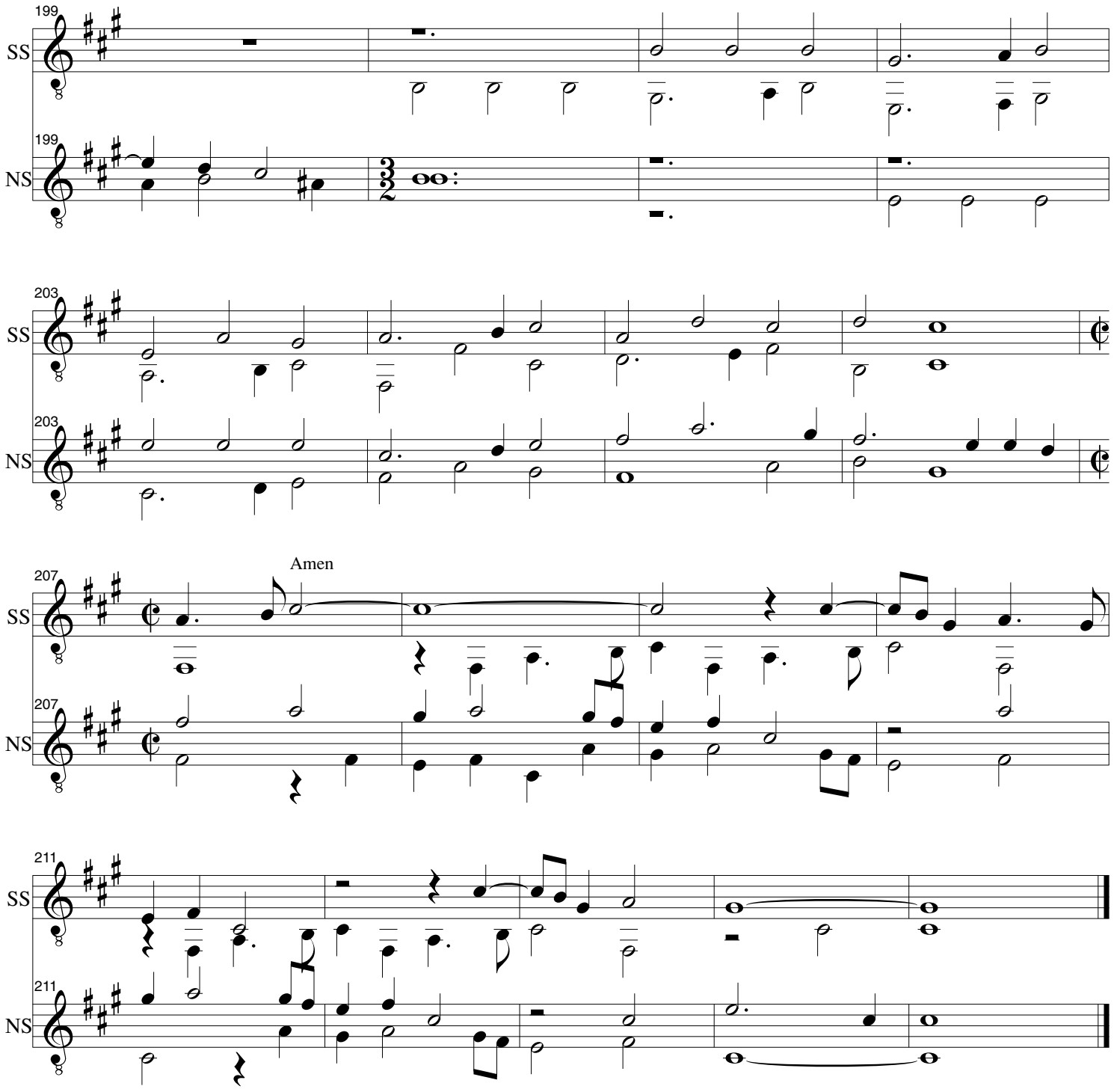

38
SS
38
NS
46
SS
46
NS
54
SS
54
NS
61
SS
61
NS
67
SS
67
NS


74
SS
74
NS
80
SS
80
NS
86
SS
86
NS
3
3
Et incarnatus est
91
SS
91
NS
101
SS
101
NS

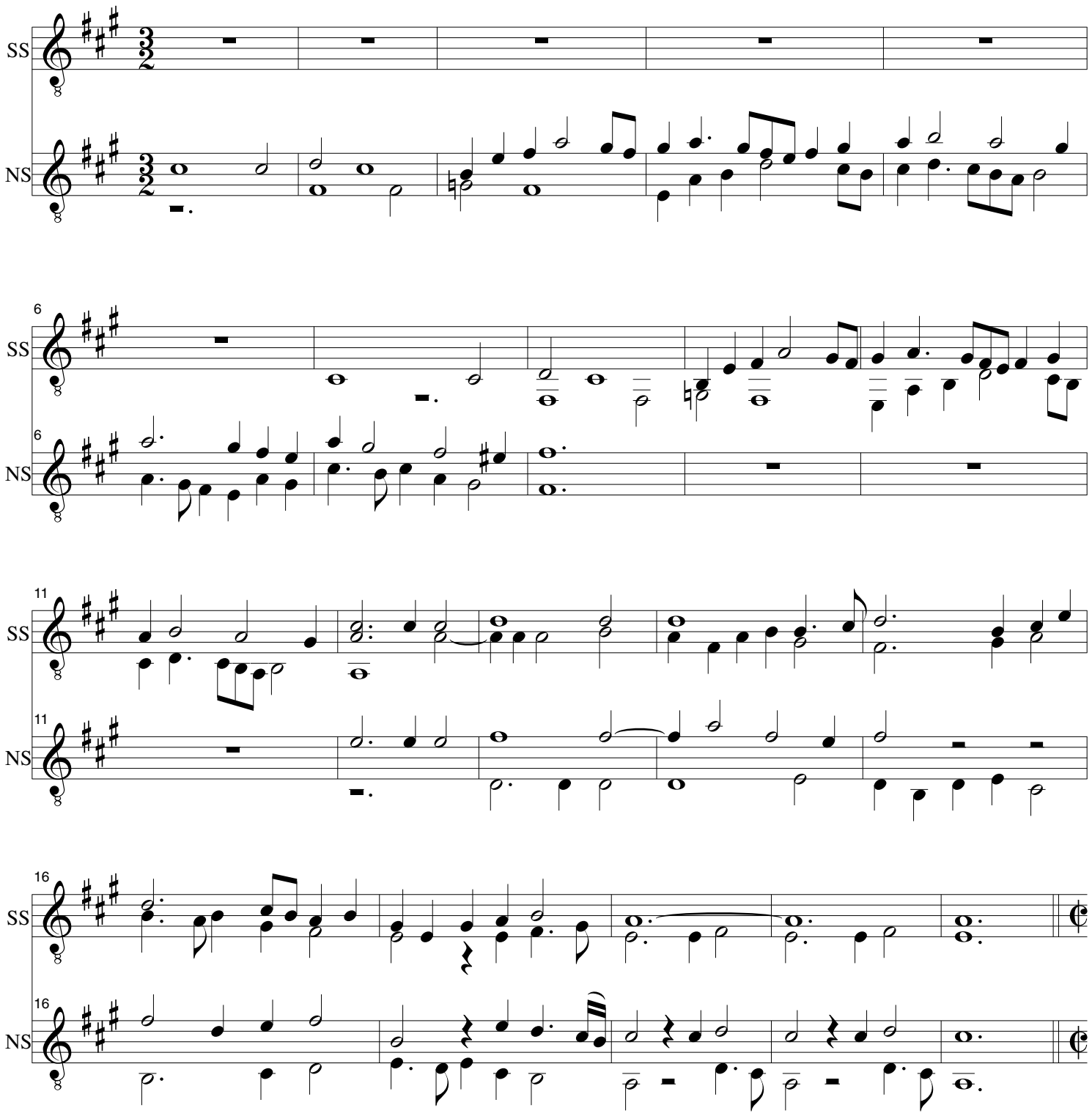

Crucifixus etiam
111
SS
111
NS
118
SS
118
NS
124
SS
124
NS
130
SS
130
NS
136
SS
136
NS

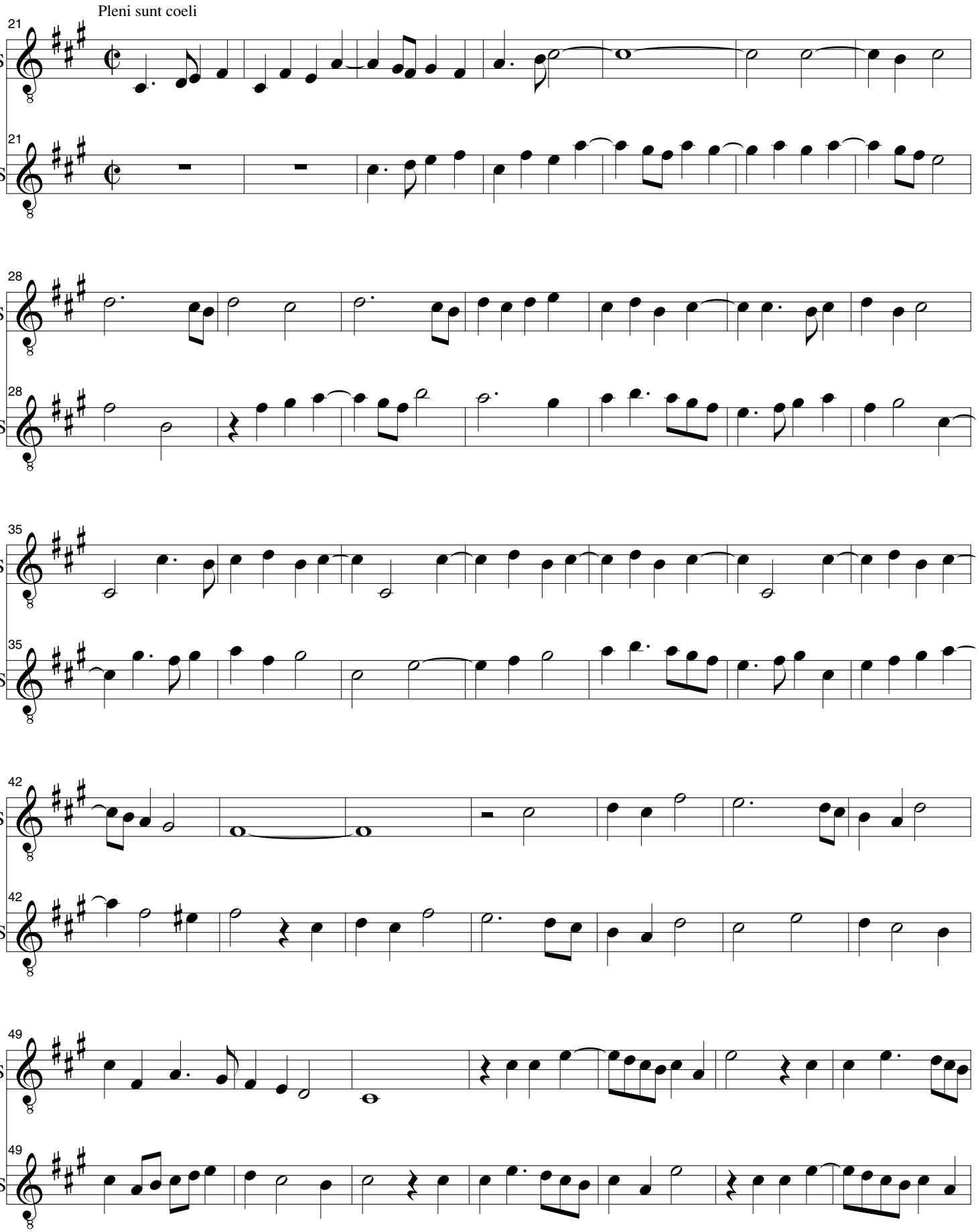

142
SS
142
NS
148
Et in Spiritum Sanctum
SS
148
NS
154
SS
154
NS
160
SS
160
NS
166
SS
166
NS

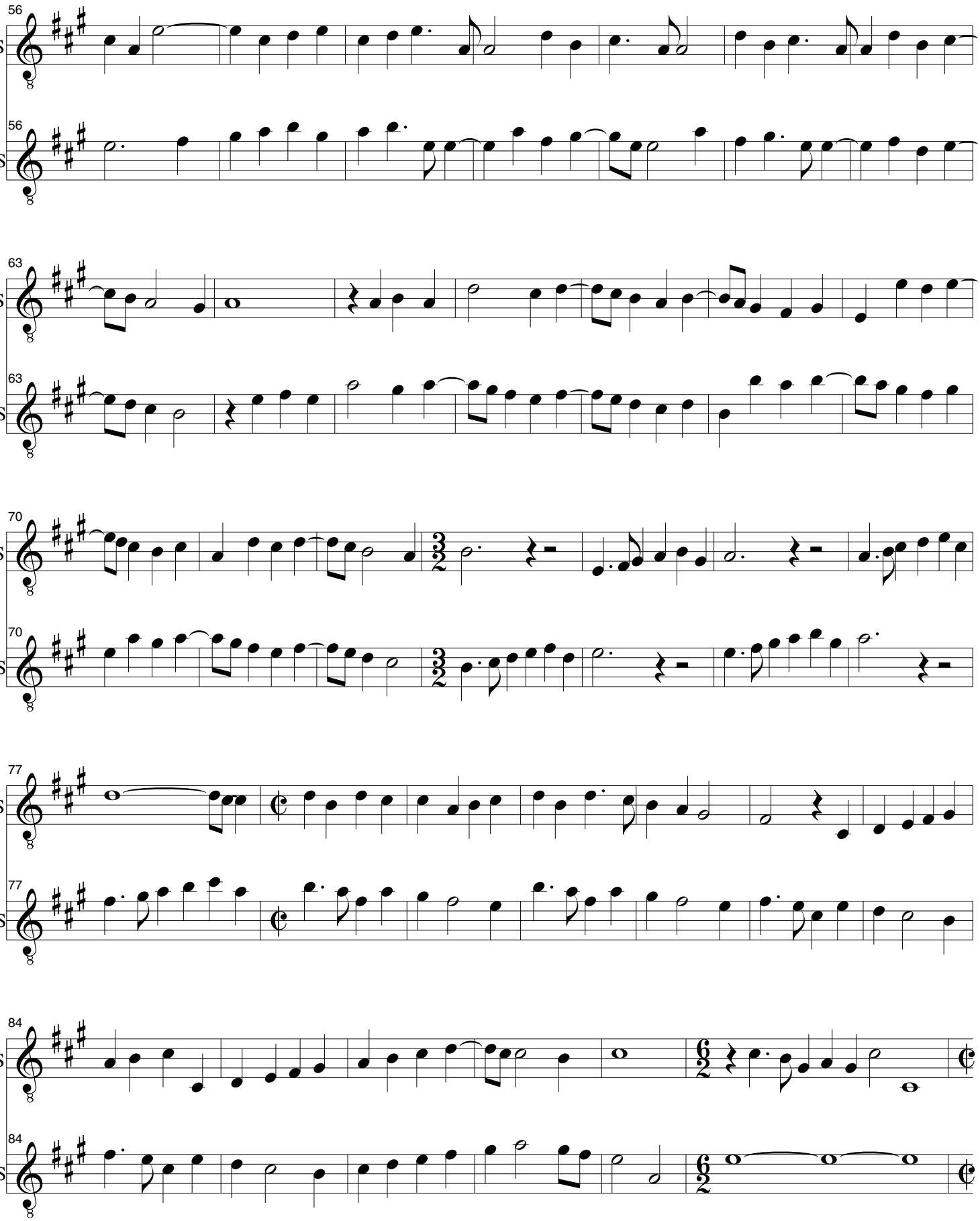

172
SS
172
NS
178
SS
178
NS
Confiteor unum baptisma
183
SS
183
NS
Et exspecto resurrectionem mortuorum
189
SS
189
NS
195
SS
195
NS

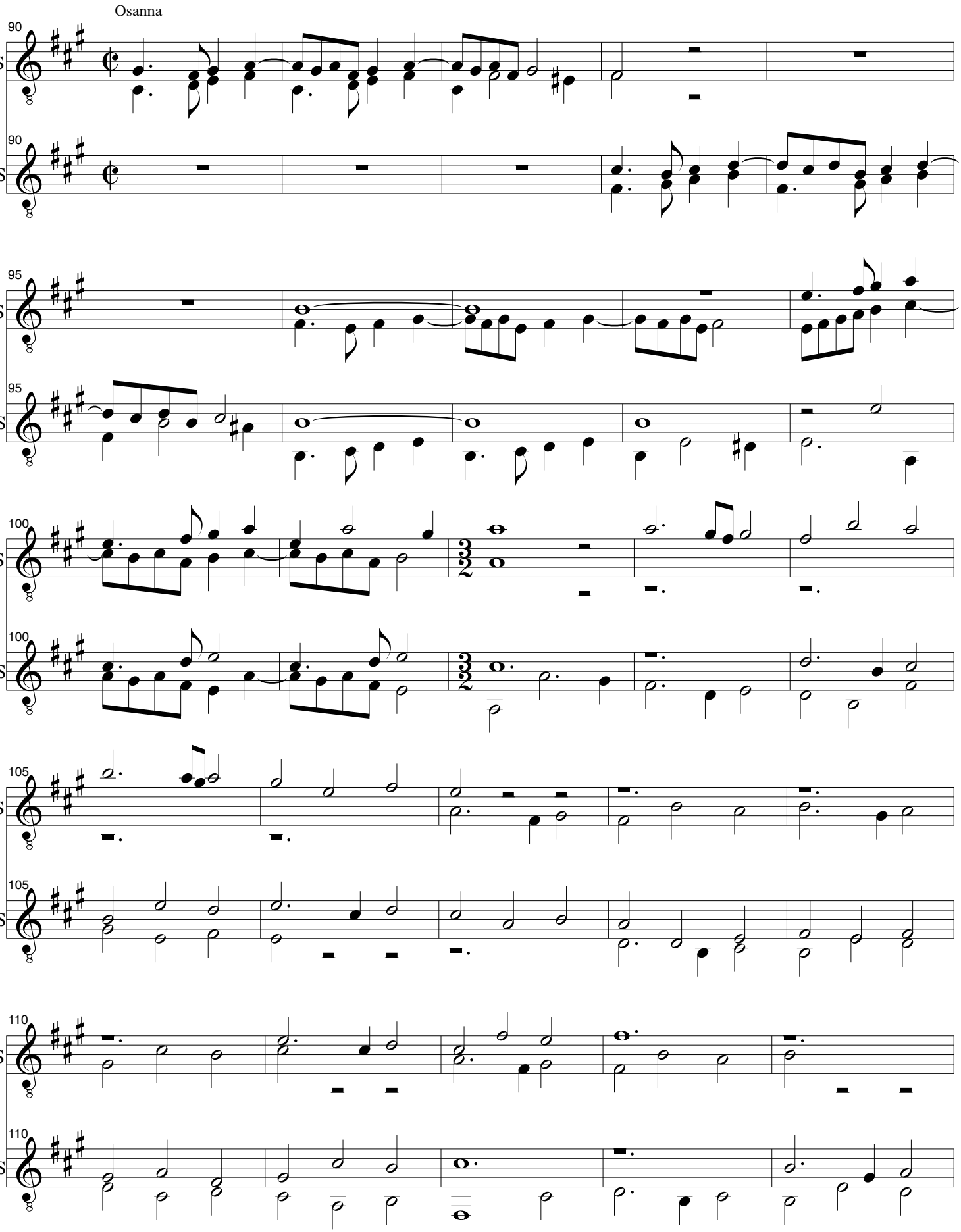

199
SS
199
NS
203
SS
203
NS
Amen
207
SS
207
NS
211
SS
211
NS

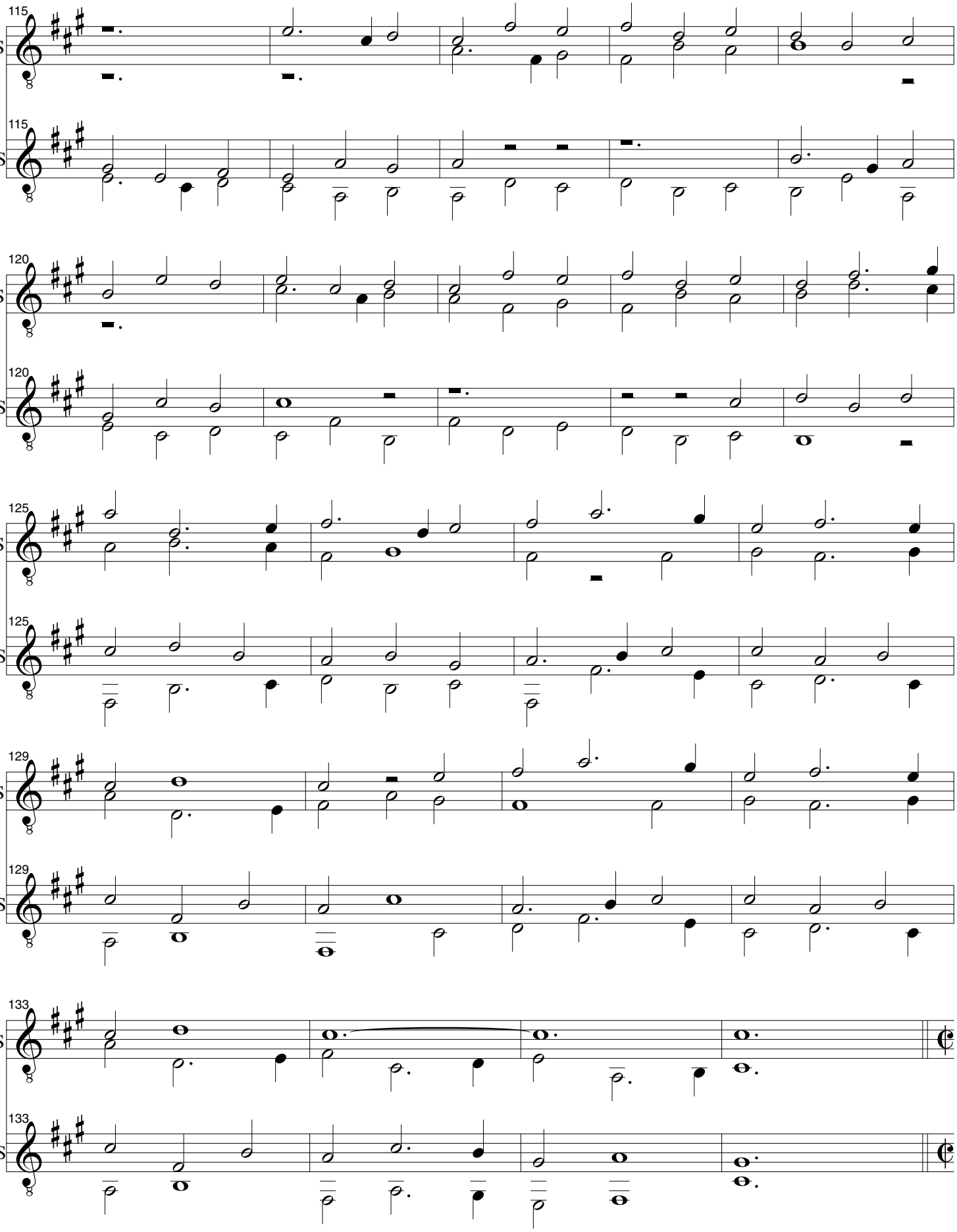
Sanctus

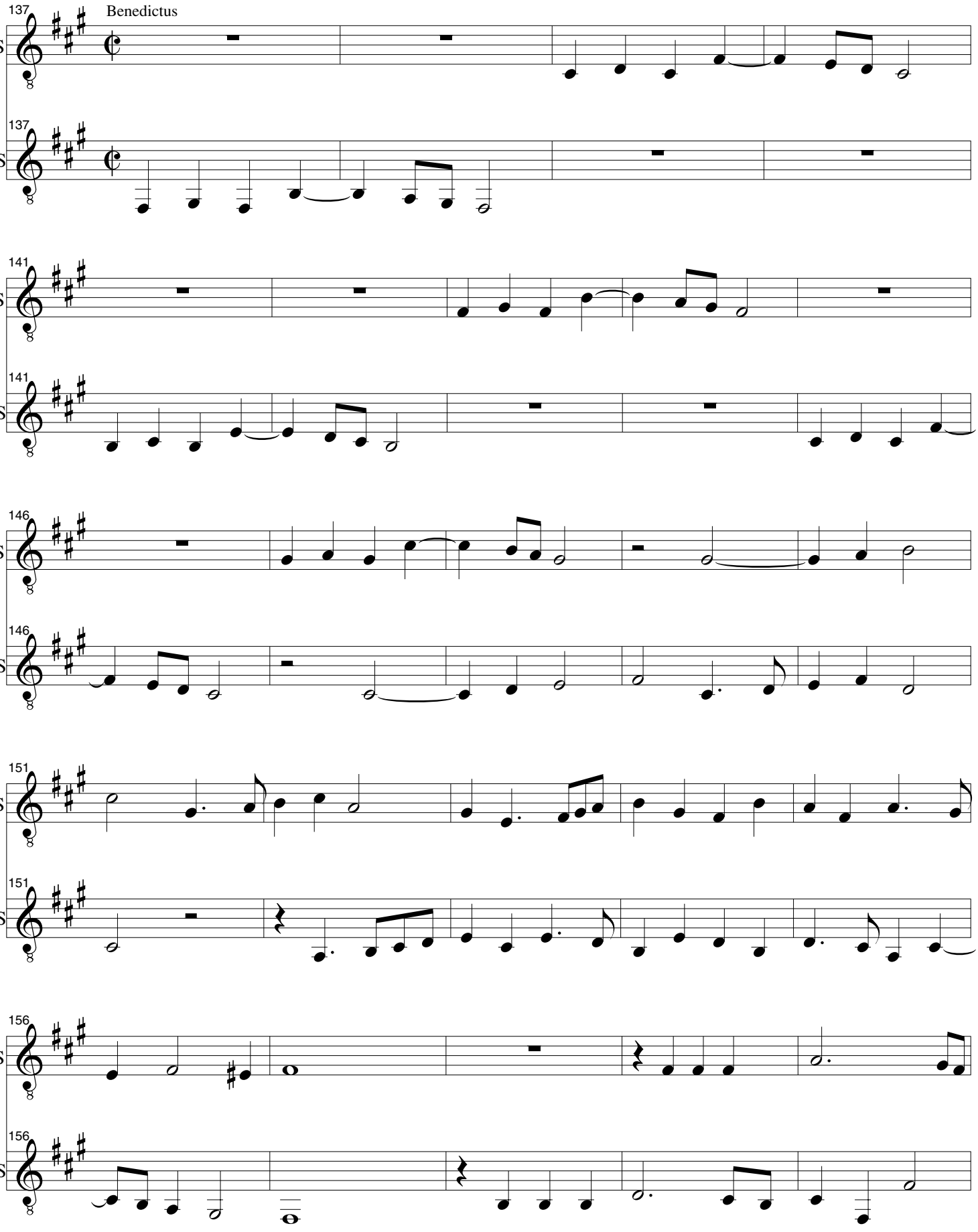


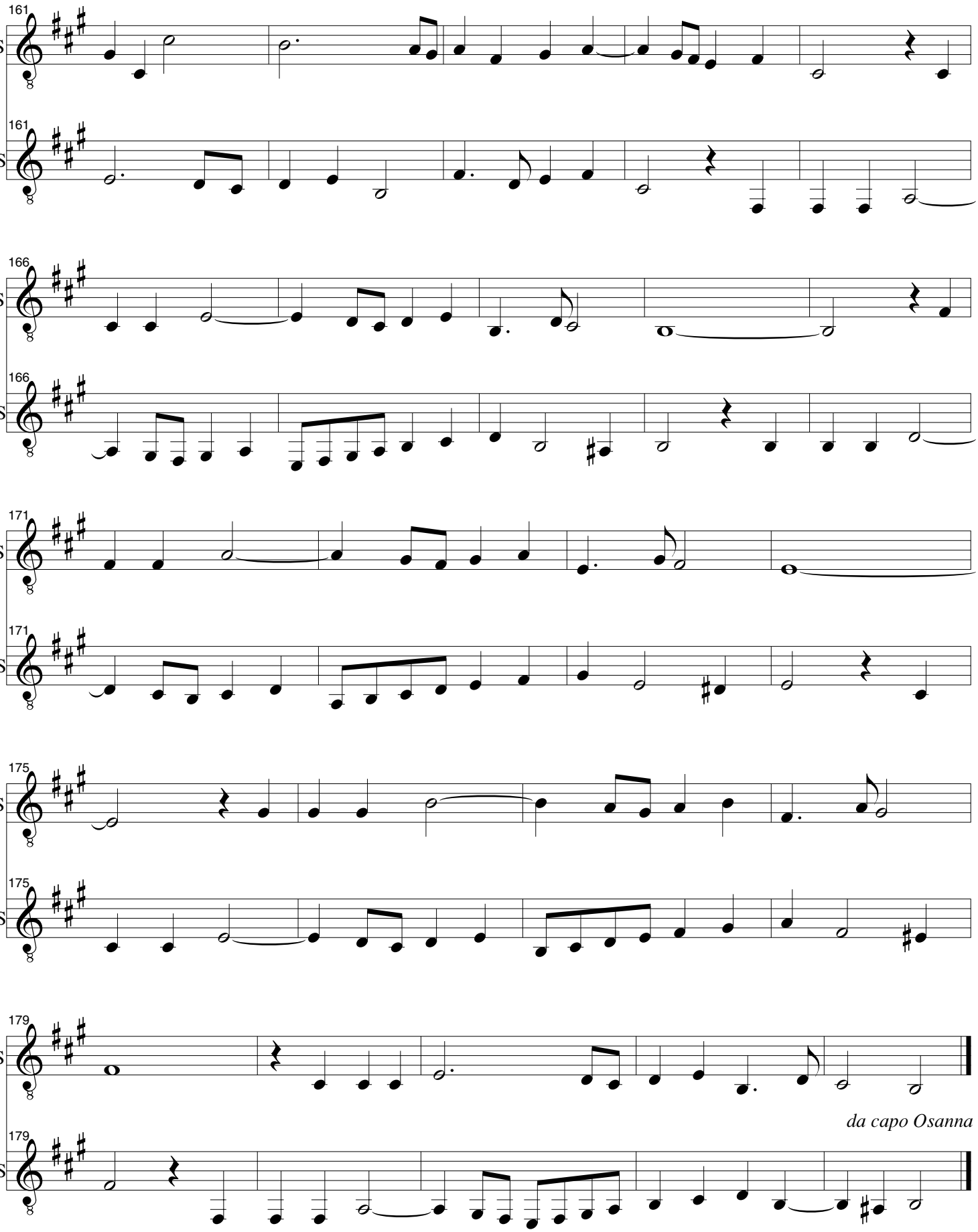

Pleni sunt coeli
21
SS
NS
28
35
42
49


56
SS
56
NS
63
SS
63
NS
70
SS
70
NS
77
SS
77
NS
84
SS
84
NS

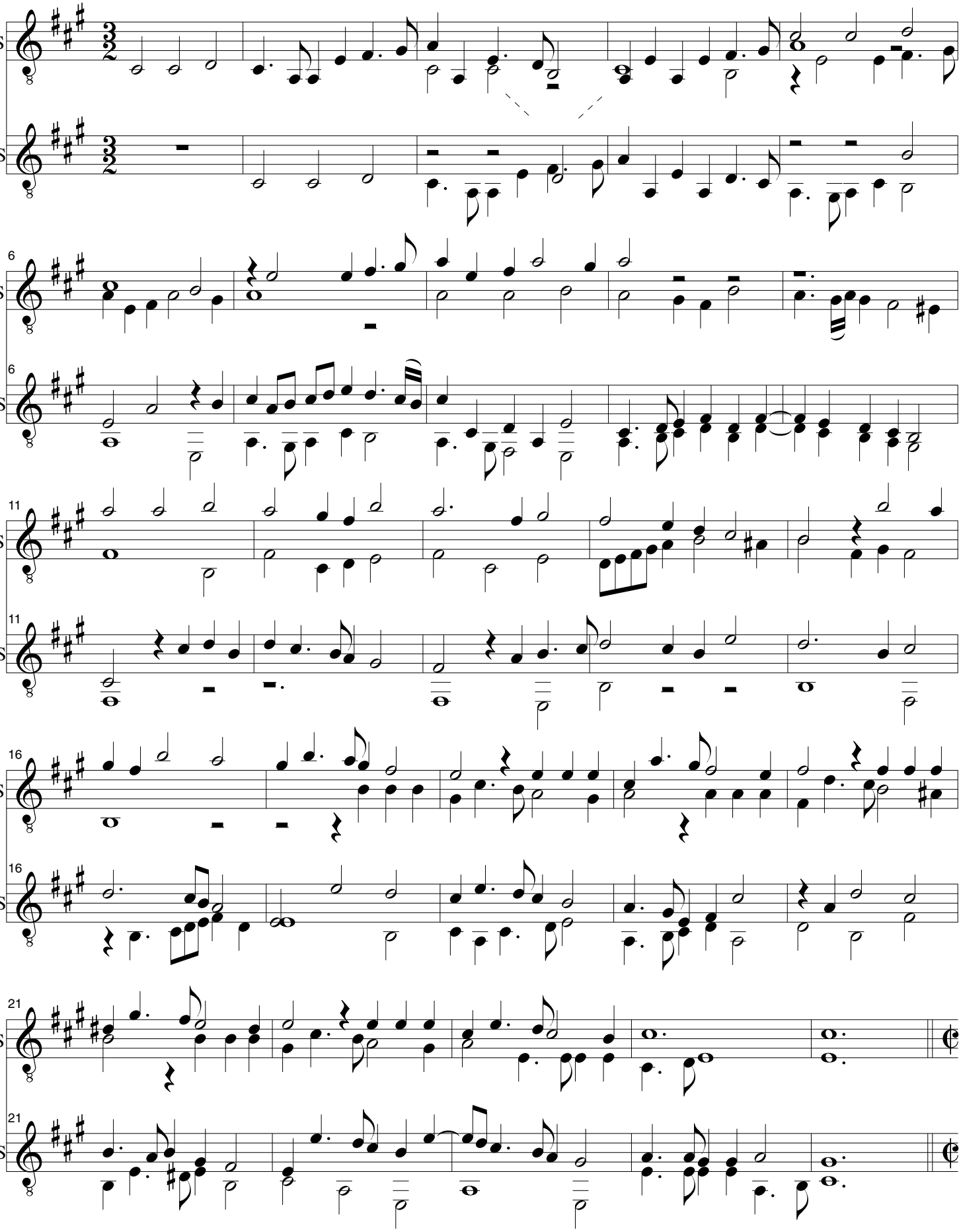

Osanna
90
SS
90
NS
95
SS
95
NS
100
SS
100
NS
105
SS
105
NS
110
SS
110
NS

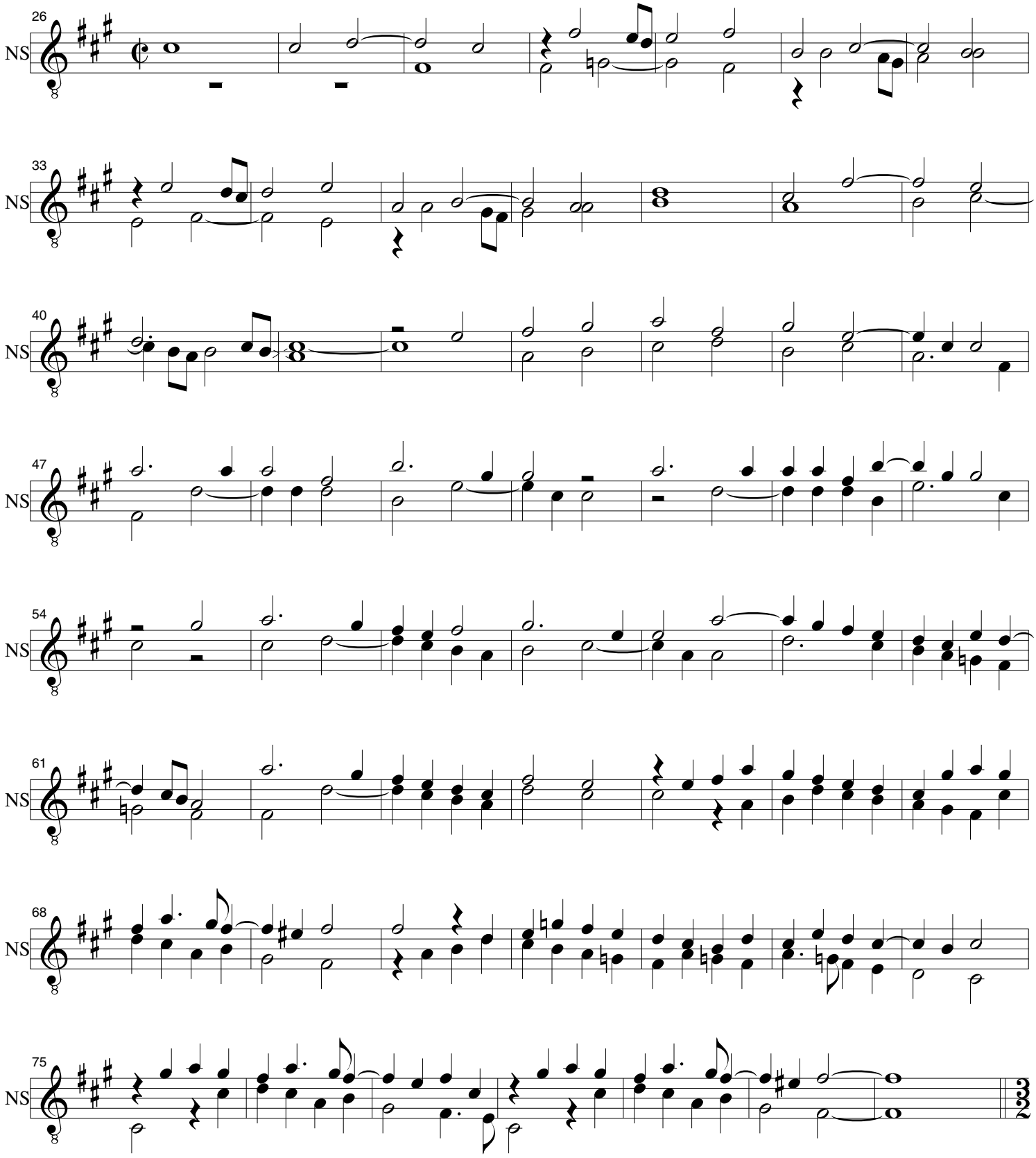

115
SS
115
NS
120
SS
120
NS
125
SS
125
NS
129
SS
129
NS
133
SS
133
NS


Benedictus
137
SS
137
NS
141
SS
141
NS
146
SS
146
NS
151
SS
151
NS
156
SS
156
NS

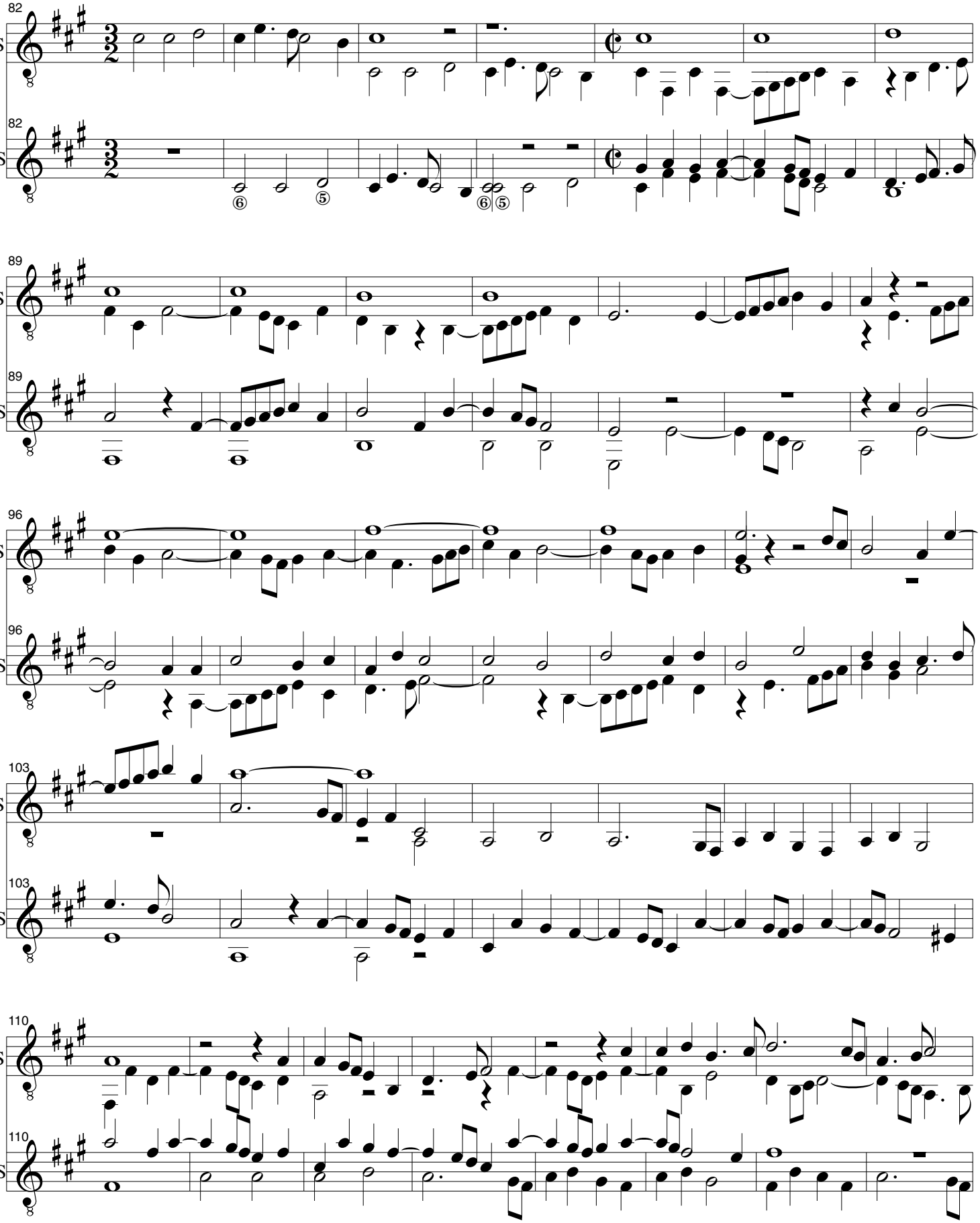

161
SS
161
NS
166
SS
166
NS
171
SS
171
NS
175
SS
175
NS
179
SS
179
NS
da capo Osanna

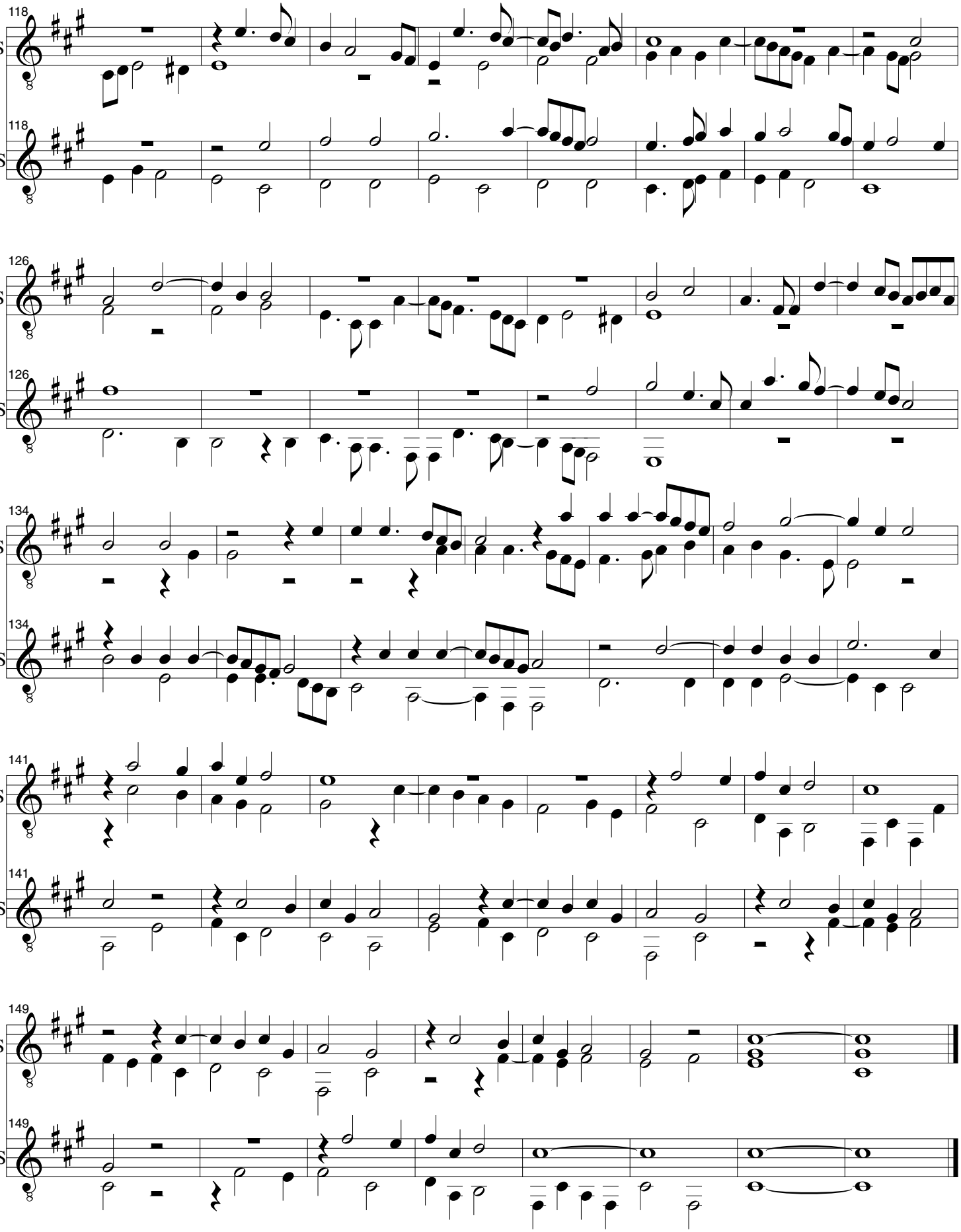
Agnus Dei I




26
NS
33
NS
40
NS
47
NS
54
NS
61
NS
68
NS
75
NS

Agnus Dei II




118
SS
118
NS
126
SS
126
NS
134
SS
134
NS
141
SS
141
NS
149
SS
149
NS

Prism Music

Current Titles

SOLO GUITAR

Les Cinq Doigts (8 movements) — Igor Stravinsky

Prelude Nos. 4 & 15 (from Op. 28) — Frédéric Chopin

Third Cello Suite (6 movements) — J.S. Bach

Sin Palabras

Unicornio/Rabo de Nube	Silvio Rodriguez (Cuba)
Para Amarnos con el Mundo	Salvador Cardenal Barquero (Nicaragua)
Erev Shel Shoshanim	Israel
Agnus Dei 1310	England

Semper Dowland — John Dowland

25 newly arranged works by the English Renaissance master

Voice of Creation — Jeffry Hamilton Steele

- Stream at Sunrise
- Samba de los Niños
- Jacob's Dream (for guitar with tape)
- Sunset Reverie

Solo Guitar Suite from *Clear Away: A Fisherman's Farewell* — Jeffry Hamilton Steele

GUITAR DUET

Missa Pange Lingua (5 movements) — Josquin des Préz (c.1440-1521)

Missa Hercules (5 movements) — Josquin des Préz

GUITAR, VIOLIN/VIOLA, FLUTE, PENNYWHISTLE, VOICES & PERCUSSION (with dancers)

Clear Away: A Fisherman's Farewell — Jeffry Hamilton Steele

(complete score)

The *Clear Away* Songbook — Jeffry Hamilton Steele

(Just **the songs** from *Clear Away: A Fsiherman's Farewell*)

Prism Music 4 Spring St. Gloucester MA 01930 978-282-3106

http://jeffrysteele.com