Cantate Domino 5 vocum

Edited by David Millard
Revised edition, 2017

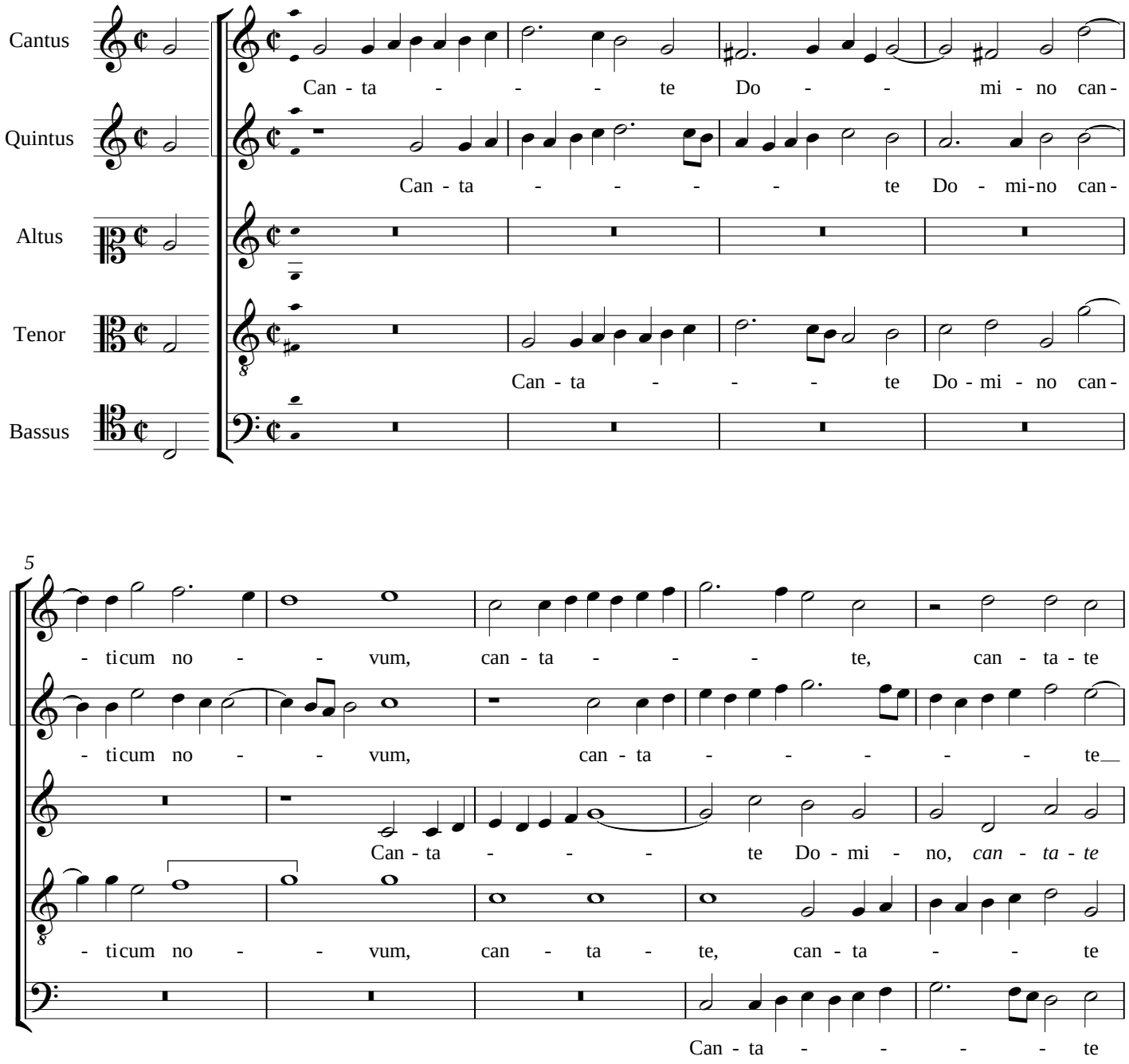
Hans Leo Hassler
1564–1612

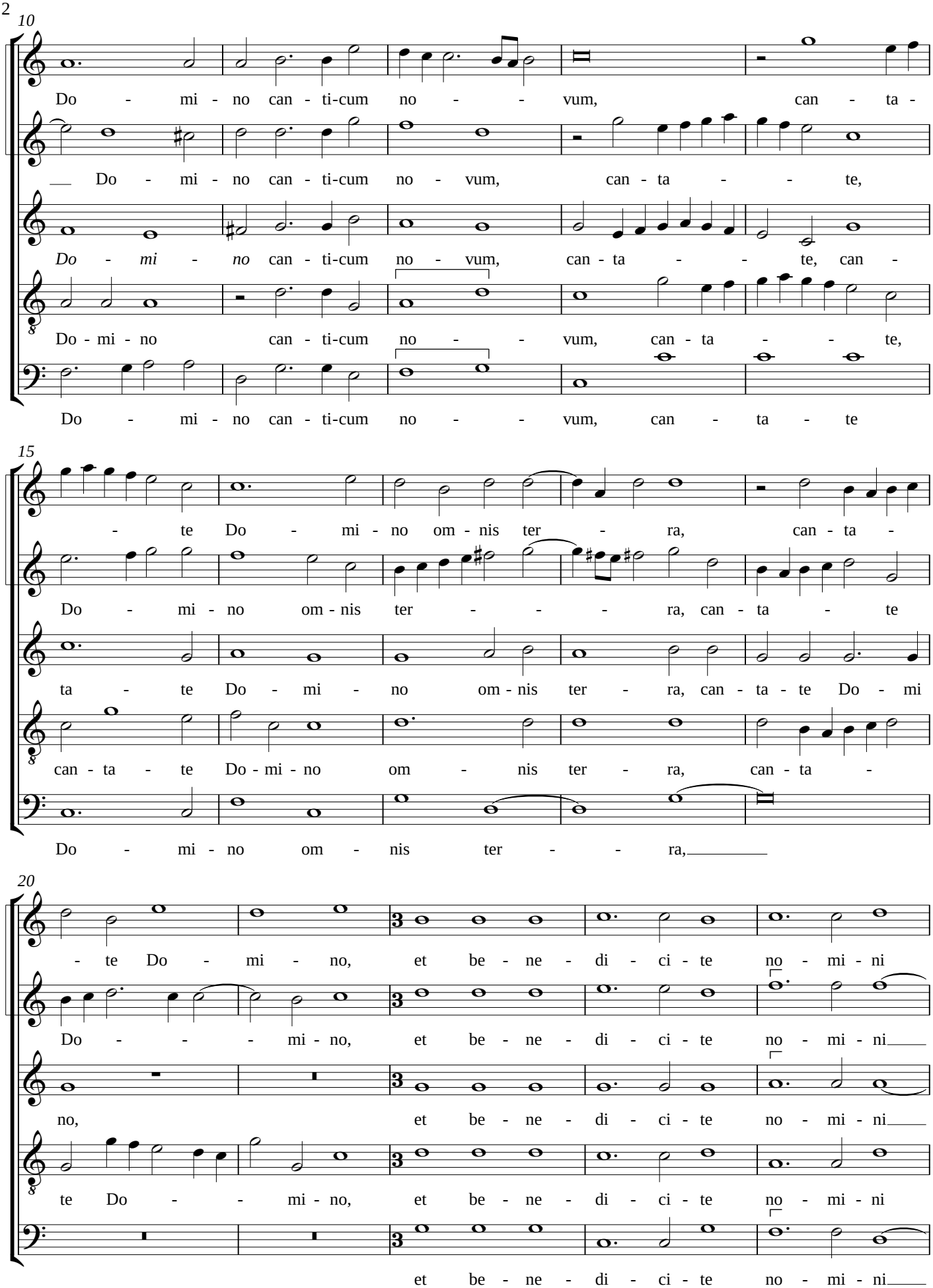
Cantate Domino canticum novum :
cantate Domino omnis terra.
Cantate Domino et benedicite nomini ejus :
annuntiate in die de diem salutare ejus.
Annuntiate inter gentes gloriam ejus,
in omnibus populis mirabilia ejus.
Quoniam magnus Dominus, et laudabilis nimis :
terribilis est super omnes deos.

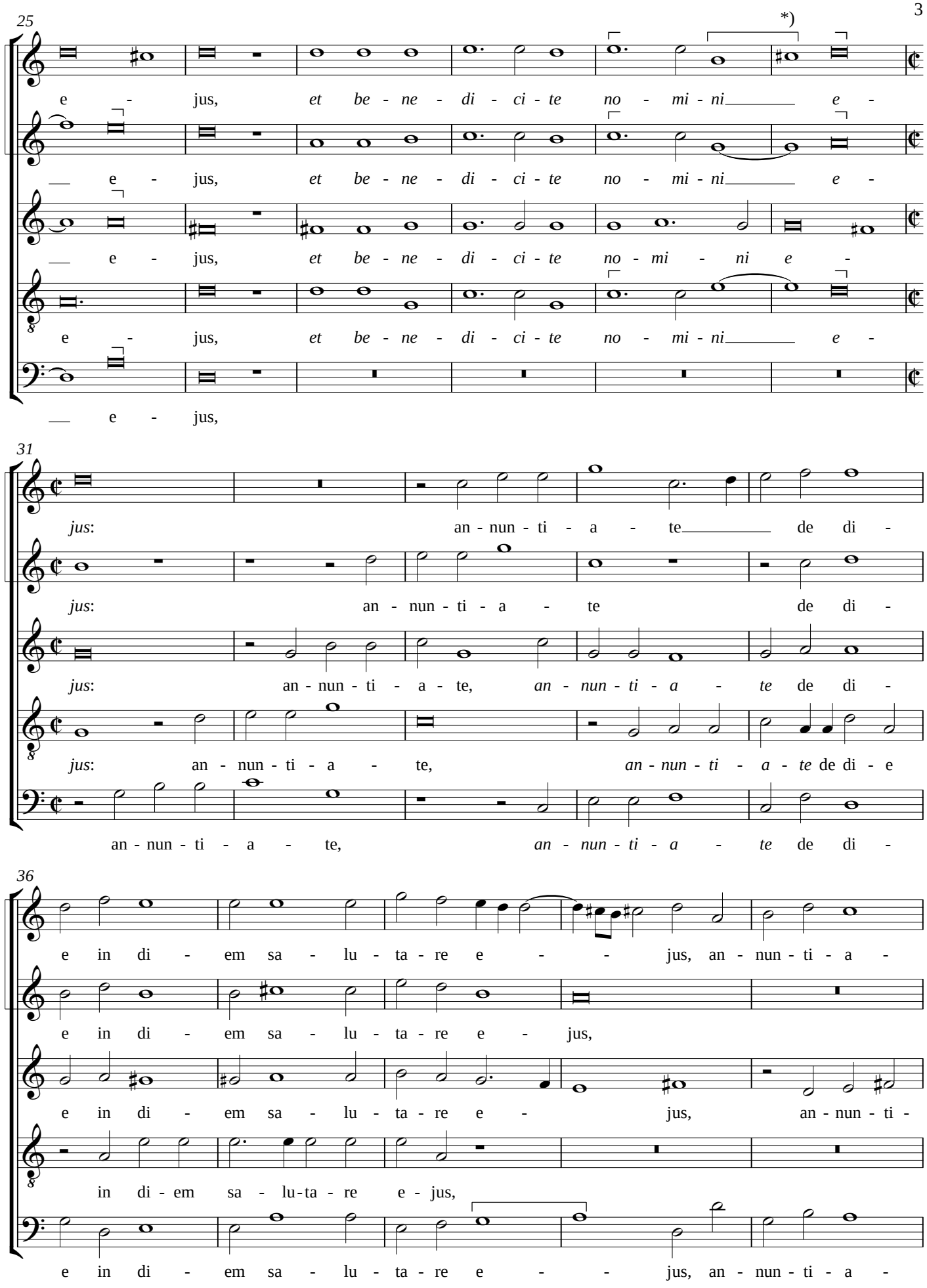
Psalmus 95 (96) 1–4. Vulgata

O sing unto the Lord a new song :
sing unto the Lord, all the whole earth.
Sing unto the Lord and praise his Name :
be telling of his salvation from day to day.
Declare his honour among the nations :
and his wonders among all peoples.
For the Lord is great, and cannot worthily be praised :
he is more to be feared than all gods.

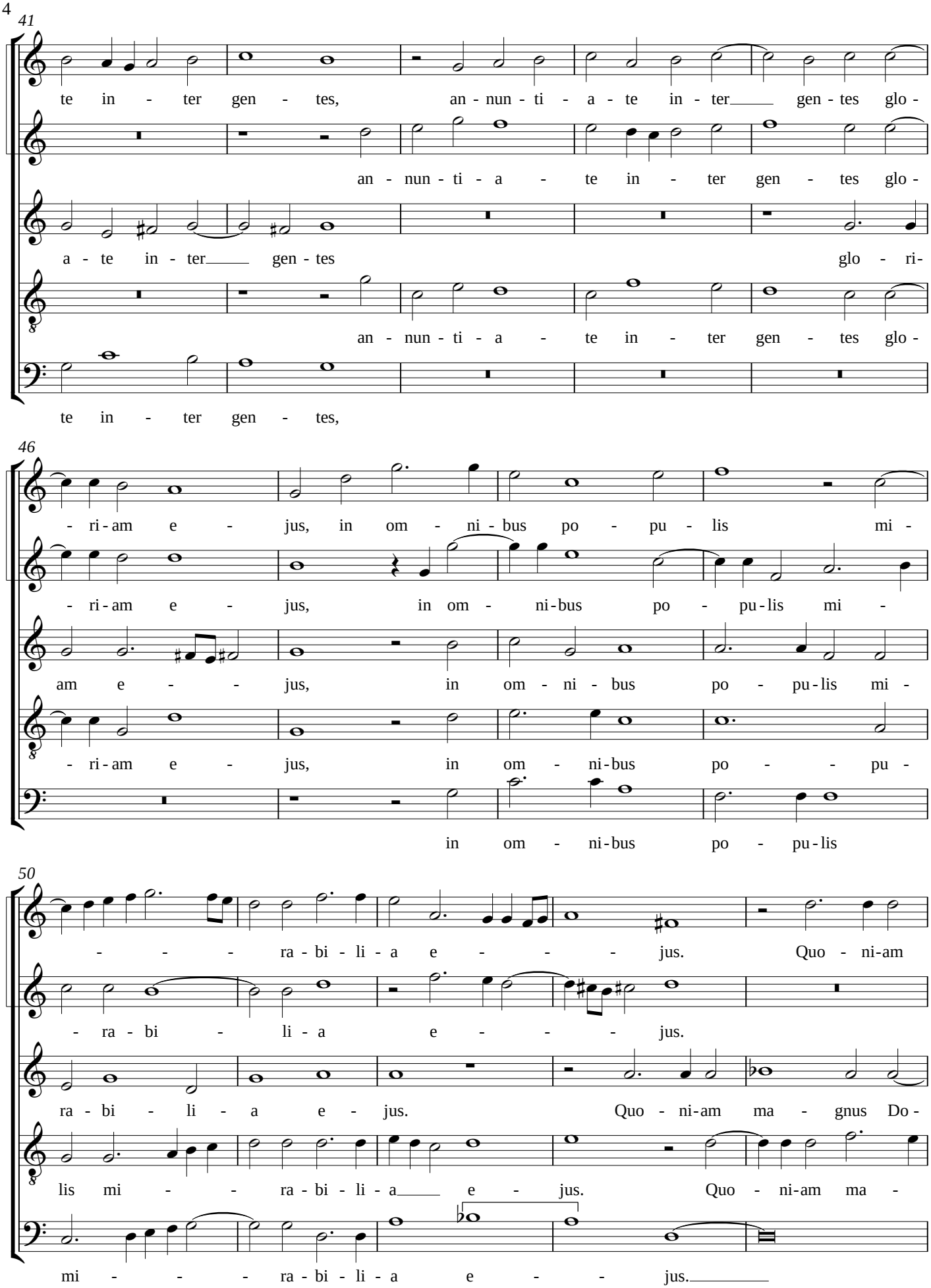
Psalm 96: 1–4, Book of Common Prayer

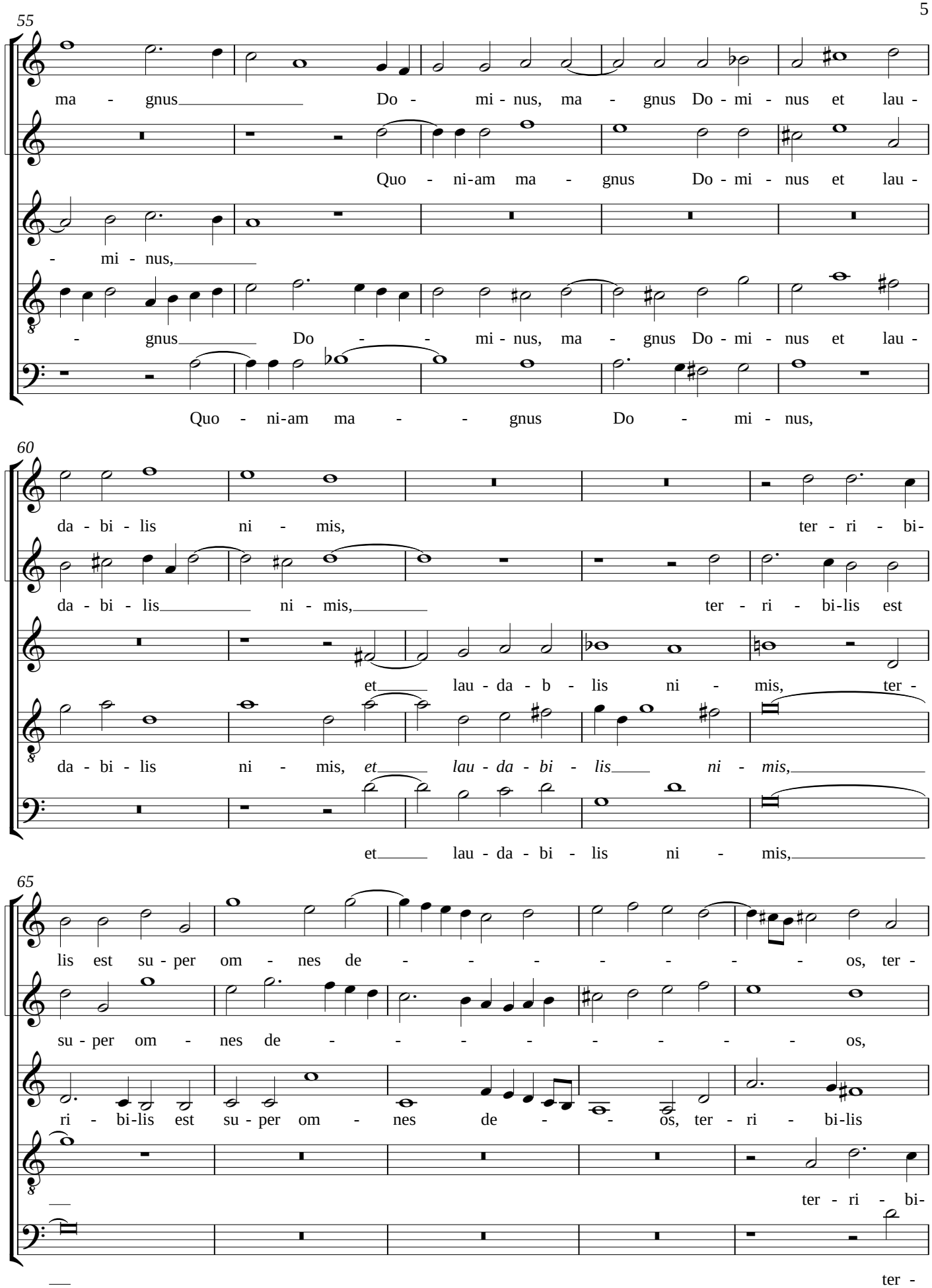


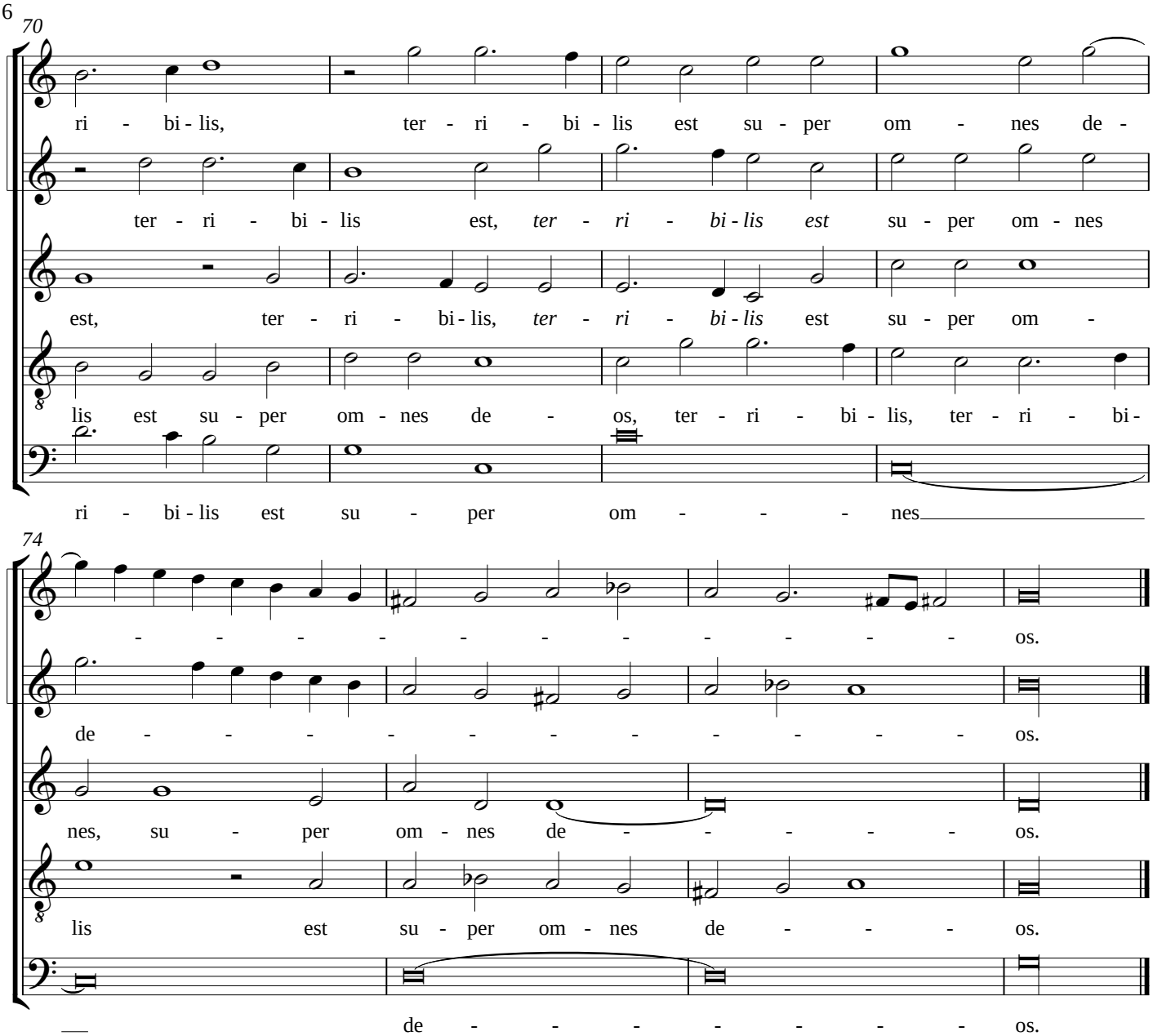

10
Do - mi - no can - ti-cum no - - vum, can - ta -
Do - mi - no can - ti-cum no - vum, can - ta - - te,
Do - mi - no can - ti-cum no - vum, can - ta - - te, can -
Do - mi - no can - ti-cum no - - vum, can - ta - - te,
Do - mi - no can - ti-cum no - - vum, can - ta - te
15
- te Do - mi - no om - nis ter - ra, can - ta -
Do - mi - no om - nis ter - - - ra, can - ta - te
ta - te Do - mi - no om - nis ter - ra, can - ta - te Do - mi
can - ta - te Do - mi - no om - nis ter - ra, can - ta -
Do - mi - no om - nis ter - - ra,
20
- te Do - mi - no, et be - ne - di - ci - te no - mi - ni
Do - - - mi - no, et be - ne - di - ci - te no - mi - ni
no, et be - ne - di - ci - te no - mi - ni
te Do - - mi - no, et be - ne - di - ci - te no - mi - ni
et be - ne - di - ci - te no - mi - ni



*) See Editorial Note


41
te in - ter gen - tes, an - nun - ti - a - te in - ter gen - tes glo -
an - nun - ti - a - te in - ter gen - tes glo -
a - te in - ter gen - tes glo - ri -
an - nun - ti - a - te in - ter gen - tes glo -
te in - ter gen - tes,
46
- ri - am e - jus, in om - ni - bus po - pu - lis mi -
- ri - am e - jus, in om - ni - bus po - pu - lis mi -
am e - - jus, in om - ni - bus po - pu - lis mi -
- ri - am e - jus, in om - ni - bus po - - pu -
in om - ni - bus po - pu - lis
50
- - - ra - bi - li - a e - - - jus. Quo - ni - am
- ra - bi - li - a e - - - jus.
ra - bi - li - a e - jus. Quo - ni - am ma - gnus Do -
lis mi - - ra - bi - li - a e - jus. Quo - ni - am ma -
mi - - - ra - bi - li - a e - - jus.


55
ma - gnus Do - mi - nus, ma - gnus Do - mi - nus et lau -
Quo - ni-am ma - gnus Do - mi - nus et lau -
- mi - nus,
- gnus Do - - mi - nus, ma - gnus Do - mi - nus et lau -
Quo - ni-am ma - - gnus Do - mi - nus,
60
da - bi - lis ni - mis, ter - ri - bi-
da - bi - lis ni - mis, ter - ri - bi-lis est
et lau - da - b - lis ni - mis, ter -
da - bi - lis ni - mis, et lau - da - bi - lis ni - mis,
et lau - da - bi - lis ni - mis,
65
lis est su - per om - nes de - - - - - - - os, ter -
su - per om - nes de - - - - - - - os,
ri - bi-lis est su - per om - nes de - - os, ter - ri - bi-lis
ter - ri - bi-
ter -


70
ri - bi - lis, ter - ri - bi - lis est su - per om - nes de -
ter - ri - bi - lis est, ter - ri - bi - lis est su - per om - nes
est, ter - ri - bi - lis, ter - ri - bi - lis est su - per om -
lis est su - per om - nes de - os, ter - ri - bi - lis, ter - ri - bi -
ri - bi - lis est su - per om - - - - nes
74
- - - - - - - - - - - - os.
de - - - - - - - - - - - - os.
nes, su - per om - nes de - - - - - - os.
lis est su - per om - nes de - - - - os.
de - - - - - - - - os.

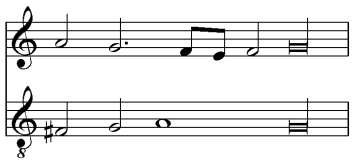
Editorial Note

Source: CANTIONES / SACRÆ, DE FESTIS / PRÆCIPVIS TOTIVS ANNI, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, & plurium vocum: / *Autore JOANNE LEONE HASLERO Nurimb.* (Sacred Songs of the Principal Feasts of the Whole Year; for 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, and more voices, composed by Hans Leo Hassler of Nuremberg.) Printed in Nuremberg by Paul Kaufmann, 1597.

Cantate Domino is number 27 in this collection of motets, designated for use *In Festo Epiphanion Domini* (for the Feast of the Epiphany). The text comprises the first five verses of psalm 96 (95 Vulgate). The music is for the most part unproblematic, showing only one clear error (the final note of the *Altus* part is printed as e rather than d). The bulk of editorial intervention lies in the addition of accidentals.

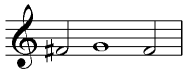
Notational practice regarding accidentals was in a state of transition in the late sixteenth–early seventeenth centuries and did not become settled until the late eighteenth century. The expanding tonal language in music required that the notation of accidentals be made more specific. An example may be seen in mm. 3 and 4 of the *Cantus* where earlier convention (and indeed, similar passages in this same piece) would not require the specification of the second f♯. Theorists and other writers on music are frustratingly silent on the subject of the conventions regarding the use of accidentals; nonetheless, it is possible to adduce some of these conventions. As with any transitional practice, however, composers, scribes and printers are hardly consistent in their application.

In the first place, cadential formulæ such as:



where a voice is suspended against another in the progression 7–6–octave are encountered in even the earliest treatises on counterpoint. The practice of raising the notes of the upper voice so that the octave is approached by a major sixth is widely attested—although not always unproblematic in application. The need for f♯s in the upper voice is further motivated by the presence of the f♯ in the lower voice. The absence of sharp signs in the print (*Cantus* mm. 76–77) is therefore unsurprising.

A second common conventional formula is this:



Although it is something of a truism that intervening notes of another pitch cancel the force of accidentals in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the stereotypical nature of this cadential gesture clearly calls for the second f to be raised. The same is true of the first f in cases where it is the second f that bears the sharp sign. This fact is borne out in m. 57 where the organ intabulation of Johann Woltz (see below) has a ♯ in the *Tenor*, even though it creates a diminished eleventh with the *Quintus*.

In this edition I have elected to indicate editorial accidentals not with a ‘floating’ sign above the note, but with a small sign before the note. I have done this for several reasons. The floating sign often calls unnecessary attention to itself. It carries an implication that there is an error or omission in the source, whereas I believe that the lack (by modern standards) of certain accidentals is the natural product of a different convention of musical notation. All of the cadential accidentals added in this edition occur in places where their application is readily discerned and easily added even when singing at sight. A second implication of the floating accidental is that it is a sign of editorial cowardice. It seems to say ‘I believe that this accidental should be sung, but you’re free to ignore it if you so choose’. I do not regard any editorial accidentals in the present piece as optional, but clearly motivated and not subject to serious dispute (with the possible exception of m. 30 – see below).

All full size accidentals are found in the original print. I have suppressed two functionless sharp signs, the first in the *Altus* in m. 18, the second in the *Altus* at m. 38. Although one encounters redundant sharp signs occasionally as a warning to a singer not to sing *fa* where solmization practice would normally call for it, that is not the case here. They are therefore truly otiose. A third unneeded sharp (natural) sign occurs in the *Altus* in m. 64, but in this case the b♭ two notes prior to it does require that the singer be instructed to mutate from the soft to the hard hexachord. In modern parlance, it serves as a courtesy accidental and I have retained it. The g♯ in the *Altus* in m. 37 is required by modern bar line conventions but is not present in the original print as it follows immediately after a notated g♯.

The Pitch of Performance

This edition presents the notes as they stand in the 1597 print. The music is notated in the so-called high clefs or *chiavette*. Controversy still surrounds the question of whether these clefs imply downward transposition and, if so, to what degree. We do, however, know something about the pitch standard of Nuremberg ca. 1600. According to Bruce Haynes in his study *A History of Performing Pitch* (Scarecrow Press 2002), "the majority of cornetts, both Italian and German, were tuned at A+1 [that is, one semitone above a' = 440 Hz]." In addition, "[i]n 1608 a project was undertaken to make the pitches of the organs in two churches in Nuremberg the same... and the reference was the pitch of 'Cornet und Dulcian'." Thus, singers singing to the organ would be pitched around a' = 464. Singing this work as written then, already somewhat high, would be untenable.

In a much cited passage at the beginning of Chapter IX of *Syntagma Musicum III*, Praetorius instructs organists who prepare intabulations of pieces in high clefs to transpose them down a fifth if there is no signature, or a fourth if there is flat in the signature. Following this procedure would change the final from g to c, thus rendering the piece suitable for AATTB performance. Such an intabulation in exactly this transpositon exists. The *Nova Musices Organicæ Tabulatura* of Johann Woltz (1617) contains a version of this motet (reduced to four parts) which, lacking the flamboyant ornamentation of intabulations intended for solo performance, makes it suitable to serve as an organist's accompaniment. In addition to confirming the downward transposition of a fifth, the Woltz version provides a near contemporary witness to the raising of cadential leading tones (tablature, although based in the letter names of the notes, specifies not the *notes* to be played, but the *keys* to be played, and thus indicates accidentals not written in the vocal source). A perhaps unexpected accidental occurs in m. 30 where Woltz indicates an f♯ in the Cantus (c♯ in the untransposed version) producing a surprisingly modern sounding 'secondary dominant' progression. Some performers may wish to ignore this sharp, coming as it does from an arranger, rather than the composer. However, it should be borne in mind that the sharp is entirely in keeping with Zarlino's prohibition against the minor sixth proceeding to the octave (seen here in the movement of the Cantus and Tenor—see *Institutioni Harmoniche* 1558, part III, chapter 57).

The transposition to C-final, combined with our knowledge of organ pitches, would indicate a performance key (in modern terms) of D♭ major, or possibly D as many organs in northern Germany were pitched as much as a whole tone above a' = 440. Other transpositions are also possible. Writers as early as Arnolt Schlick (*Spiegel der Orgelmacher und Organisten*, 1511) recommend that the organ play at a suitable pitch for the choir, even if it means playing 'on the semitones'. Diruta, in *Il Transilvano* (1593 and 1609) also discusses playing in keys such as (in modern terms) A major and even c♯ minor for the sake of the singers. Therefore it would not be unreasonable to transpose *Cantate Domino* down a tone or minor third, although the latter would present problems at the low end of the range of female altos.