TRANSFORMATIONS
Easy additions to create simple preludes and postludes

TRANSFORMATIONS

for Organ

Easy additions to create simple preludes and postludes

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PREFACE

Pianists who are asked to play the organ for LDS services oftentimes find themselves quite uncomfortable, not knowing how best to proceed in order to play a credible service while developing their organ skills. This might be the result of various factors:

1. They may have limited keyboard facility and find playing four-voice hymns a challenge.
2. They often do not understand how piano and organ techniques differ. The absence of a sustaining pedal on the organ creates challenges in legato playing. When playing hymns, pianists tend to think vertically (a succession of chords connected by the sustaining pedal) rather than horizontally (multiple independent legato lines sounding simultaneously).
3. They have limited understanding of the function of the organ's various mechanical and tonal resources (stops).
4. They are intimidated, thinking that they must try to use the pedals immediately.

The piano and organ are two very different instruments, and it is a fallacy to assume that because one can play the piano, he or she can also play the organ competently without further instruction.

In an attempt to assist inexperienced organists, an edition of selected LDS hymns entitled *Manual-Only Hymns for Organ* has been prepared that reduces the number of voices from four to three. The hymns also have been carefully edited with fingerings appropriate to the organ. Material in the book's preface and appendix explains and illustrates various organ techniques, particularly with regard to fingering and linear thinking. Assimilation of and adherence to these concepts and techniques will result in confident hymn playing.

The purpose of *Transformations* is to provide musical material, which, when added to the three-voice hymns, can convert them into simple, musically satisfying preludes or postludes. Like the hymns themselves, the introductions and codas herein are designed to be played without pedals. In use, this book and *Manual-Only Hymns* will be placed side by side on the organ's music rack, the organist's eyes moving between the two according to his or her predetermined plan. Fold each book against itself, so that only the desired pages are showing.

PLANNING THE PERFORMANCE

The most basic performance plan would consist of playing the introduction, followed by one verse of the hymn, and concluding with the coda:

Sequence A: Introduction→Hymn→Coda

The length could be extended by repeating the hymn:

Sequence B: Introduction→Hymn→Hymn→Coda

The introduction might be used as an interlude:

Sequence C: Hymn→Introduction (used as interlude)→Hymn→Coda

A still longer version could be:

Sequence D: Introduction→Hymn→Introduction (repeated as interlude)→Hymn→Coda

ADDING INTEREST THROUGH REGISTRATION

When planning registration the first decision to be made is the manner in which the music will be played. *Manual-Only Hymns* lists three options to consider. Your choice of options will depend to some extent on personal preference as well as consideration of the characteristics and resources of the particular organ that you play.

Option 1 (True manual-only sound) assumes that both hands will play on the same keyboard and "deep bass" or 16' tone will not be included in the registration. This perfectly viable and straightforward approach allows for considerable flexibility in registration. One might begin by choosing stops on both manuals, each manual contrasting from the other, but both in keeping with the mood of the hymn at hand. Preludes will generally be somewhat subdued while postludes might be registered more firmly. If Sequence A is chosen, the entire piece (Introduction, Hymn and Coda) could be played without changing manuals. Alternatively, after playing the Introduction on one manual the hymn might be played on the second manual, returning to the first manual for the Coda.

Introduction (Manual I)→Hymn (Manual II)→Coda (Manual I)

When playing longer versions, contrasting registration becomes increasingly important as a means of creating variety and maintaining interest. Sequence B, for example, could be performed:

Intro. (Man. I)→Hymn (Man. I)→Hymn (Man. II)→Coda (Man. II)

Or perhaps:

Intro. (Man. II)→Hymn (Man. I)→Hymn (Man. II)→Coda (Man. I)

Sequences C and D likewise offer a variety of options for effective manual changes. Experimentation will reveal several possibilities.

Option 2 utilizes whatever 16' stops may be available among the manual stops to provide deep bass tone. If neither manual includes a 16' stop, or if the 16' stop(s) do not sound all the way to the bottom of the keyboard, this option need not be considered. If there are complete 16' stops on the Swell and/or Great manuals, two general approaches are possible.

The first approach is to use one keyboard for the left hand to play the bass line (including 16' tone and additional stops to balance the right hand) while the right hand plays the soprano and alto voices on the other manual, using typical manual registration (without 16' tone). A modest contrast in registration may be realized by simply moving the left hand from one manual to the other. One manual would thus include 16' tone for the bass line while the other would not. For example, the introduction and coda might be played with 16' tone in the bass while, by changing manuals with the left hand, the hymn would be heard without 16' tone in the bass.

The second approach involves playing both hands on the same manual, but with the right hand playing the soprano and alto an octave higher than written. A quiet registration might include only 16' and 8' stops. The bass line, played as written, would sound both the 16' and 8' pitches. However, those same stops in the right hand (being played an octave higher than written) would sound as 8' and 4' stops. If both Swell and Great have 16' stops available, contrasting registrations might be set on both manuals and variety achieved by alternating between them.

The success of Option 2 will depend largely on the resources of your particular organ. One limitation of this approach is that 16' flue stops available on the manuals (Bourdon, Lieblich Gedeckt, Gemshorn, Violone, etc.) are generally quite soft and may not be effective when used in

fuller registrations. Some organs, however, include a 16' reed stop (Fagot, Waldhorn, Bassoon, etc.) on the Swell, which might successfully be employed in the fuller registrations needed for more vigorous hymns or postludes. Experimentation and your own good taste will help in determining the usefulness of Option 2.

Option 3 employs the Bass Coupler, on organs so equipped, to add Pedal stops to the lowest sounding note on the Great manual, thus giving the effect of the pedals being played even though the feet are not being used. The organist selects Pedal stops to balance those selected on the Great, then engages the Bass Coupler (a stop tab or knob on some organs, or a button on others). The Bass Couplers as designed by different manufacturers function somewhat differently from each other, and none works flawlessly. Under certain circumstances, the pedal stops may drop out occasionally, or during the space between repeated bass notes the coupler may seek out and sound the alto note. These "defects" in the bass line are heard clearly and can be bothersome. You may find that tying repeated bass notes eliminates some of these problems. It is always wise to test the Bass Coupler before using it on any piece of music to be certain that it doesn't produce an unsatisfactory result.

A FEW ADDITIONAL THOUGHTS

The foregoing discussion for all three options has assumed that once initially selected, the stops will remain unchanged for an entire piece. Any contrast in registration will result from the changing of manuals. It is possible, of course, to alter the stops between sections of a piece, either by hand or by presetting other registrations on the organ's combination action system (where available). While this complicates the performance somewhat, when done tastefully it can further enhance a performance. It will require careful advance planning and practice.

Note that the introductions and codas include dynamic markings and indications for crescendo and diminuendo, by using the expression pedal(s), as well as ritard. Observance of these markings will result in an artistic dynamic contour and a satisfying rhythmic conclusion to your prelude or postlude.

Finally, while both *Manual-Only Hymns* and *Transformations* are relatively simple to read and play, to perform them fluently, with correct organ (rather than piano) technique and with appropriate and effective registration, will require some practice. Initial learning of the notes and fingering can be accomplished at home on a piano if you will not use the damper pedal and will listen carefully for legato in all voices. The final polishing, including selecting appropriate registrations, will have to be done at the organ. Remember, "…if ye are prepared ye shall not fear."

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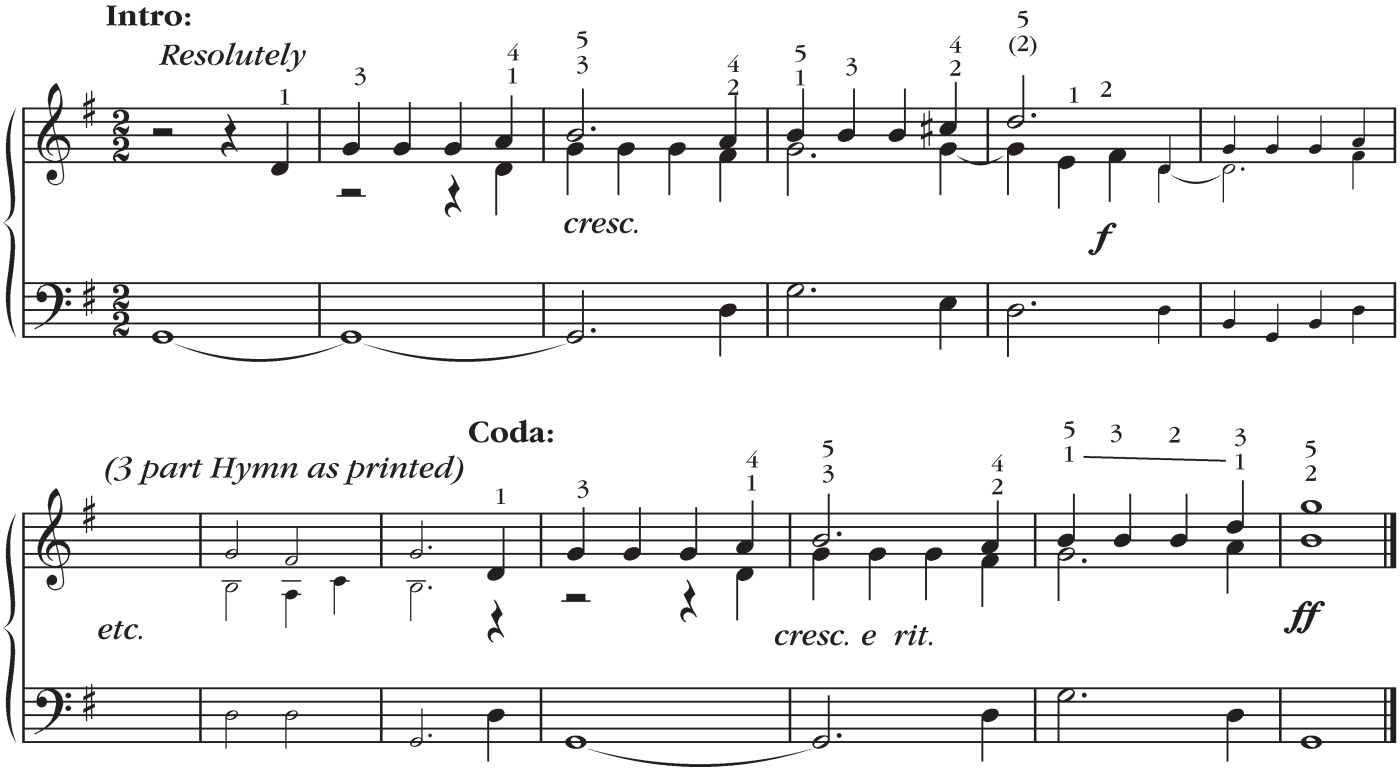
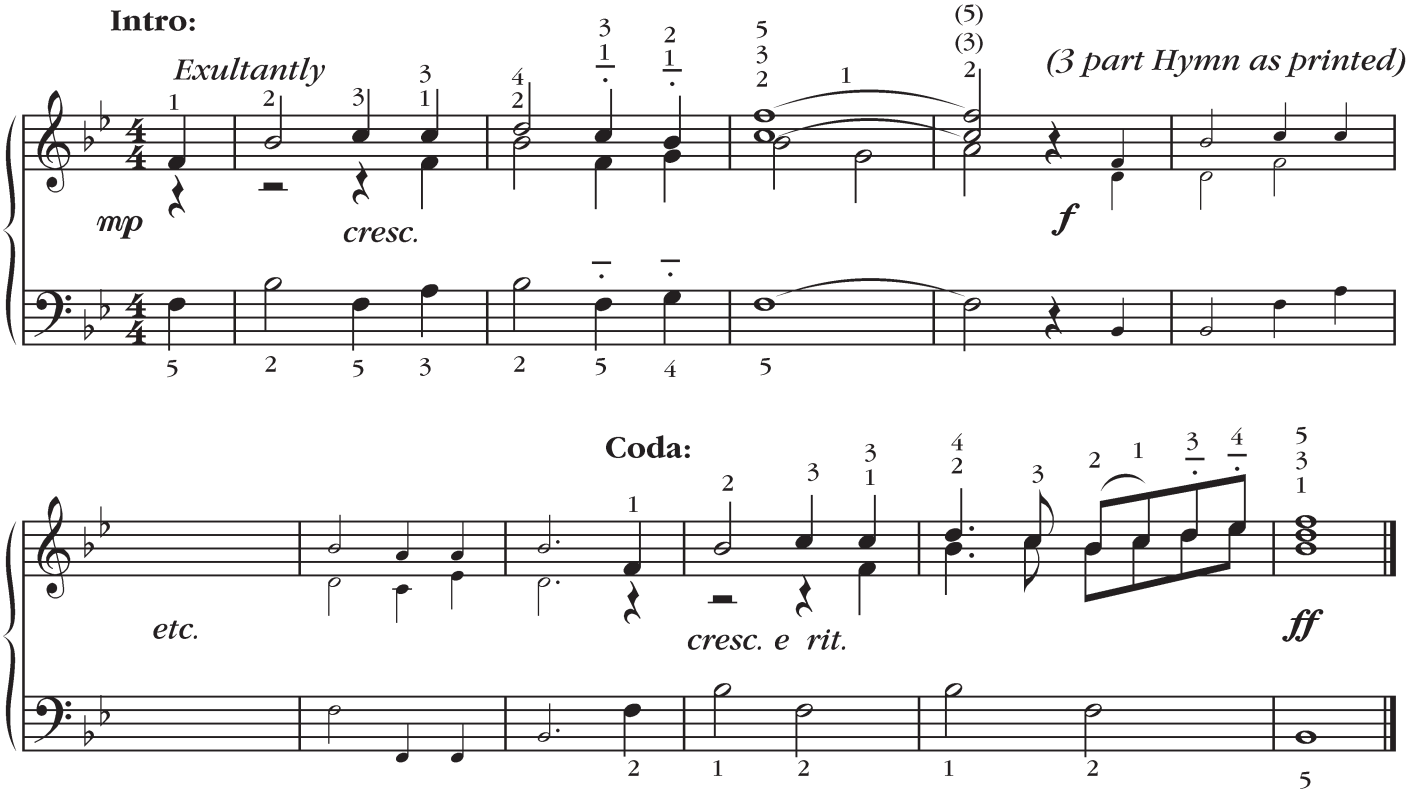
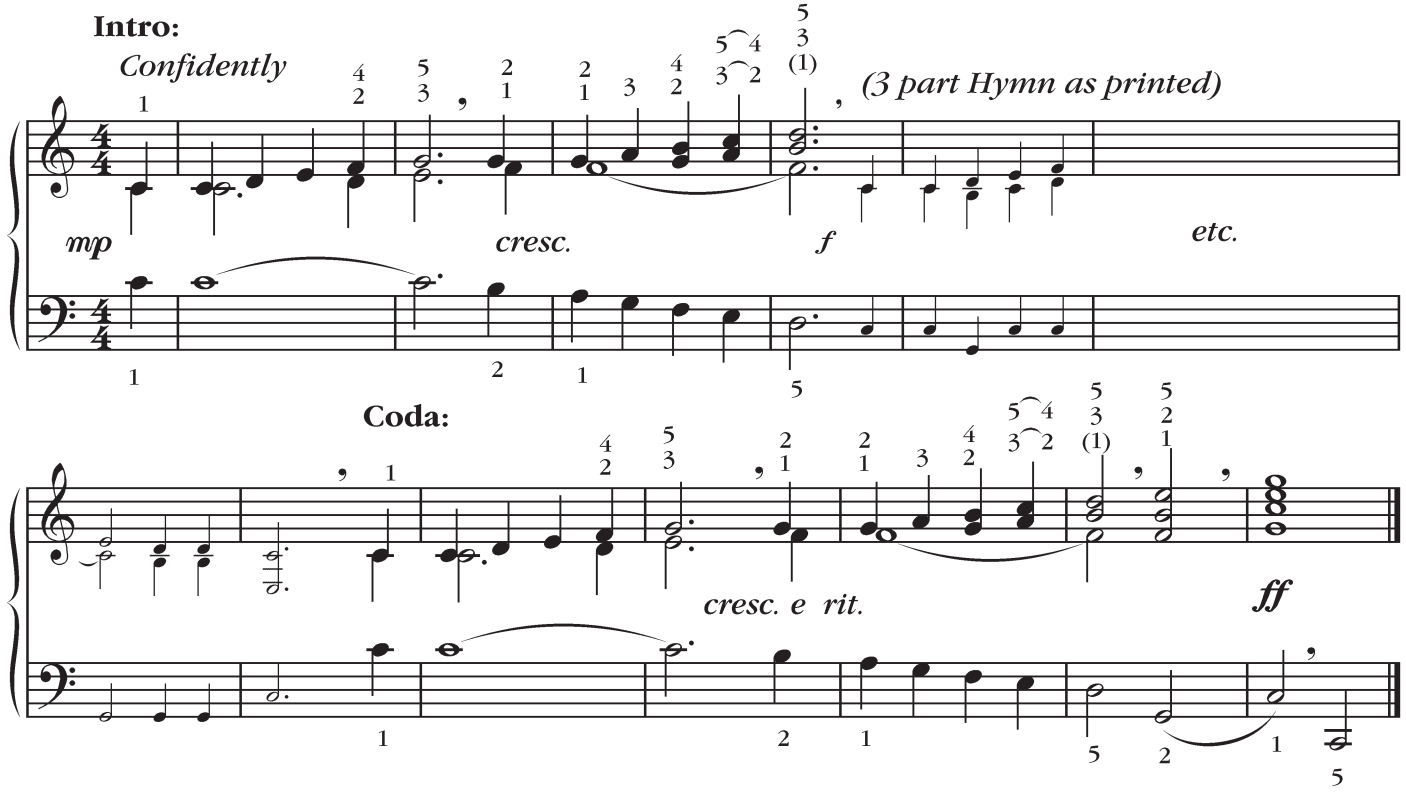
High on the Mountain Top



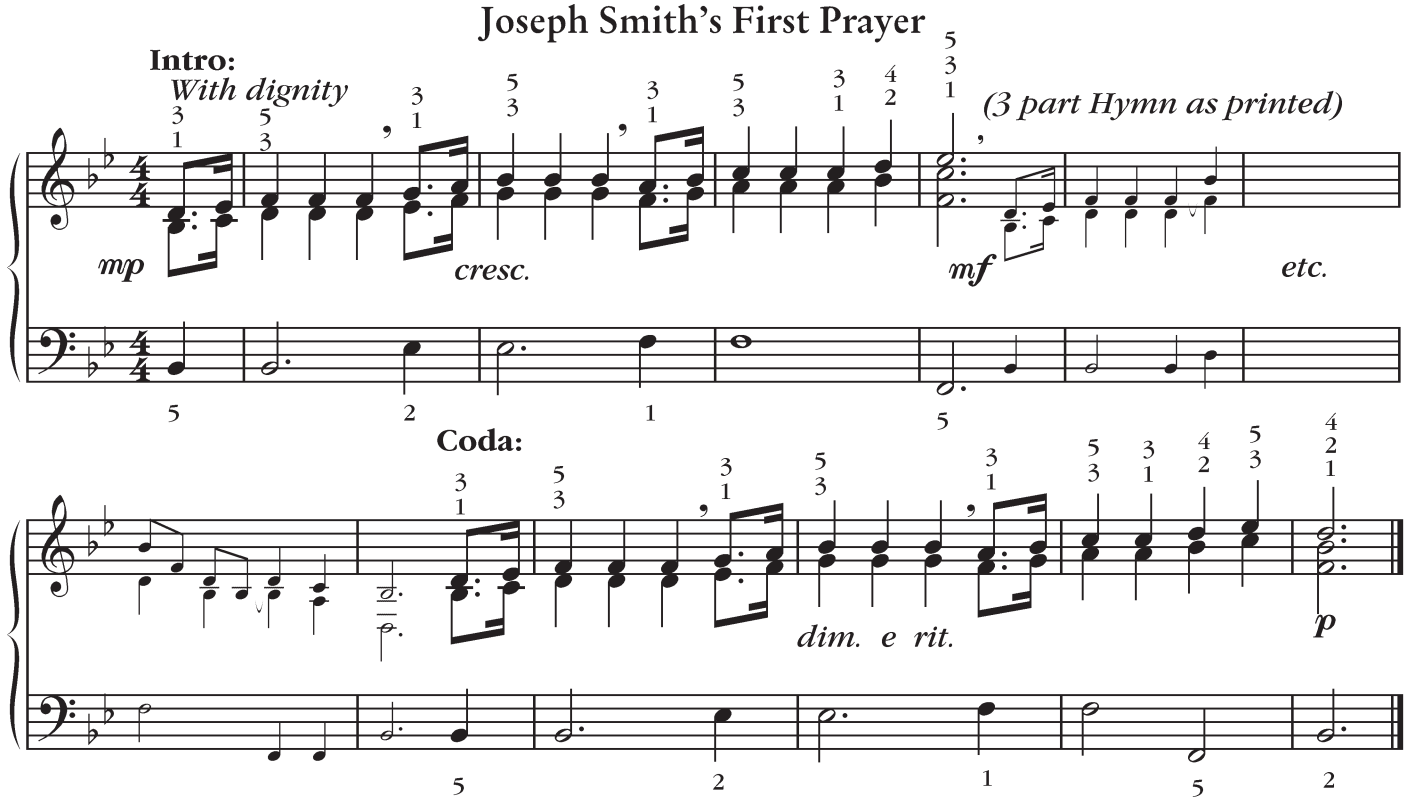
The Spirit of God



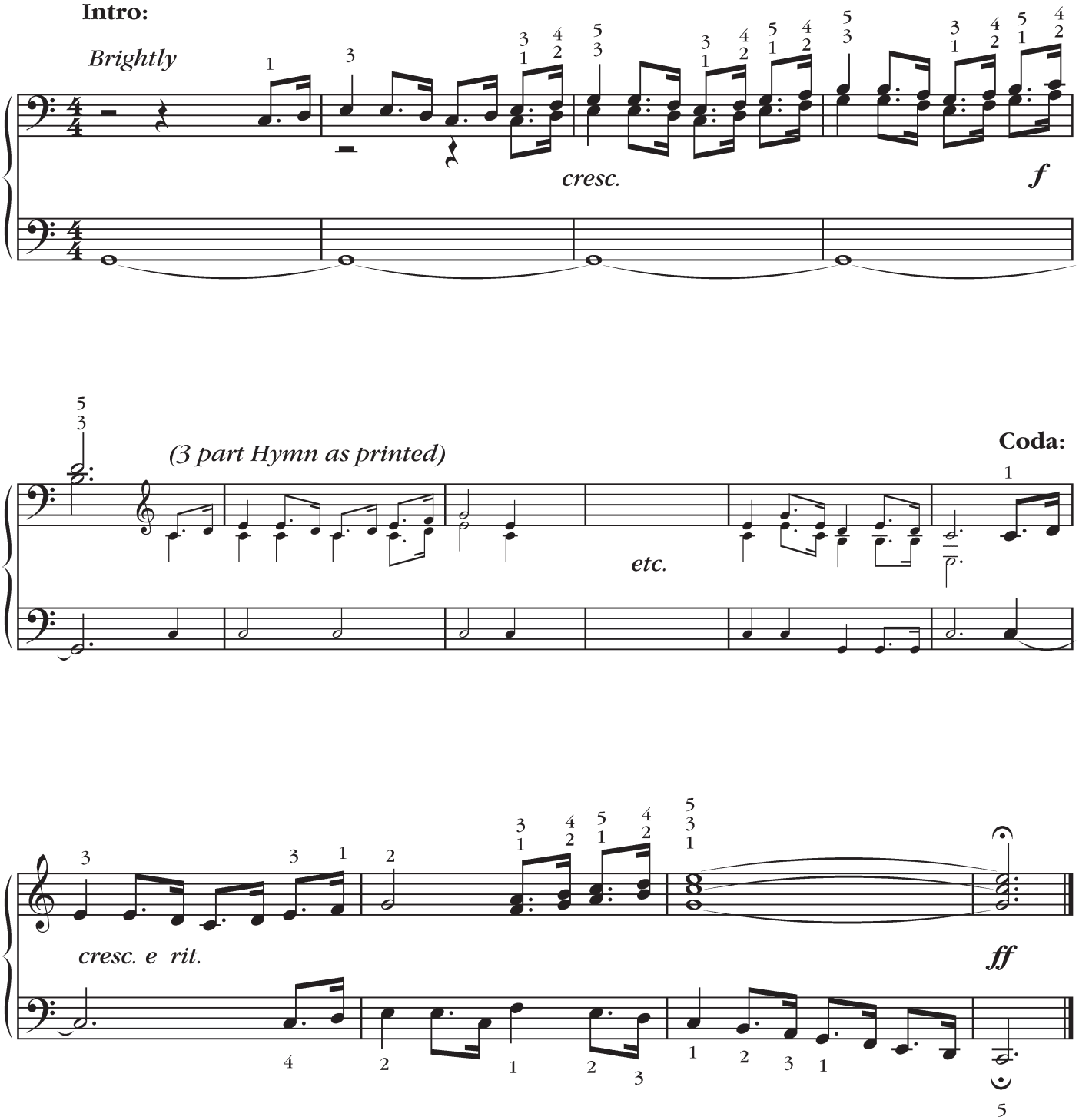
Redeemer of Israel



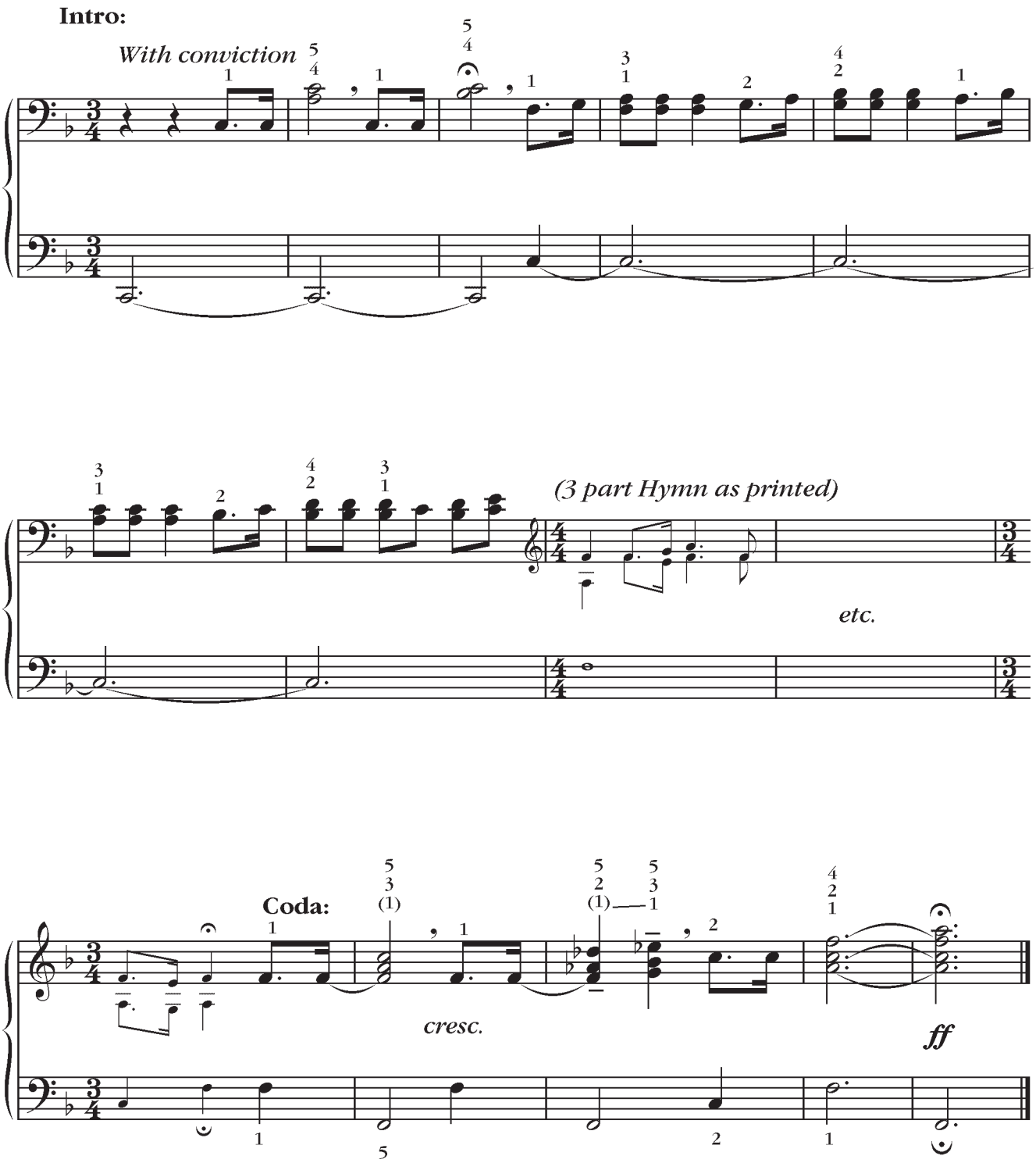
Joseph Smith's First Prayer



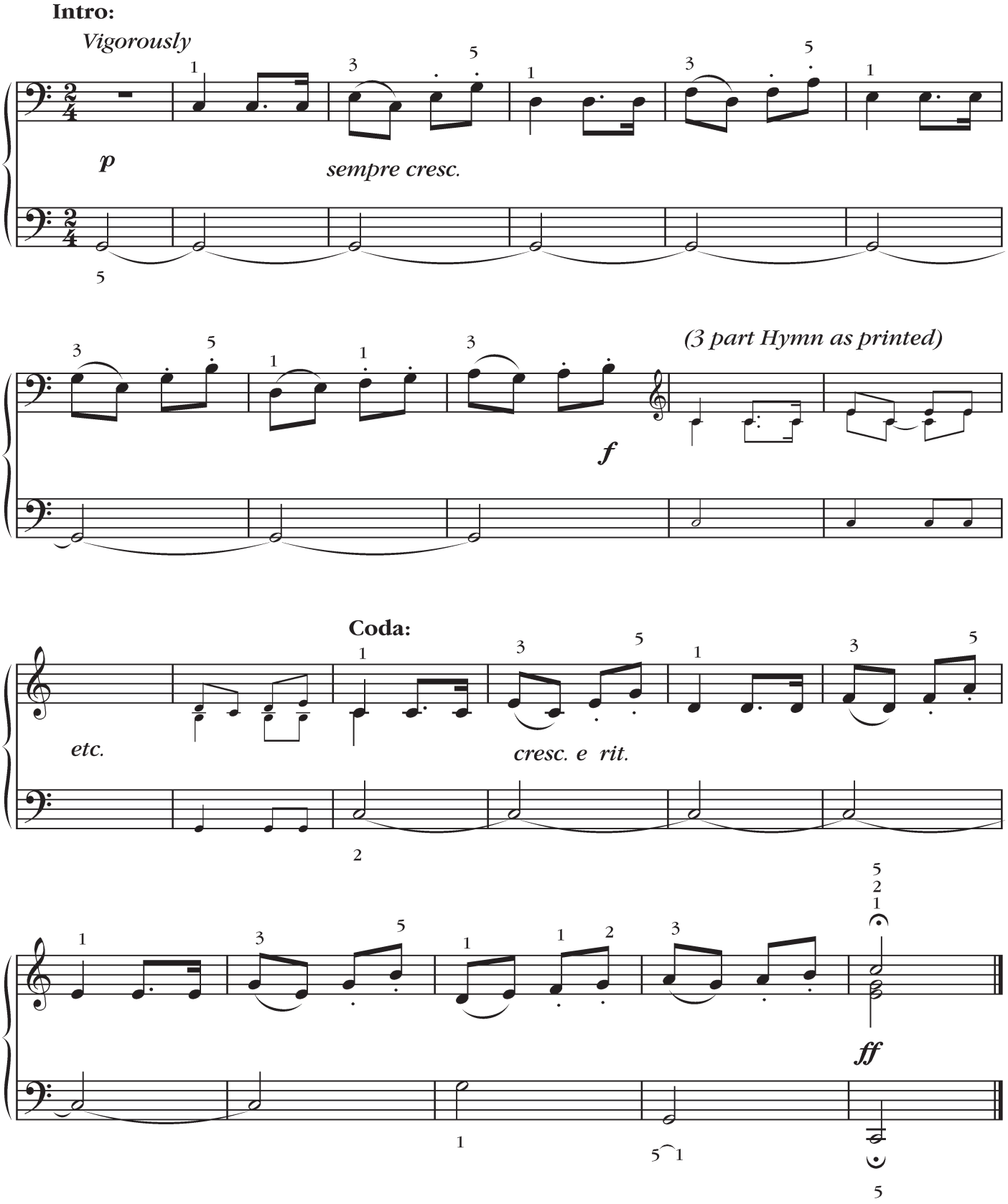
We Thank Thee, O God, for a Prophet



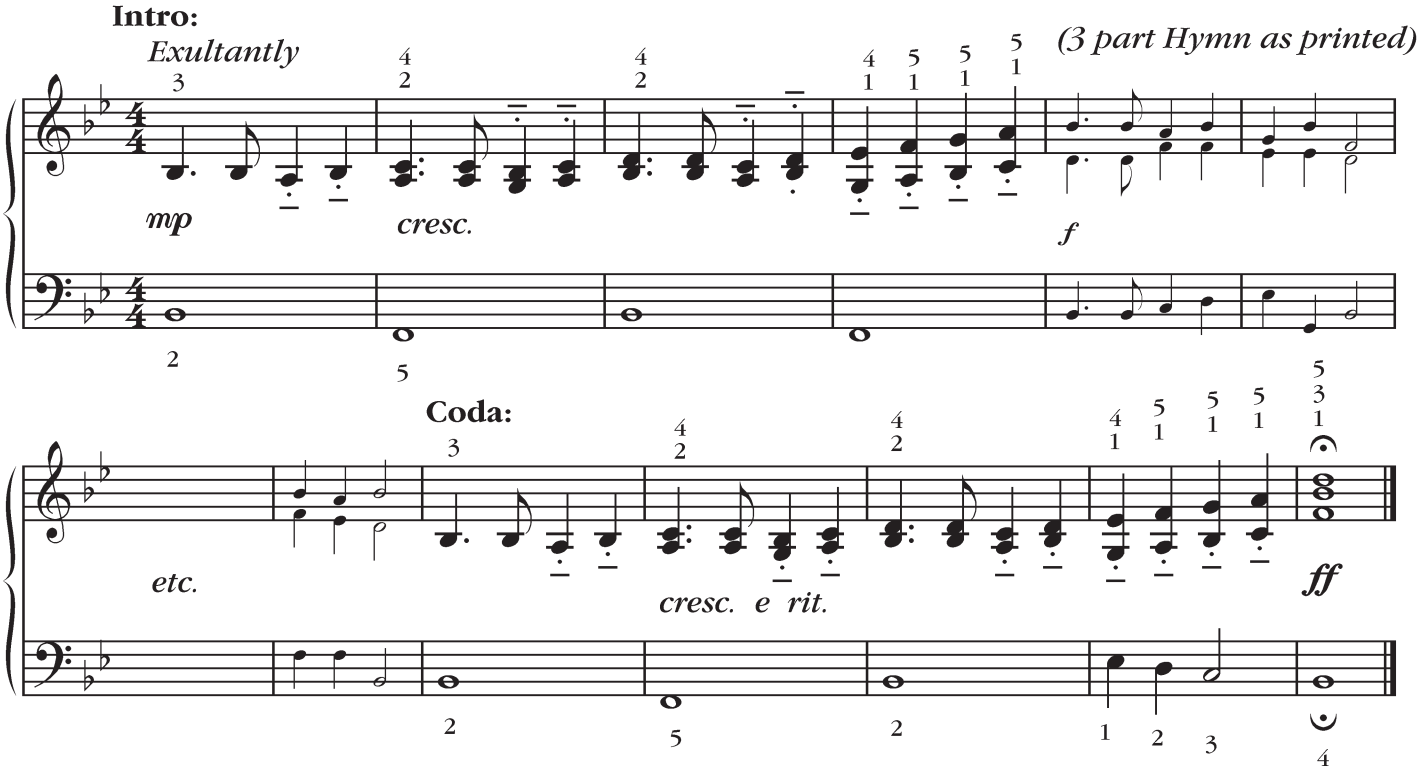
Come, Come, Ye Saints



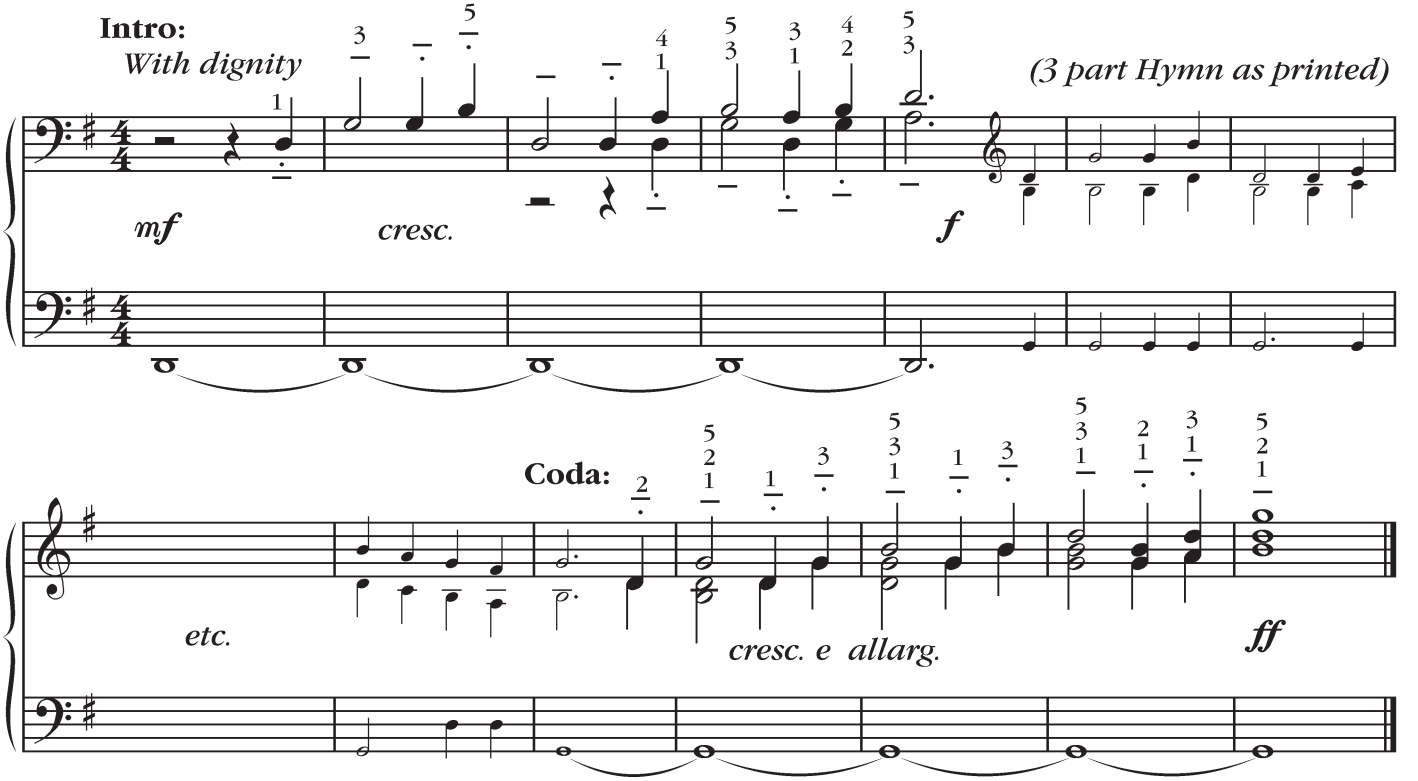
Praise to the Man



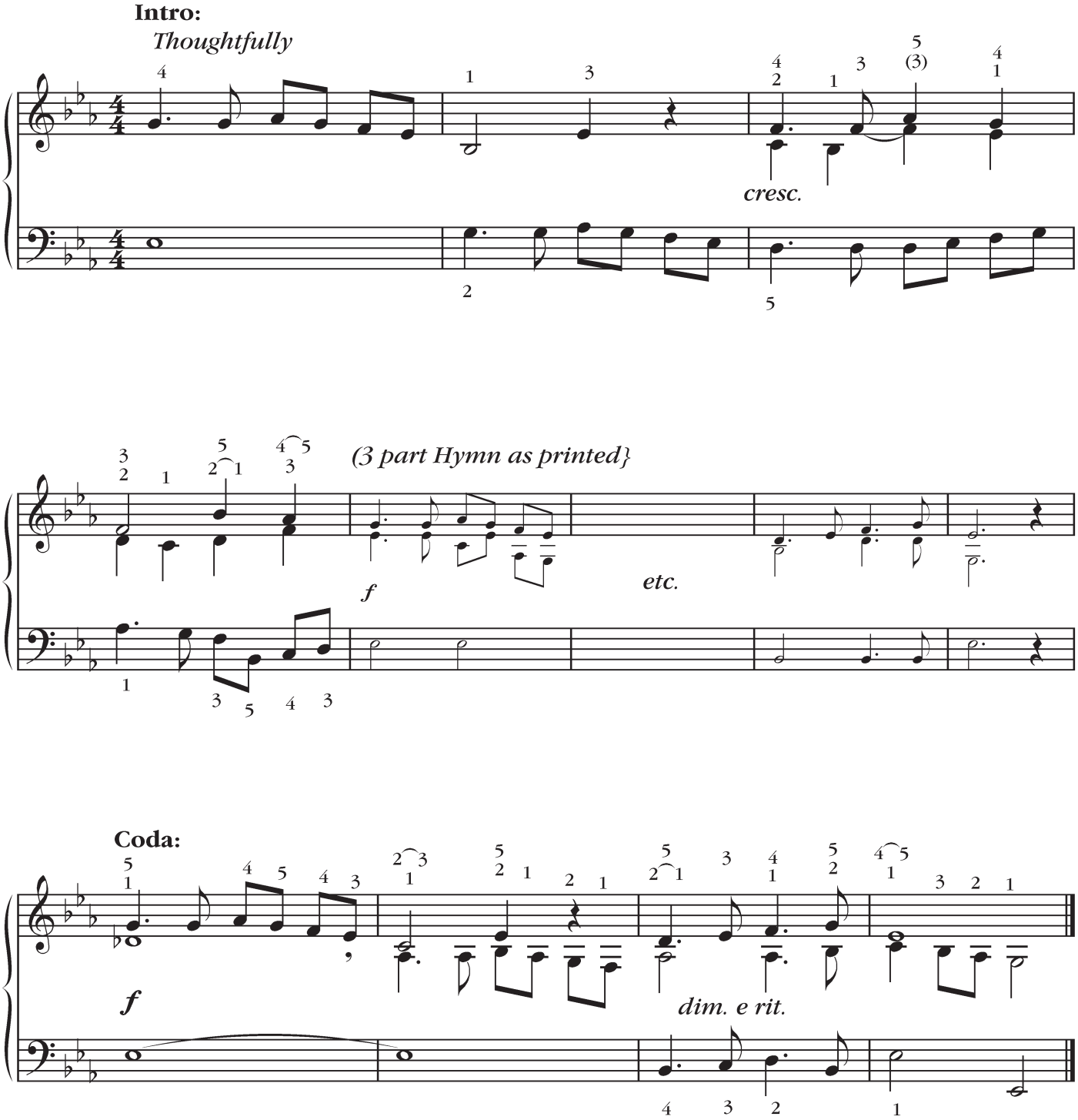
Come, Ye Children of the Lord



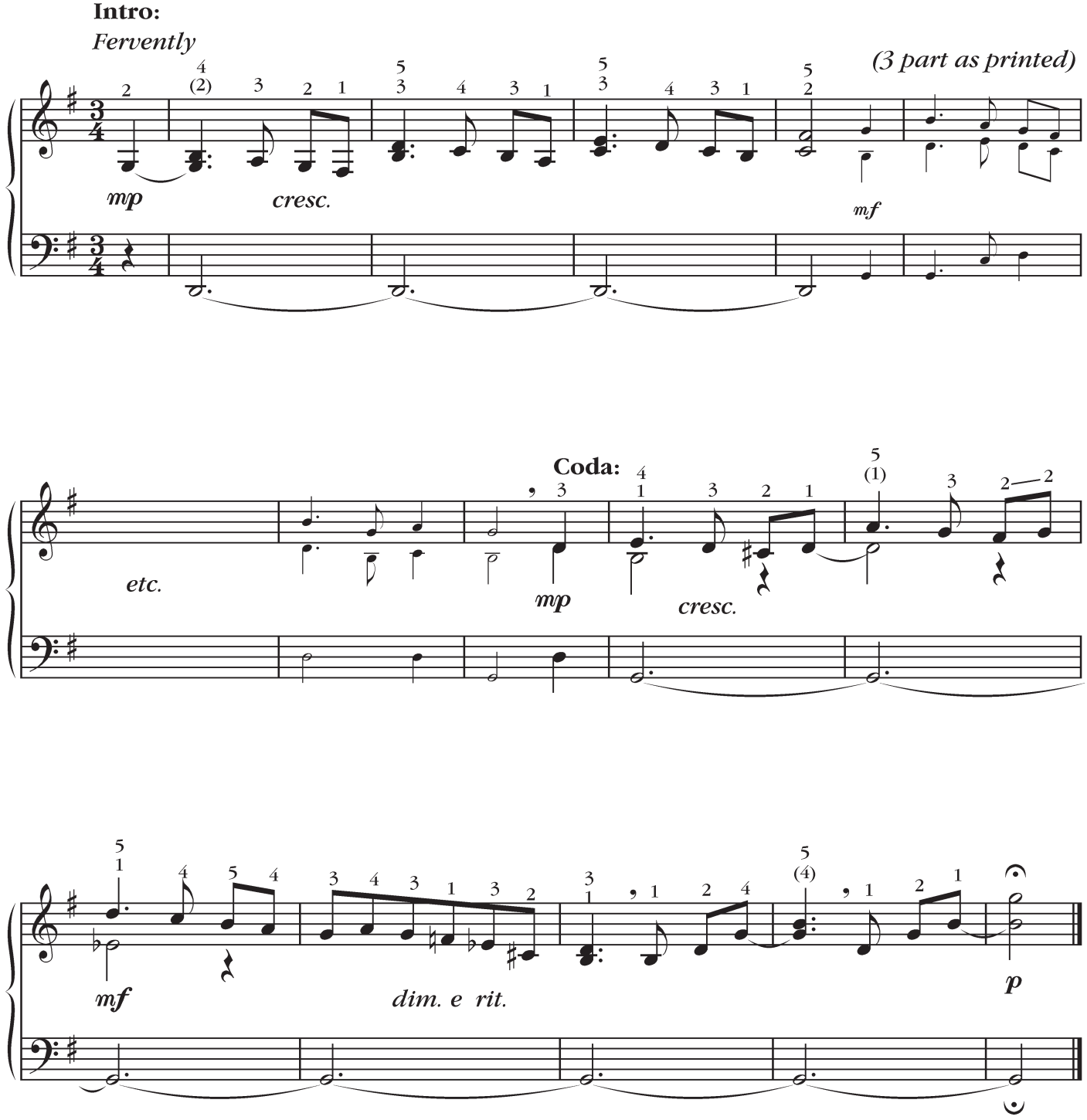
How Firm a Foundation



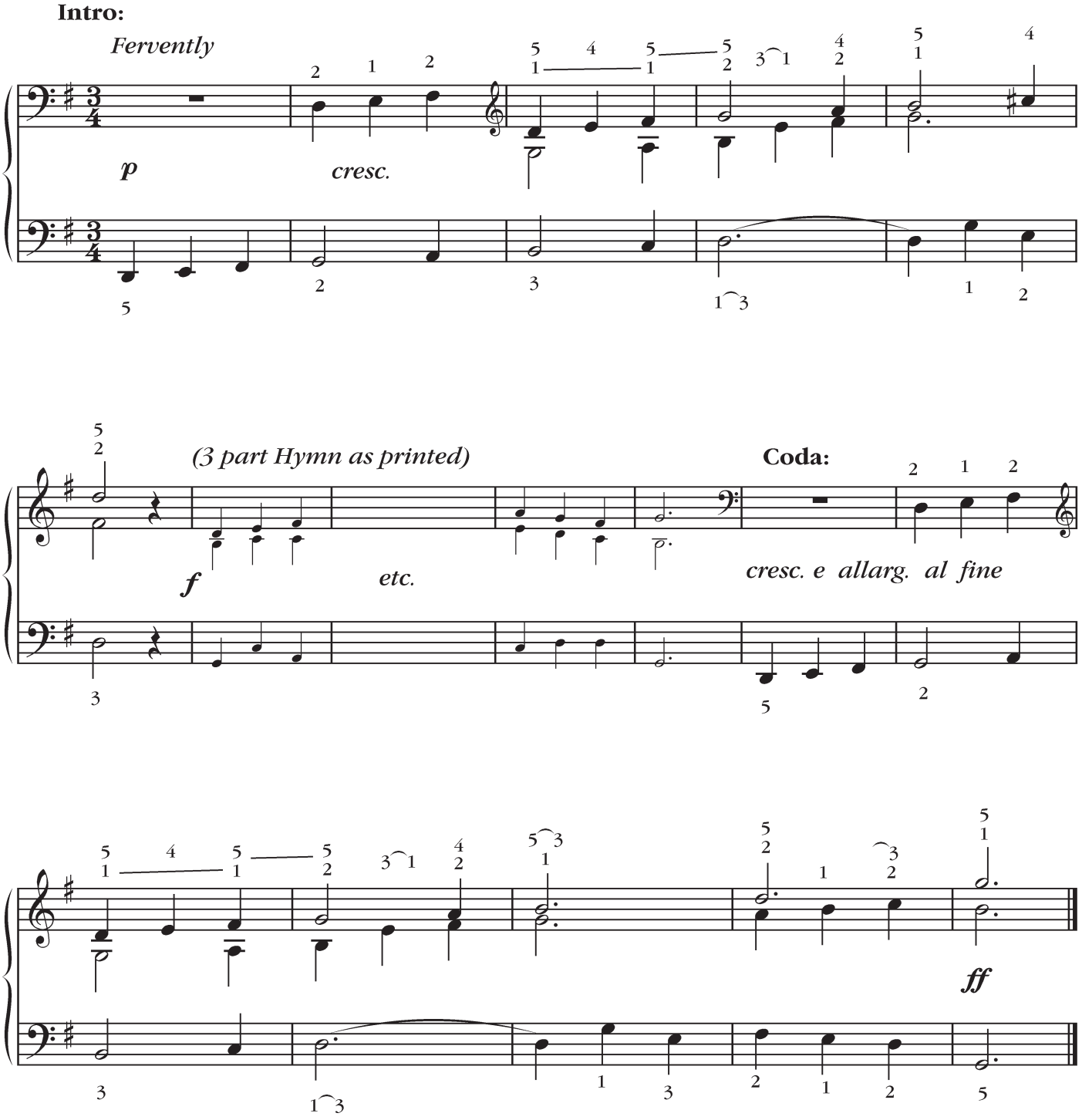
Did You Think to Pray?



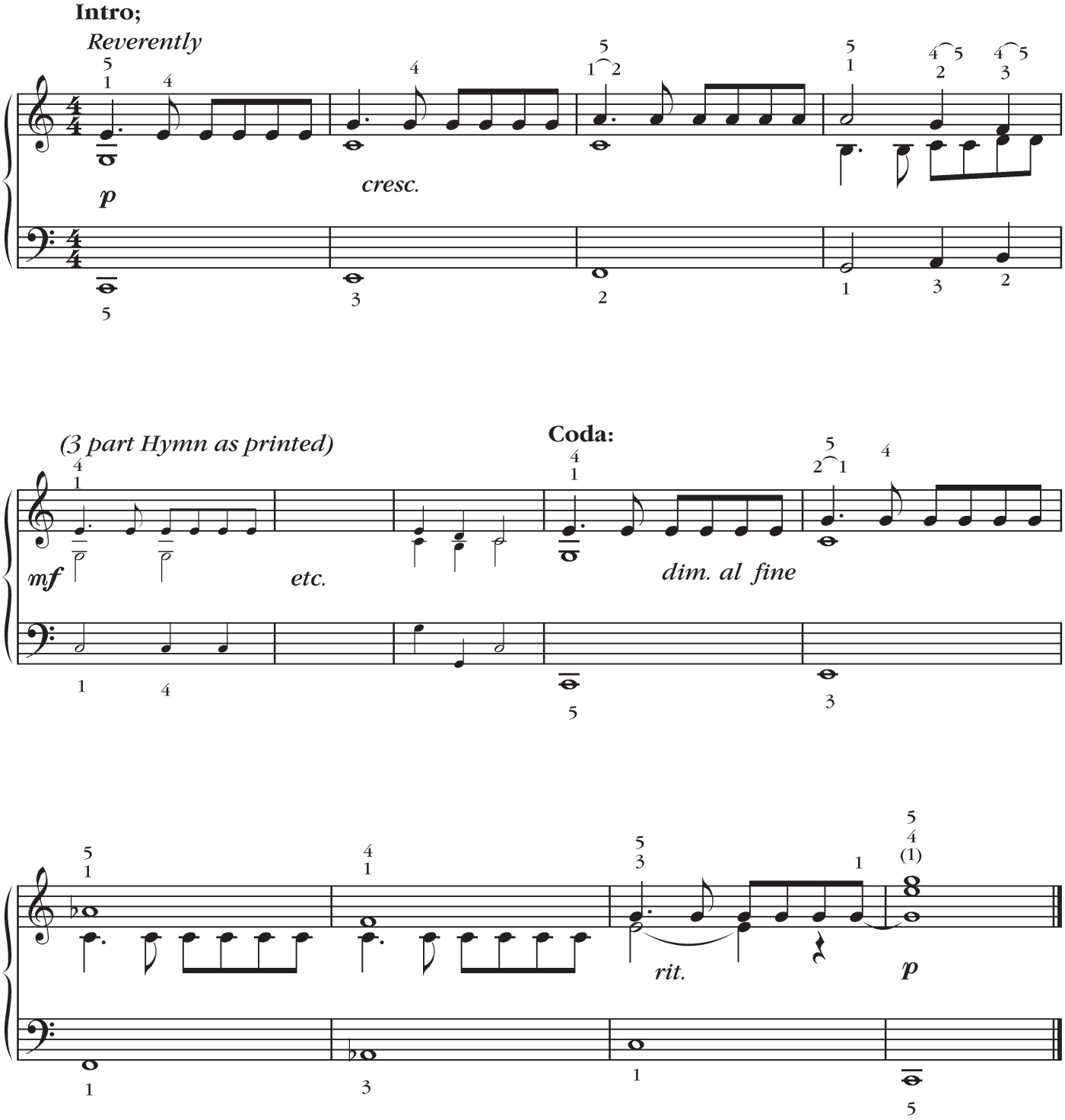
I Need Thee Every Hour



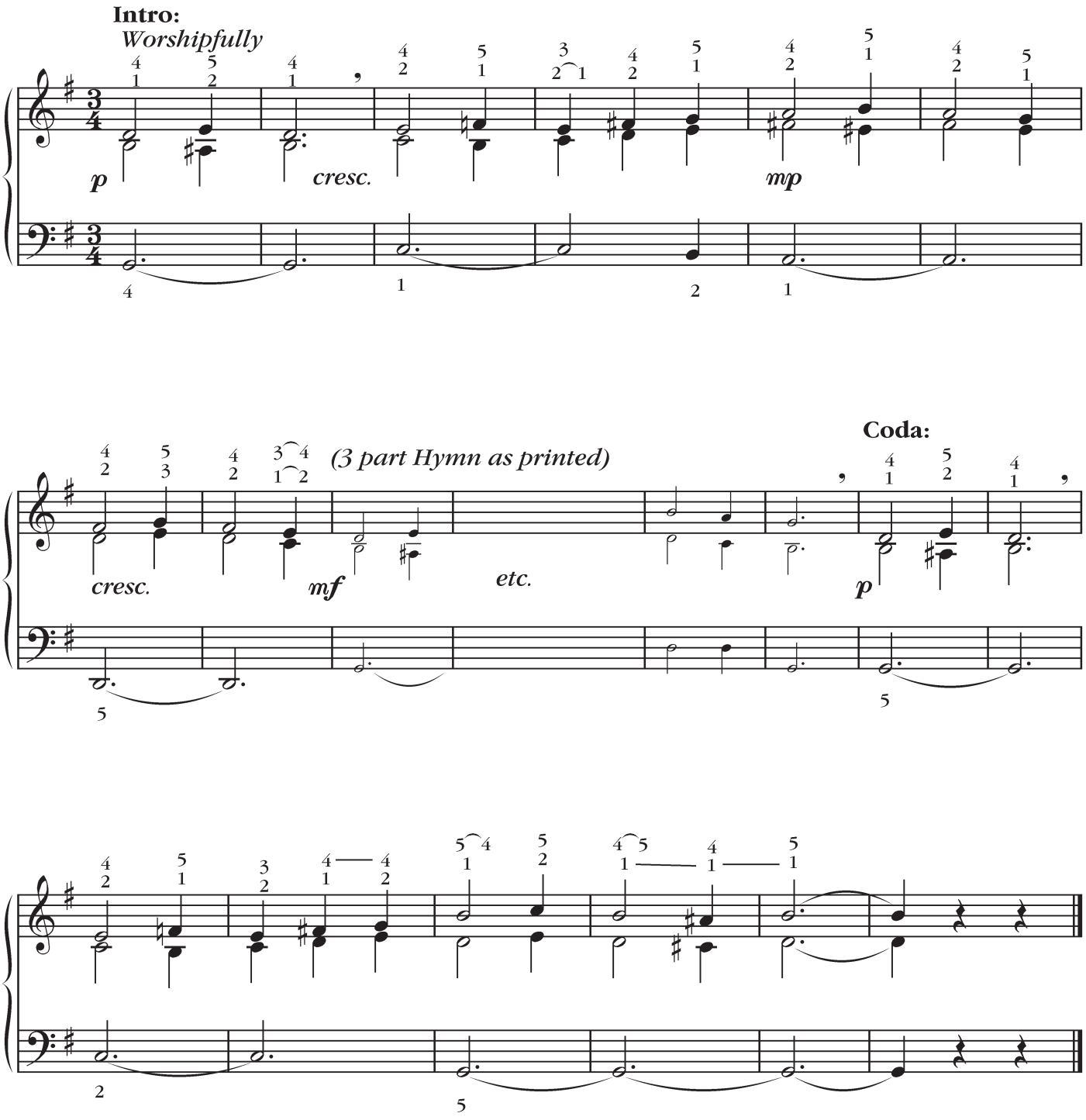
Sweet Is the Work



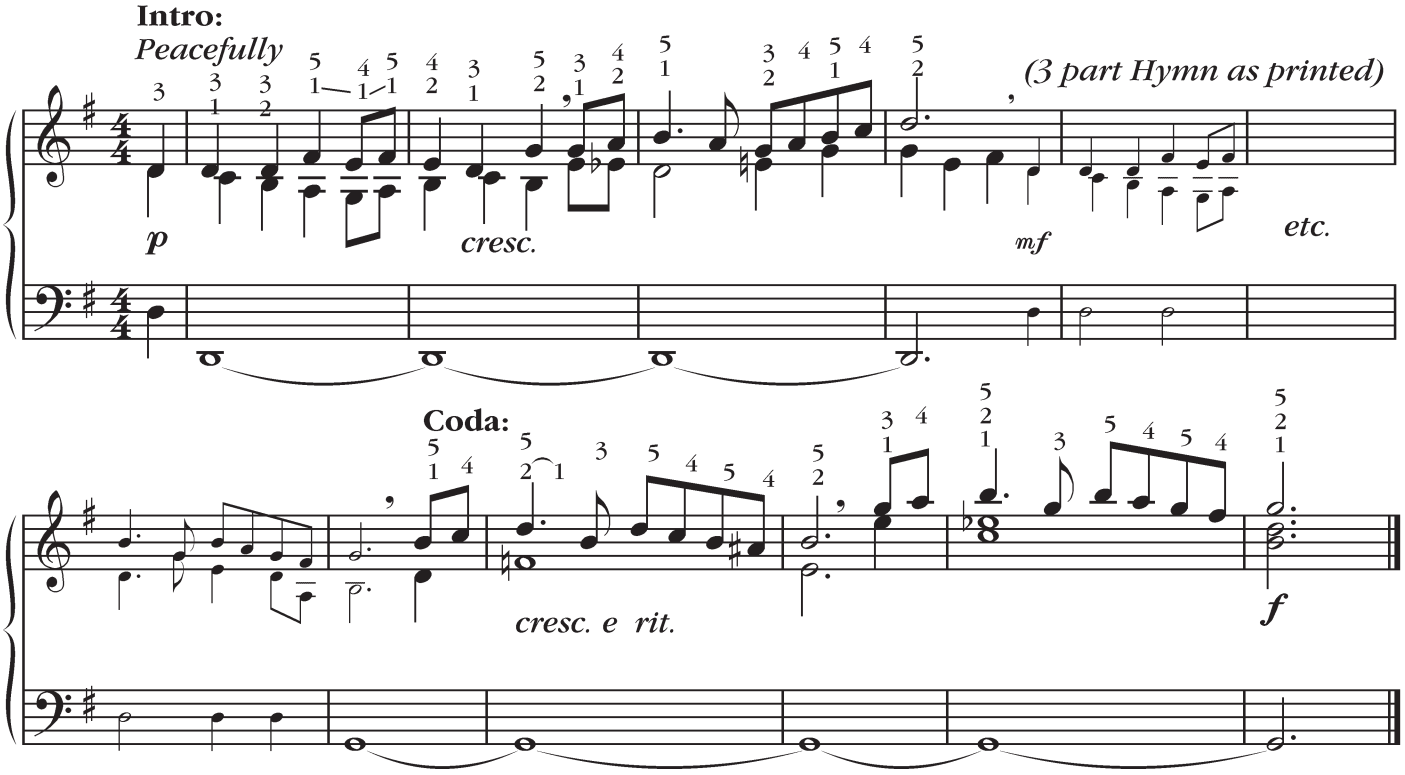
God Be with You Till We Meet Again



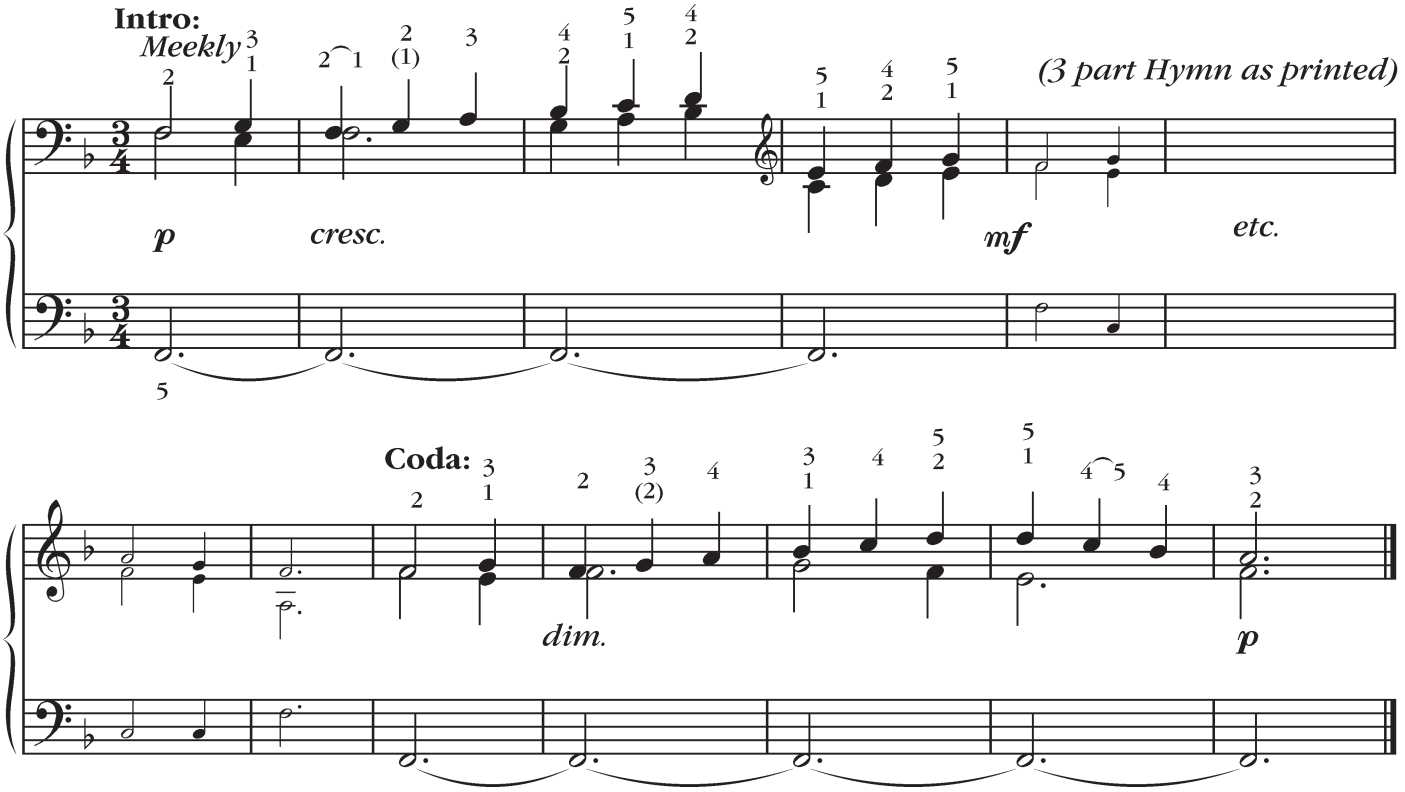
God Our Father, Hear Us Pray



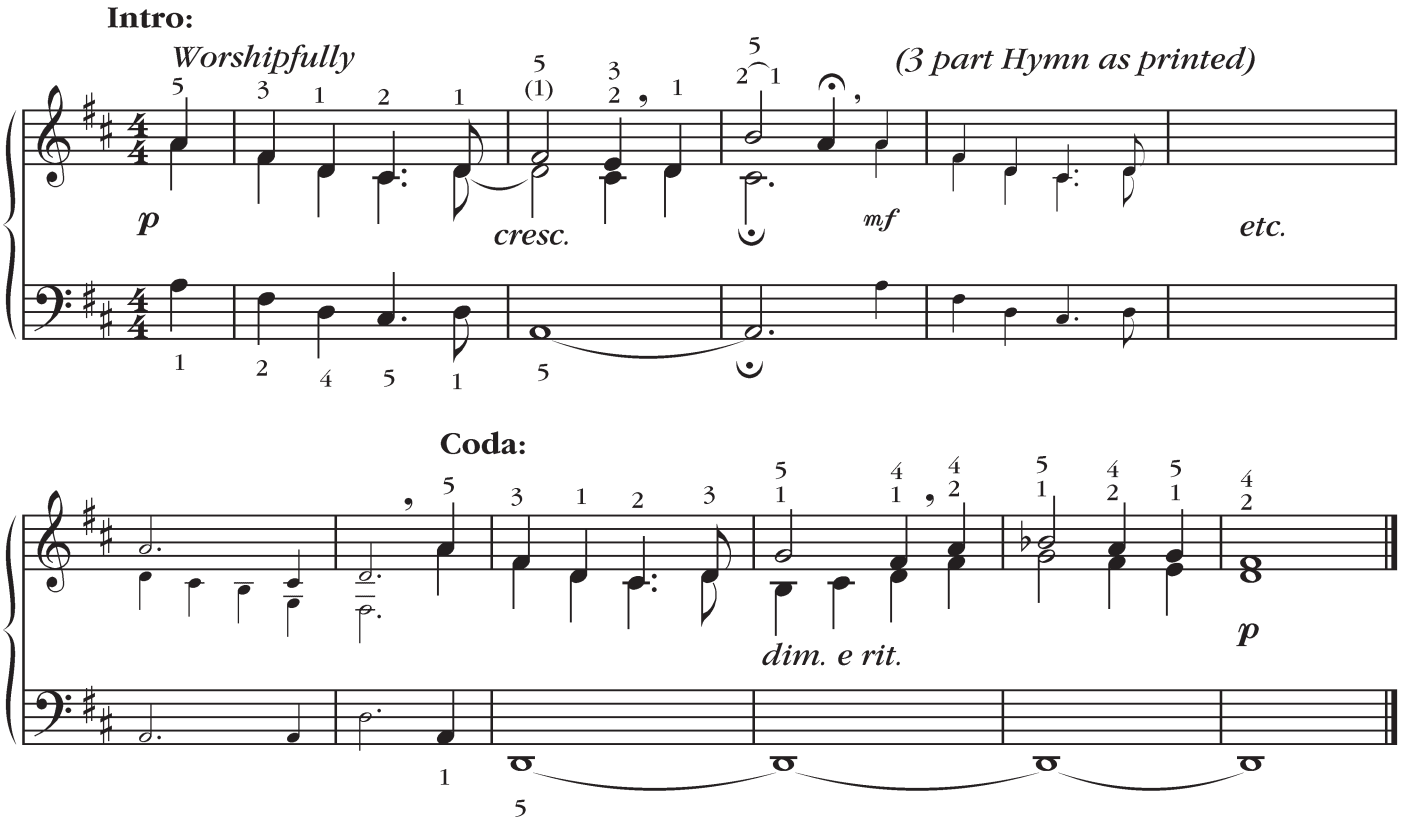
I Know That My Redeemer Lives



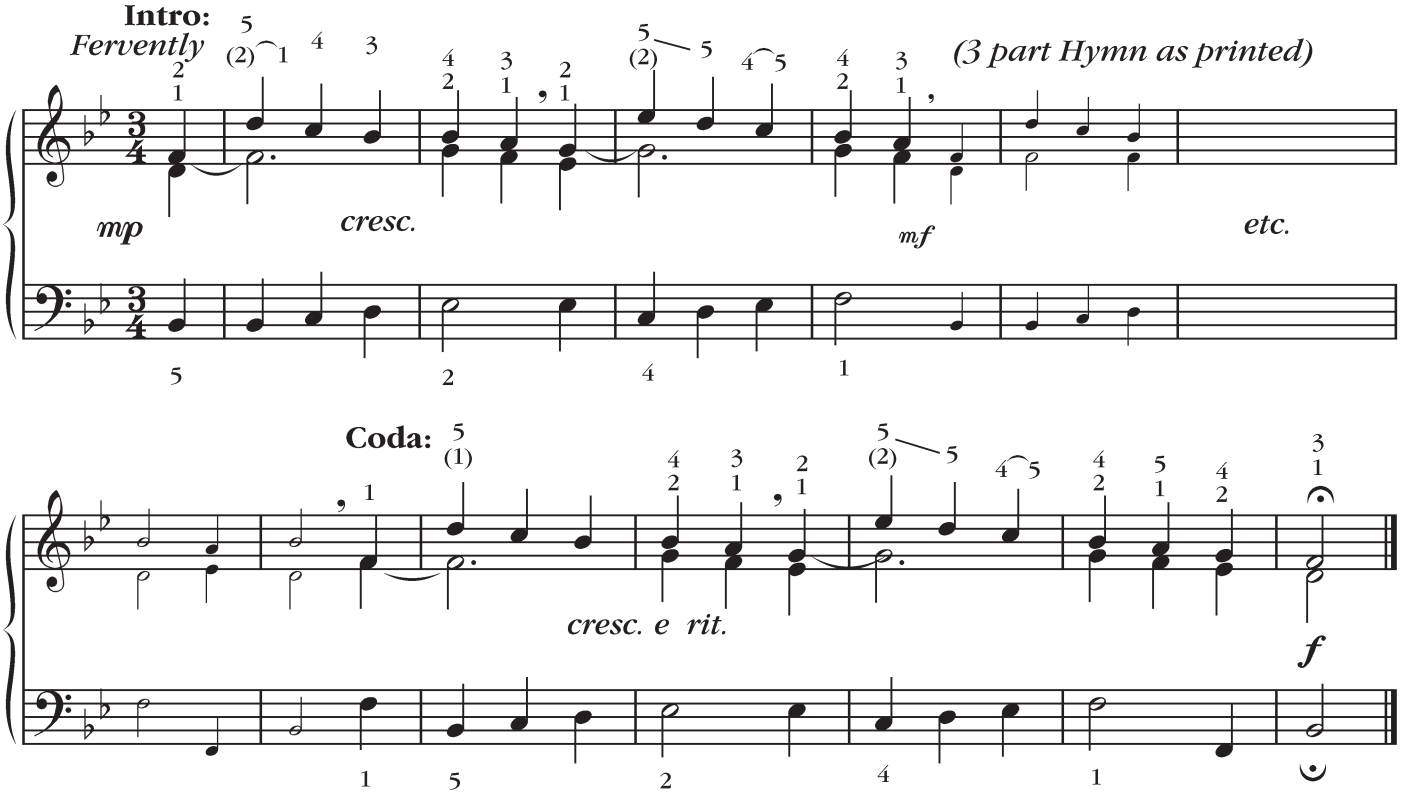
In Humility, Our Savior



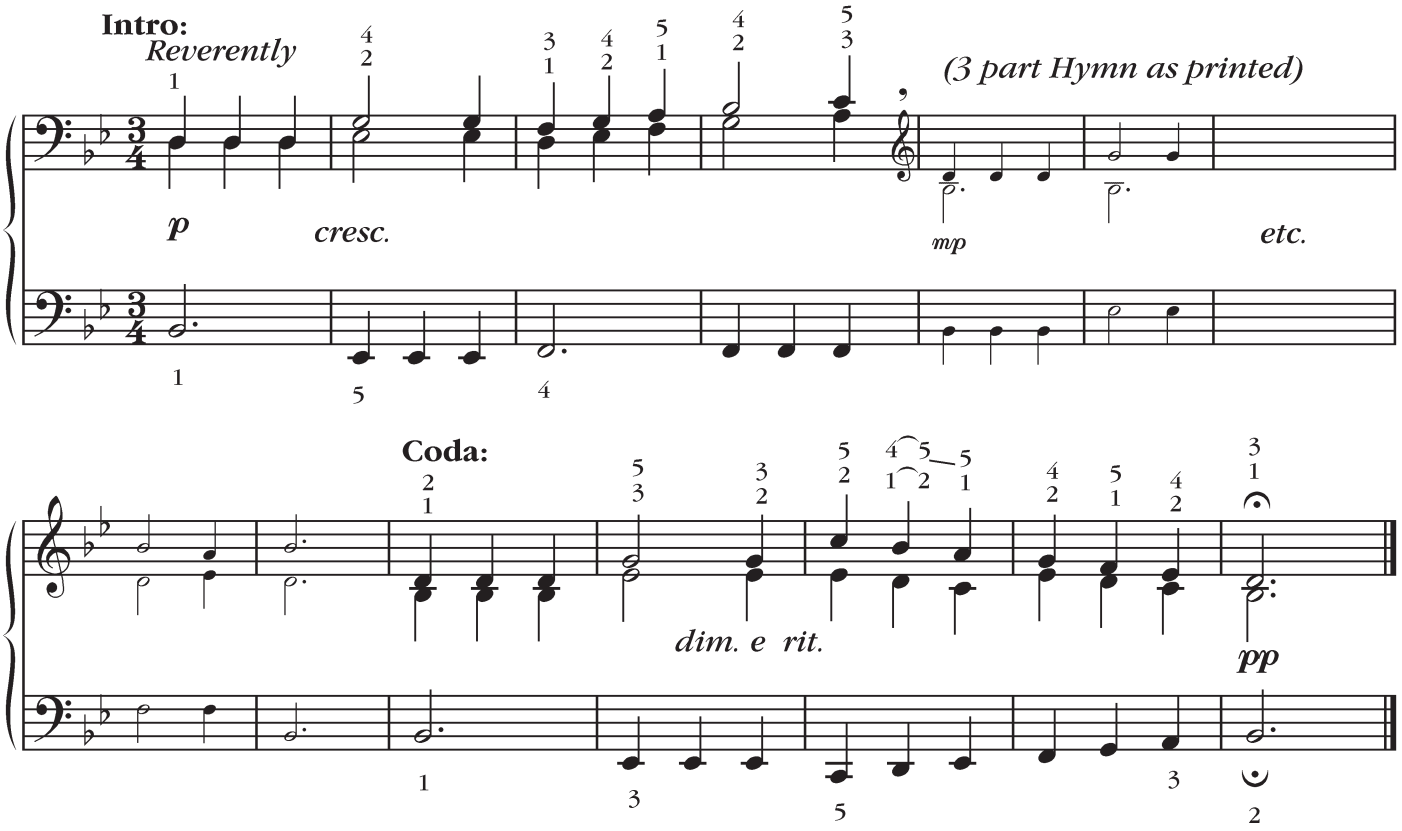
O God, the Eternal Father



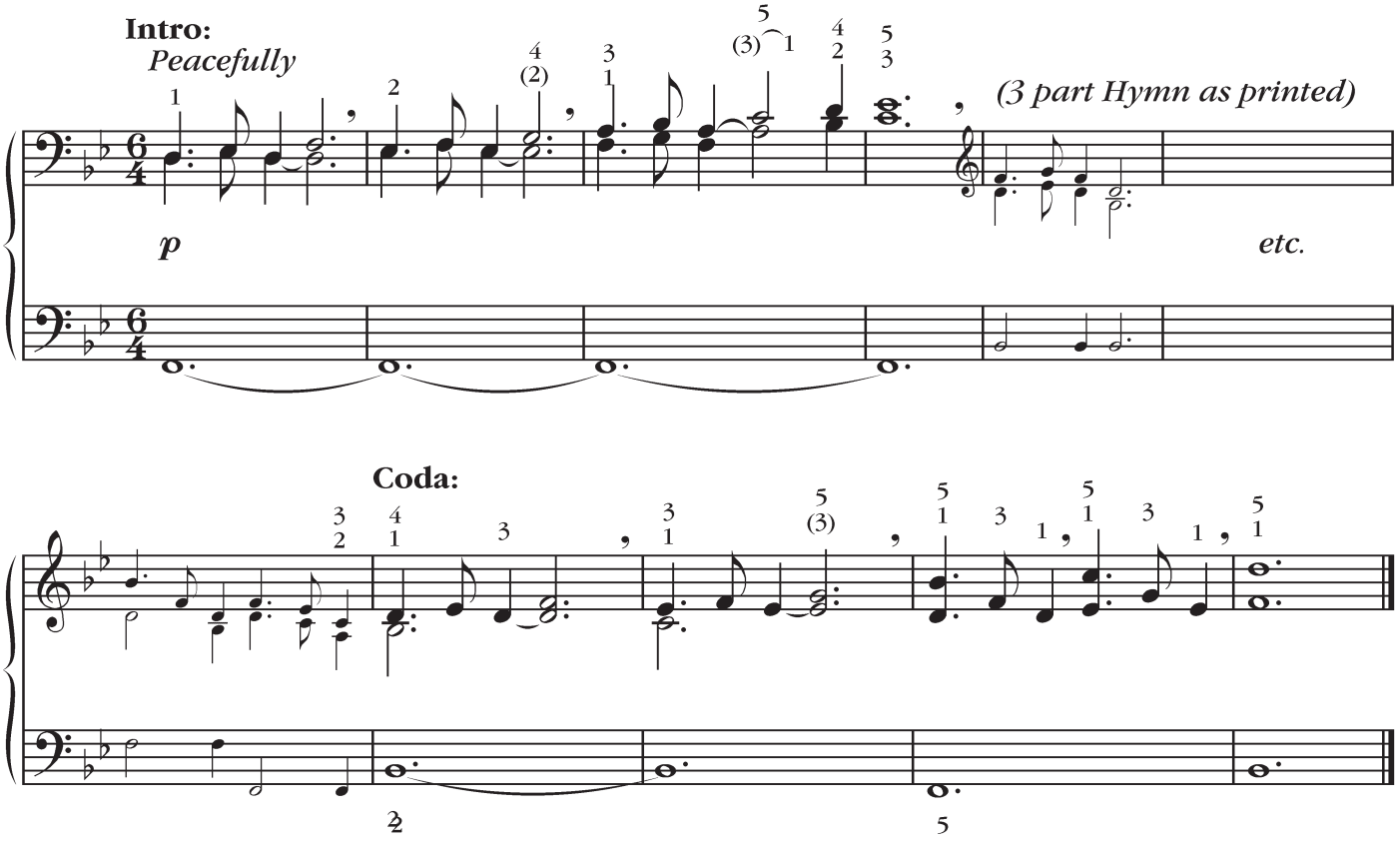
We'll Sing All Hail to Jesus' Name



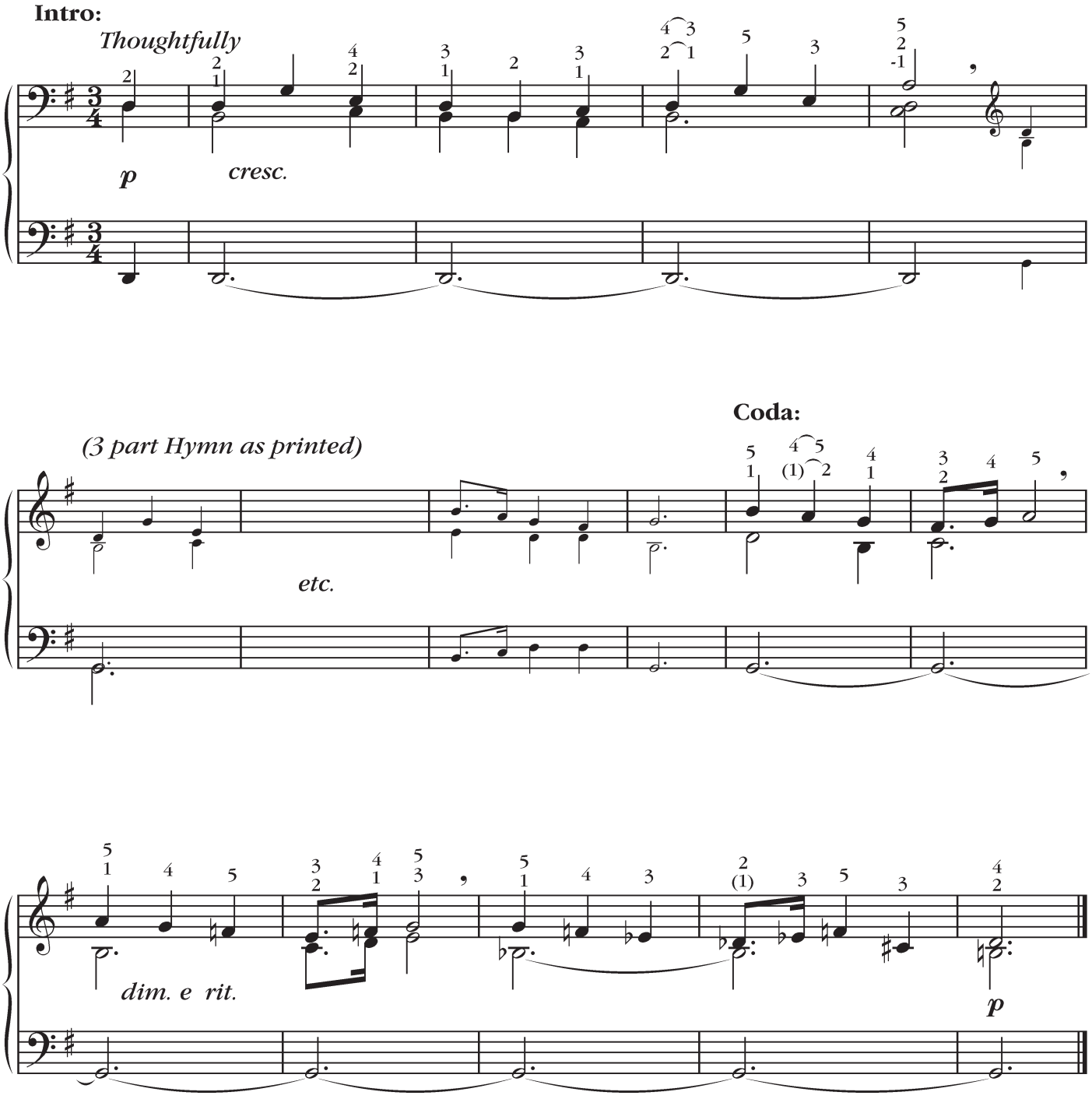
Behold the Great Redeemer Die



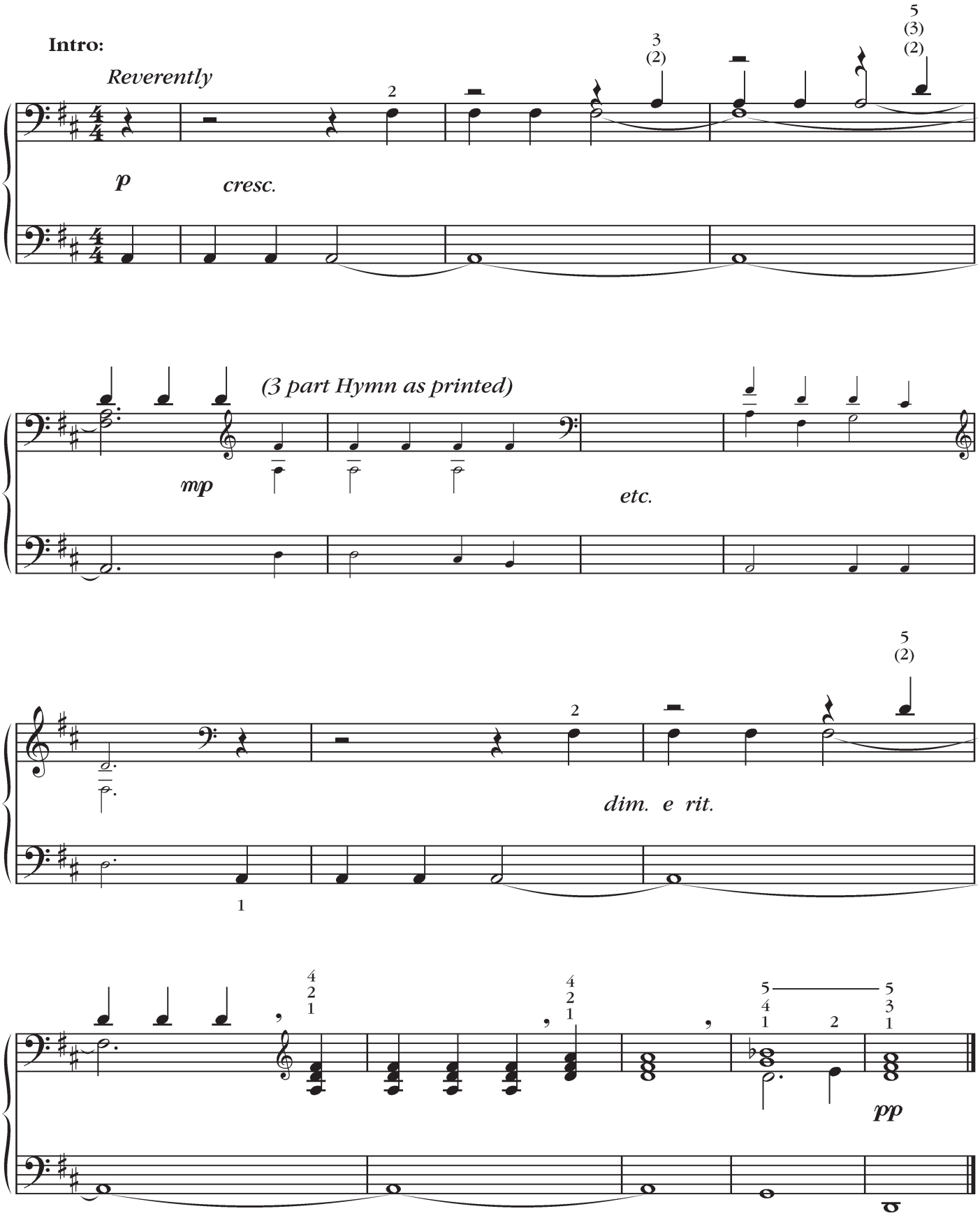
Silent Night



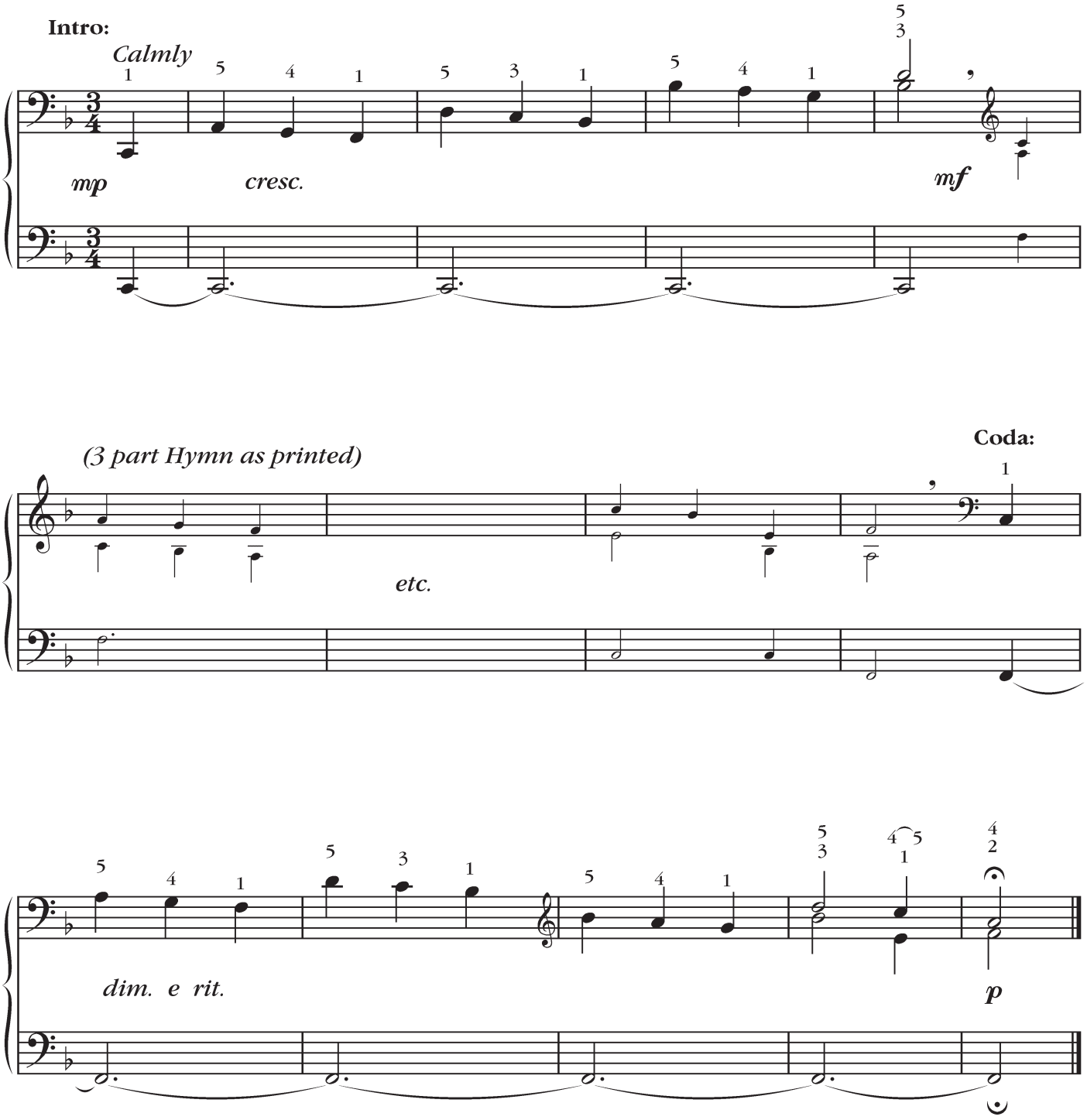
I Stand All Amazed



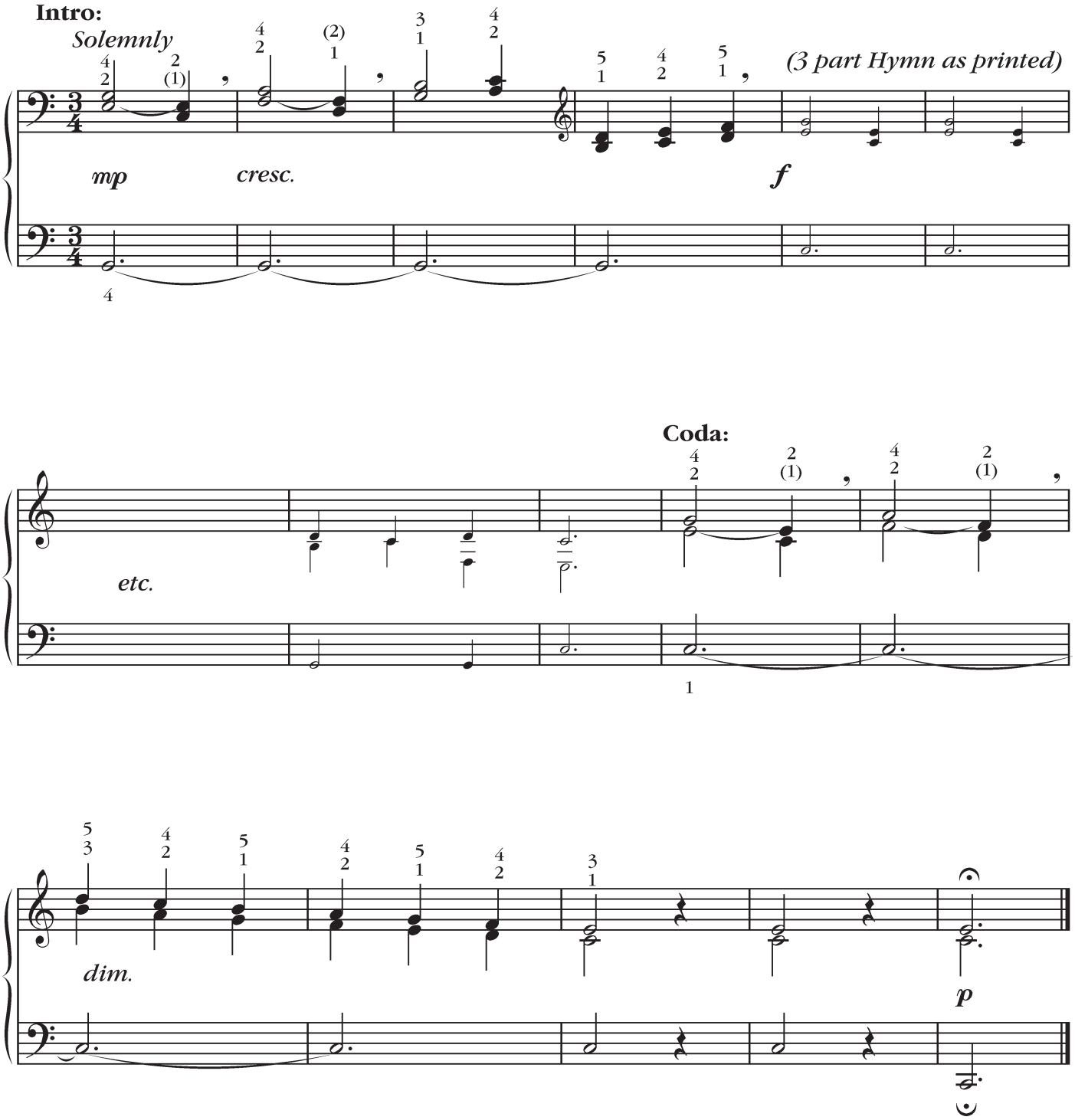
There is a Green Hill Far Away



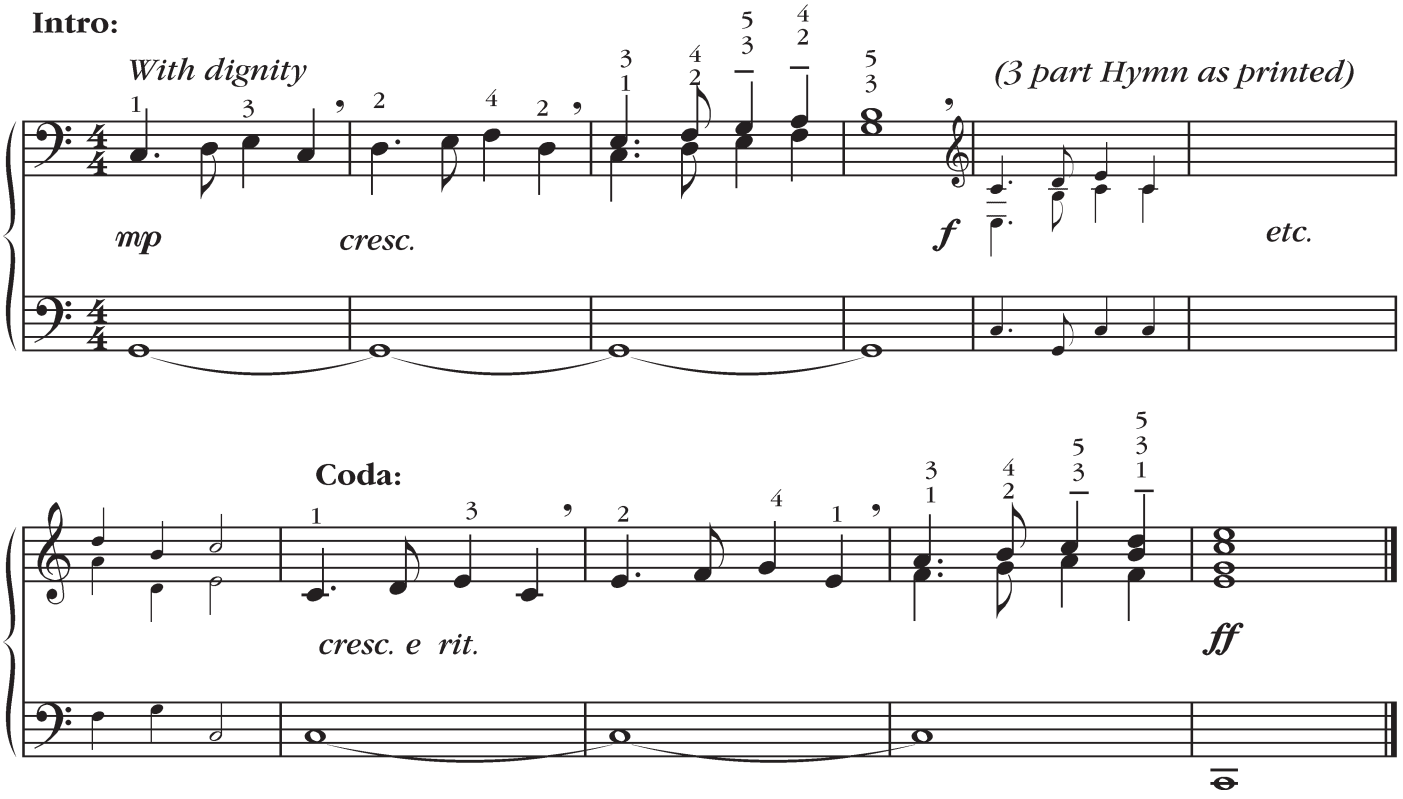
How Great the Wisdom and the Love



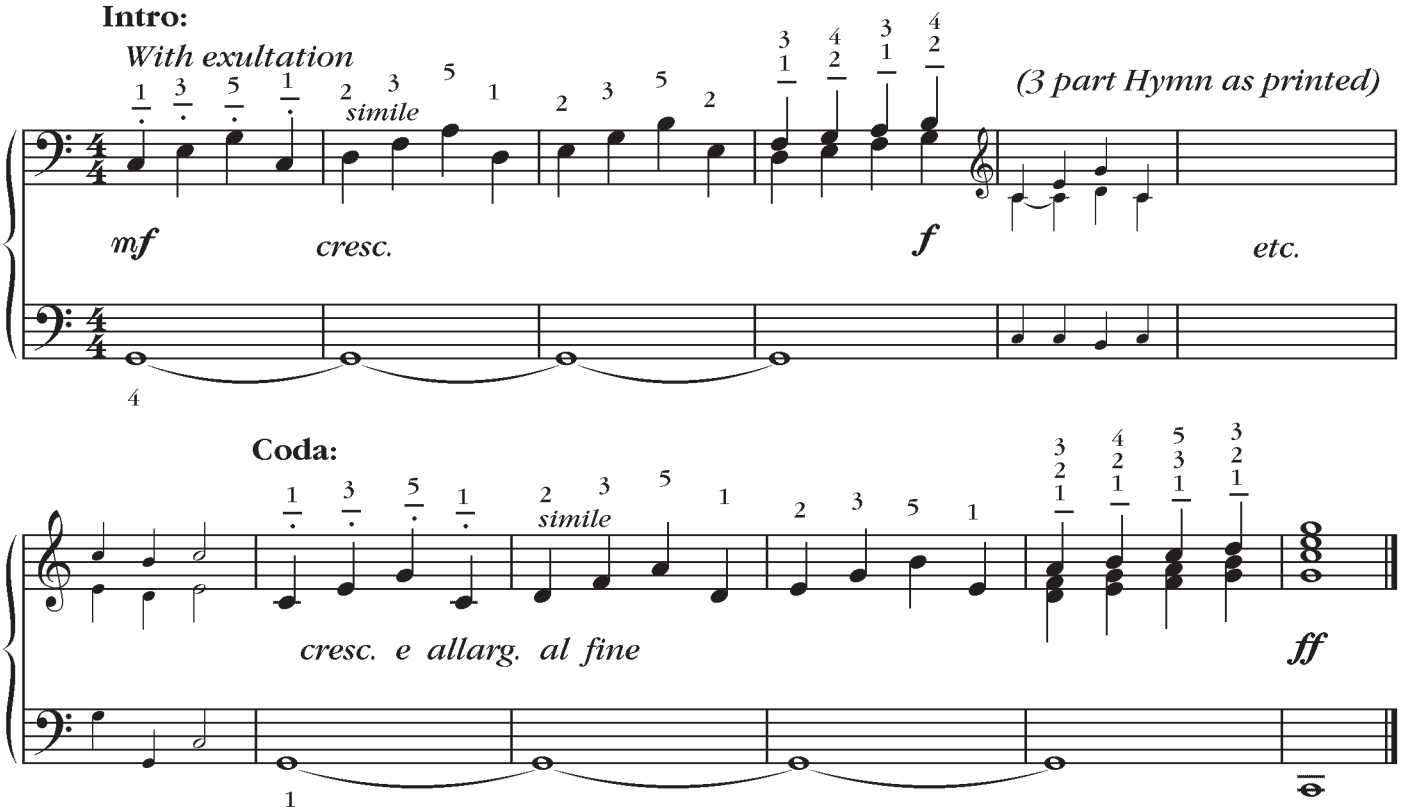
Jesus, Once of Humble Birth



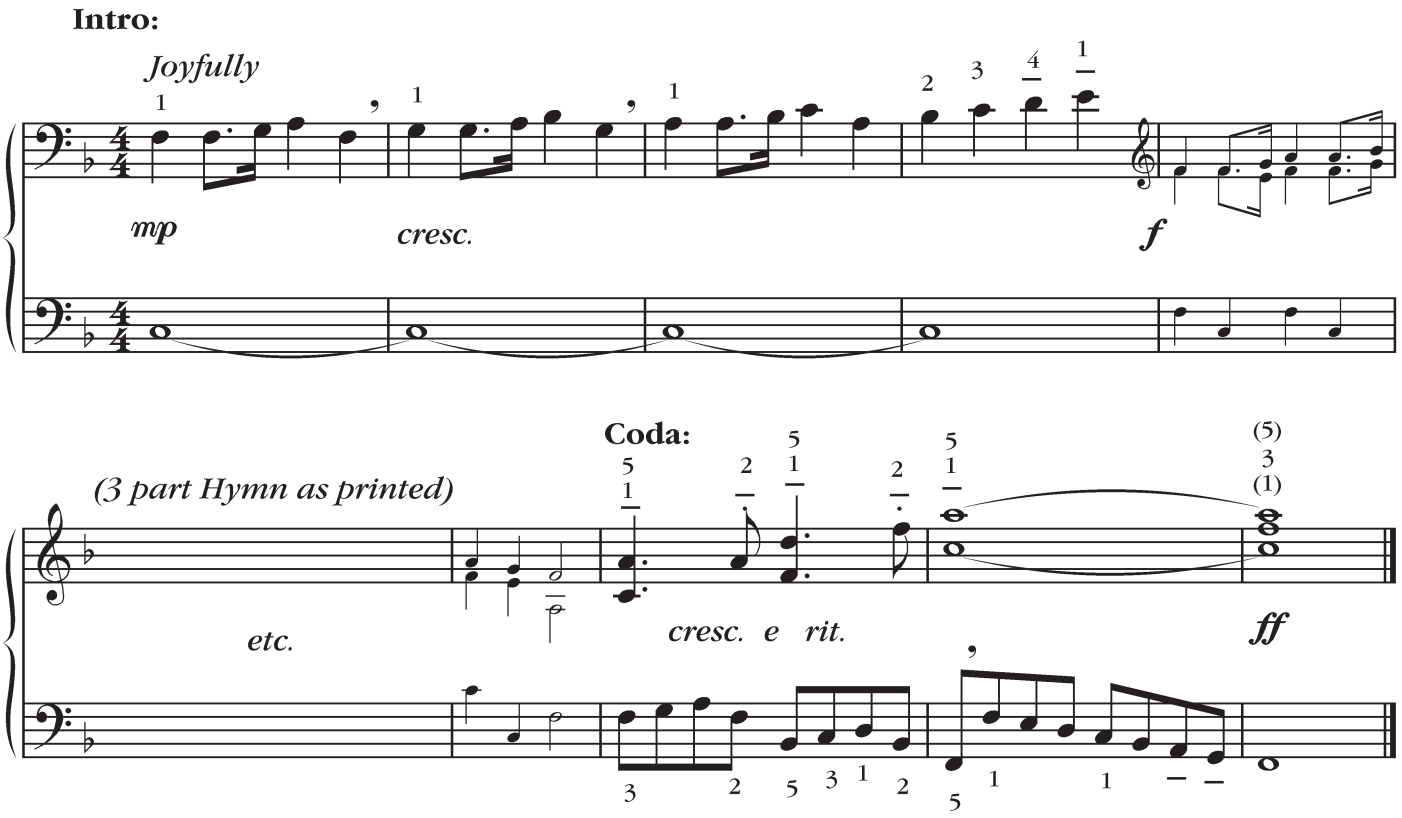
He Is Risen



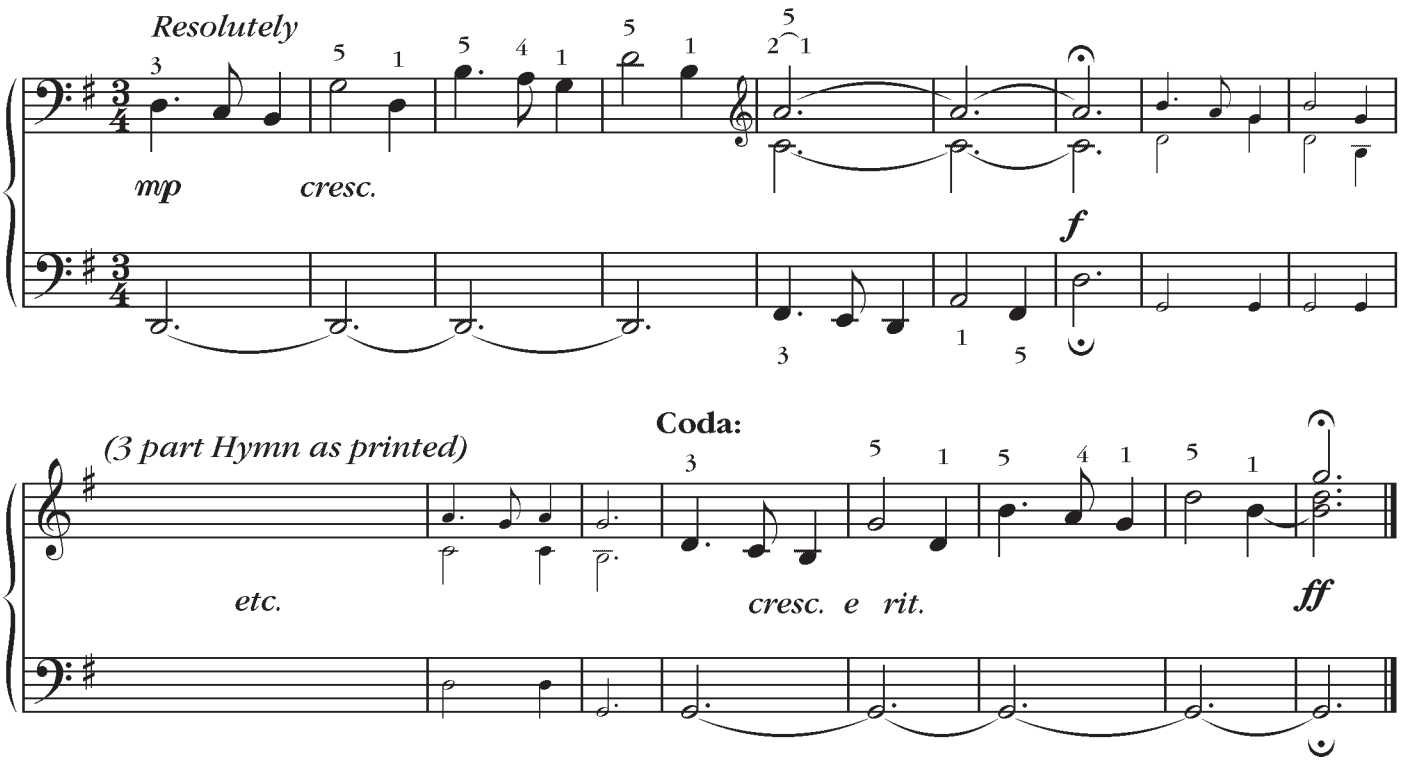
Christ the Lord is Risen Today



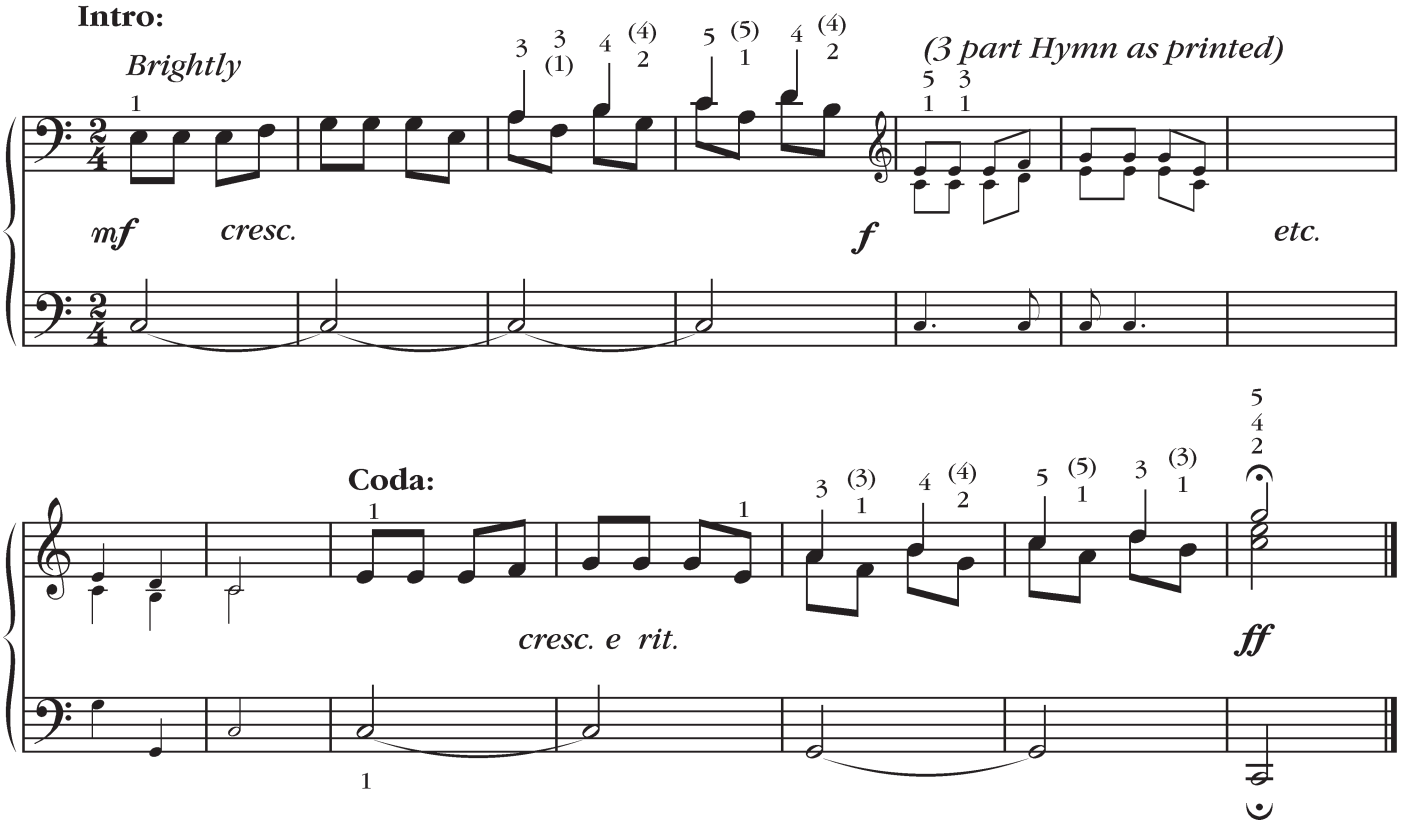
Far, Far Away on Judea's Plains



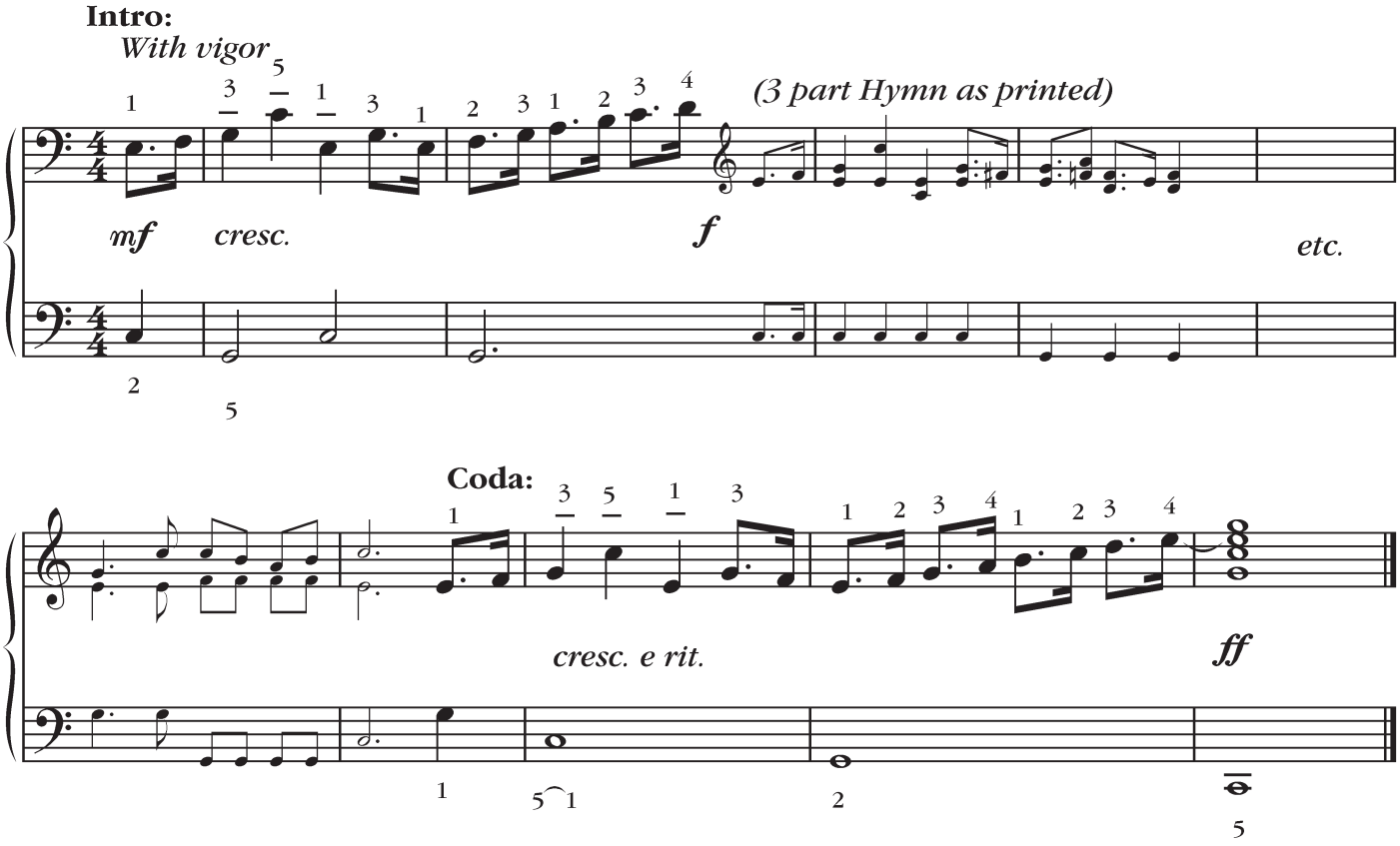
Do What is Right



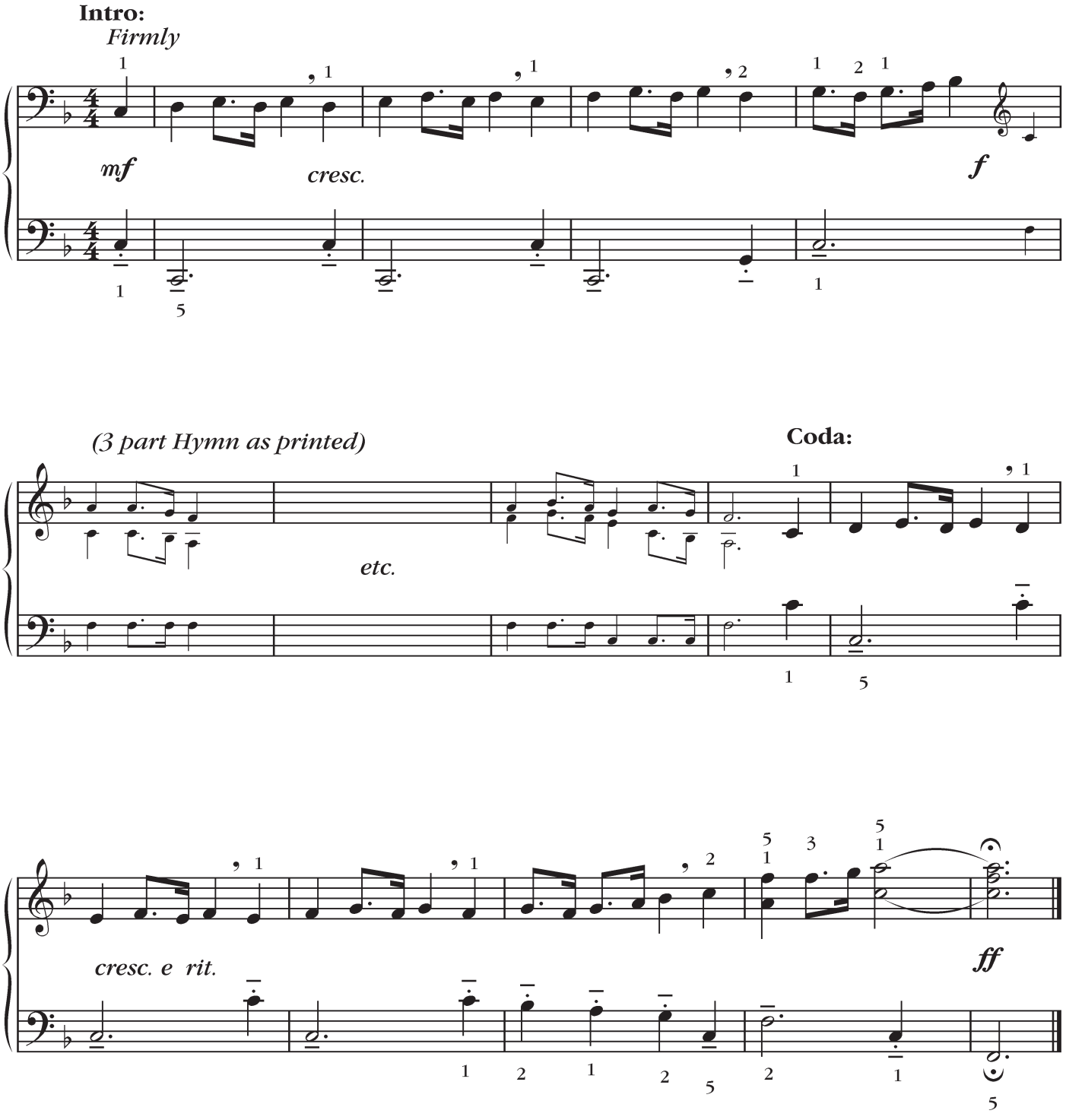
Count Your Blessings



Let Us All Press On



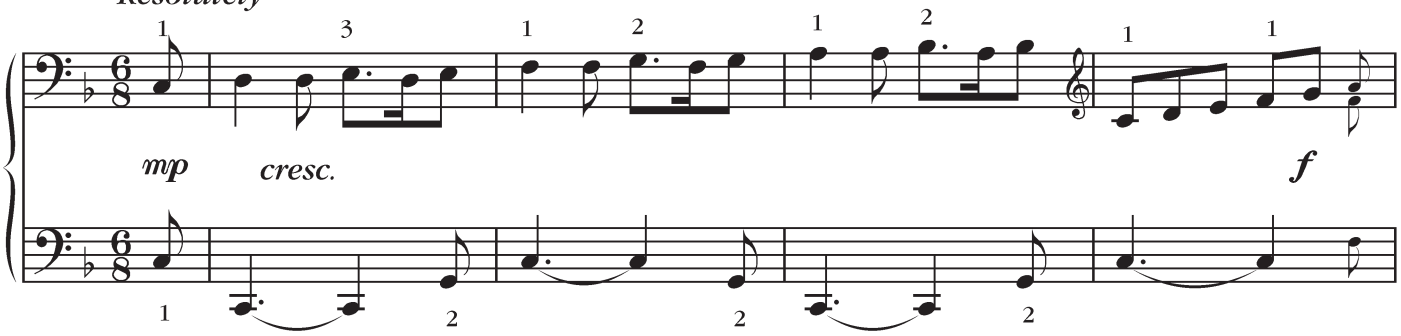
O Say, What Is Truth?



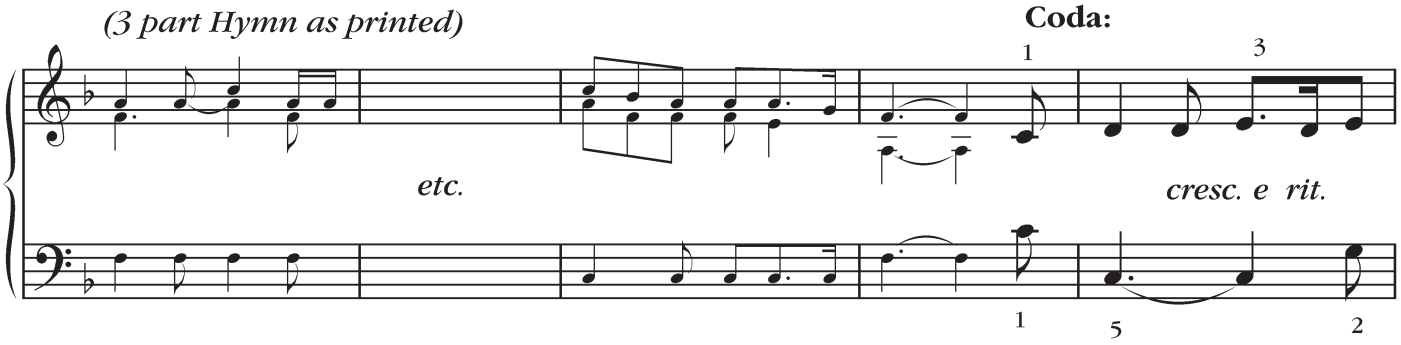
I'll Go Where You Want Me to Go

Intro:

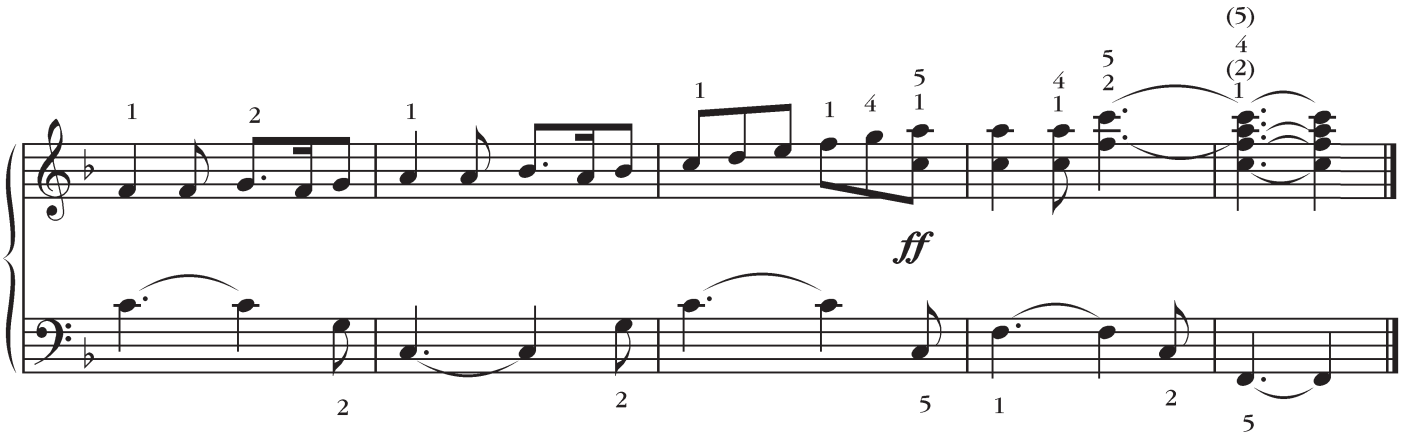
Resolutely



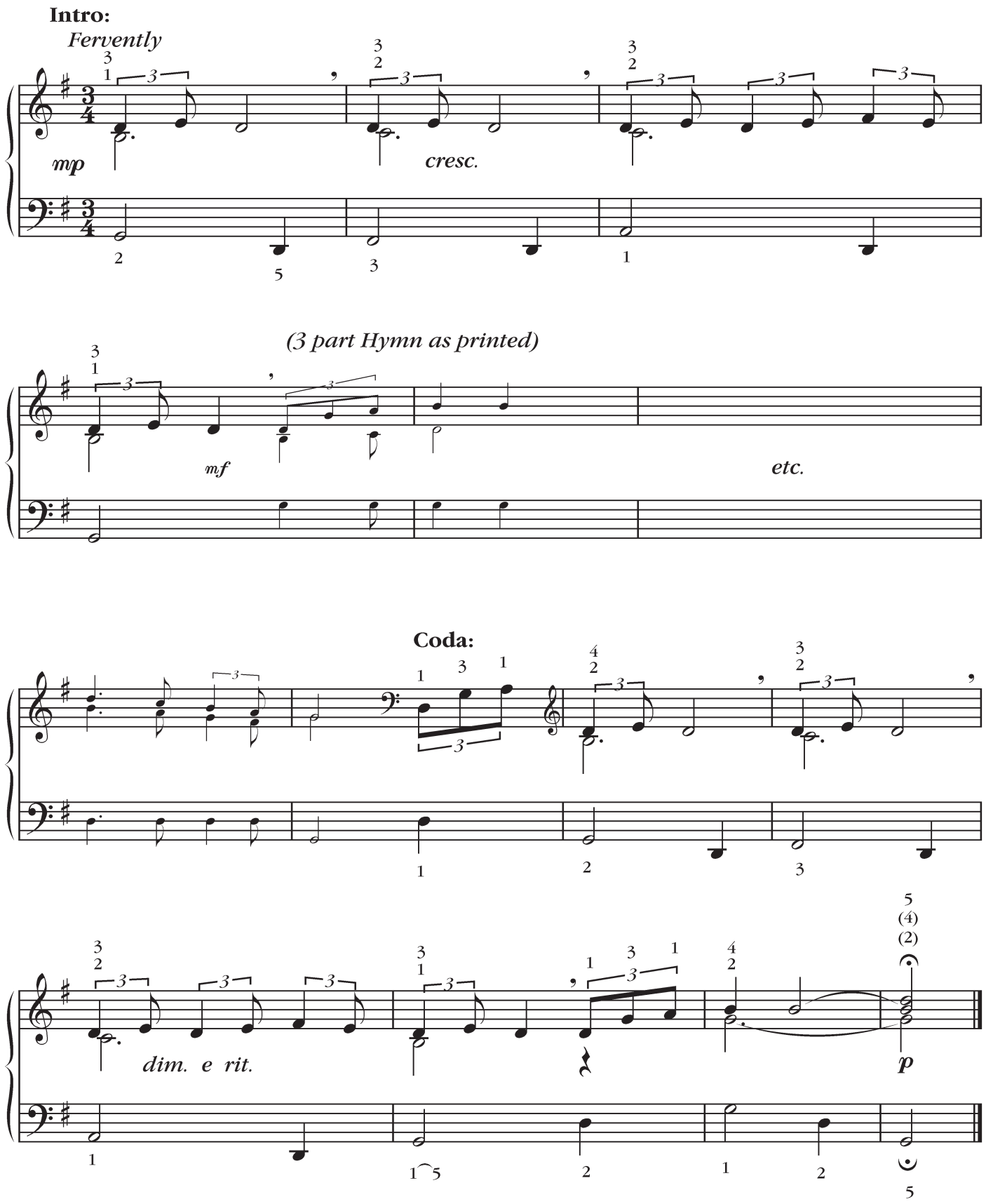
(3 part Hymn as printed)



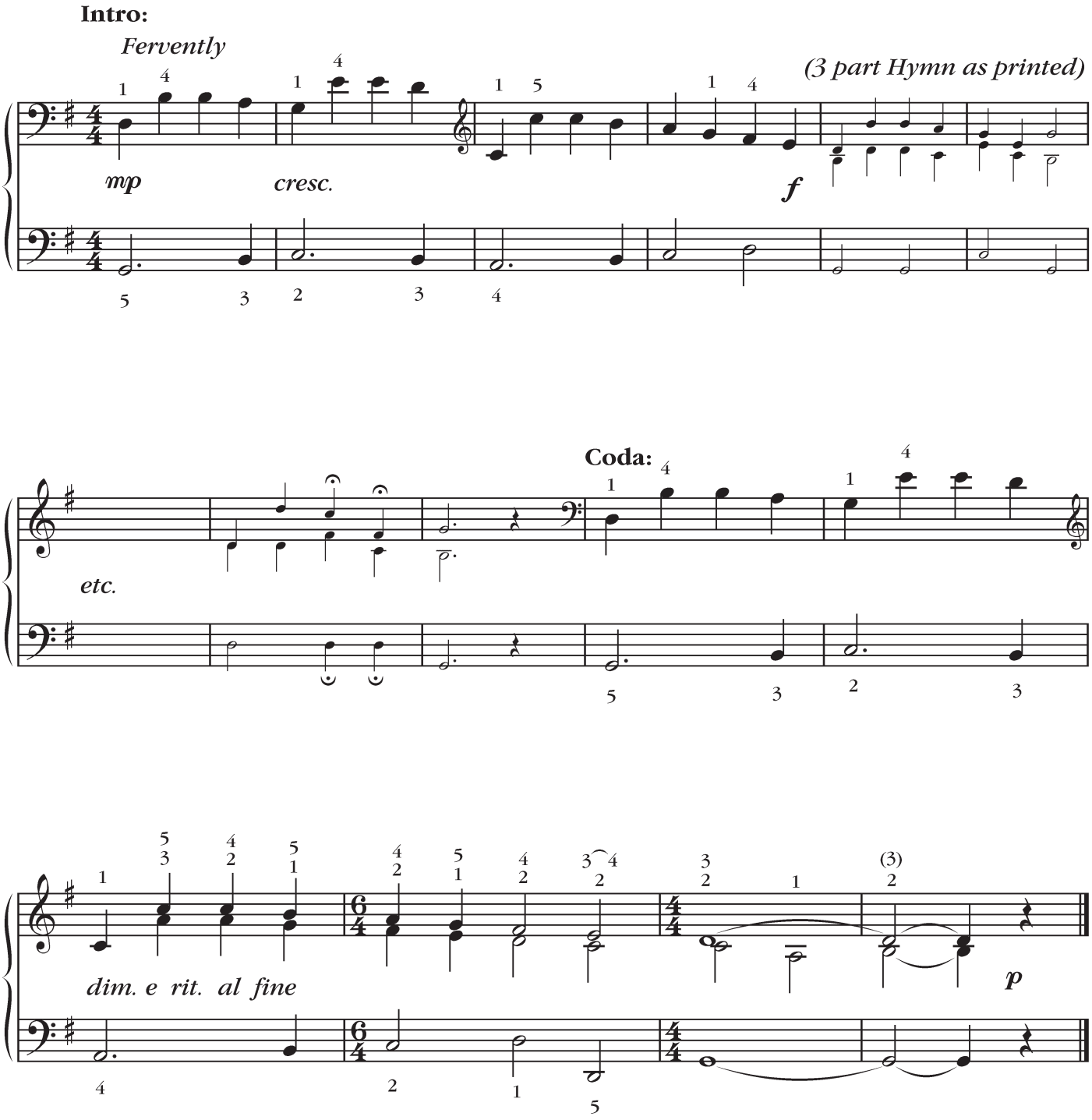
Coda:



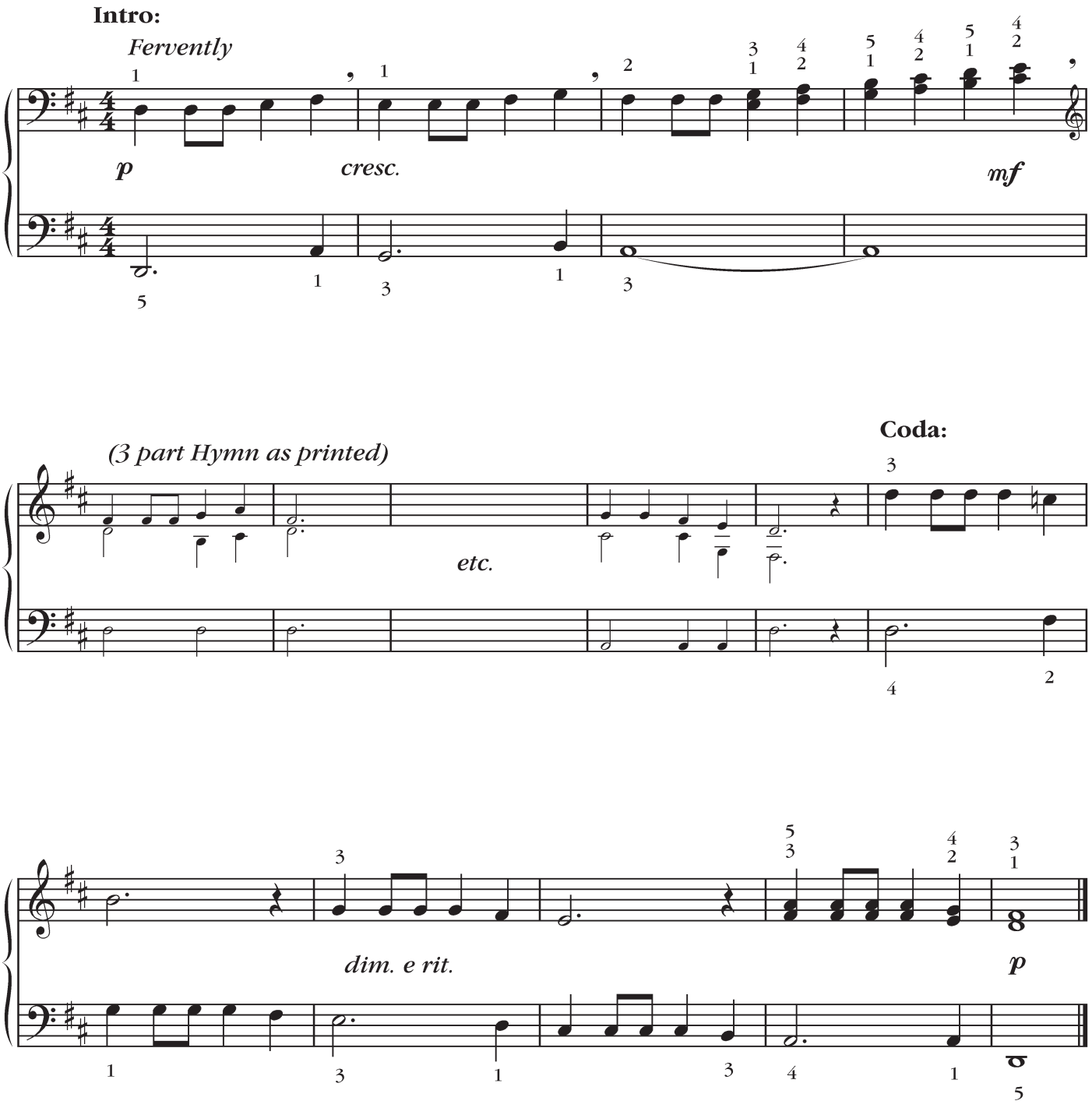
O My Father


Intro:
Fervently
mp
cresc.
(3 part Hymn as printed)
mf
etc.
Coda:
dim. e rit.
p

Love at Home

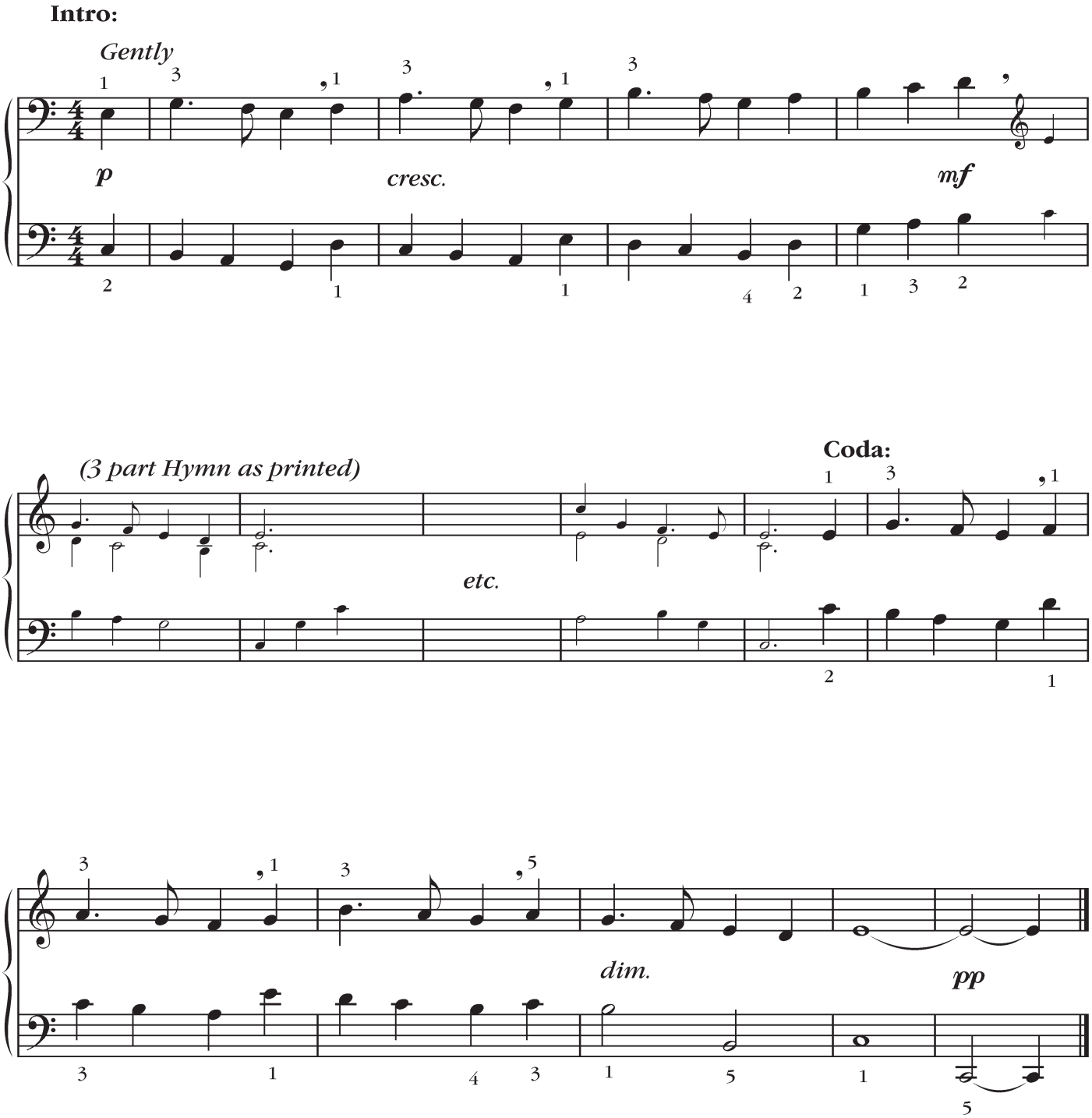

Intro:
Fervently
(3 part Hymn as printed)
mp
cresc.
f
Coda:
etc.
dim. e rit. al fine
p

I Am a Child of God

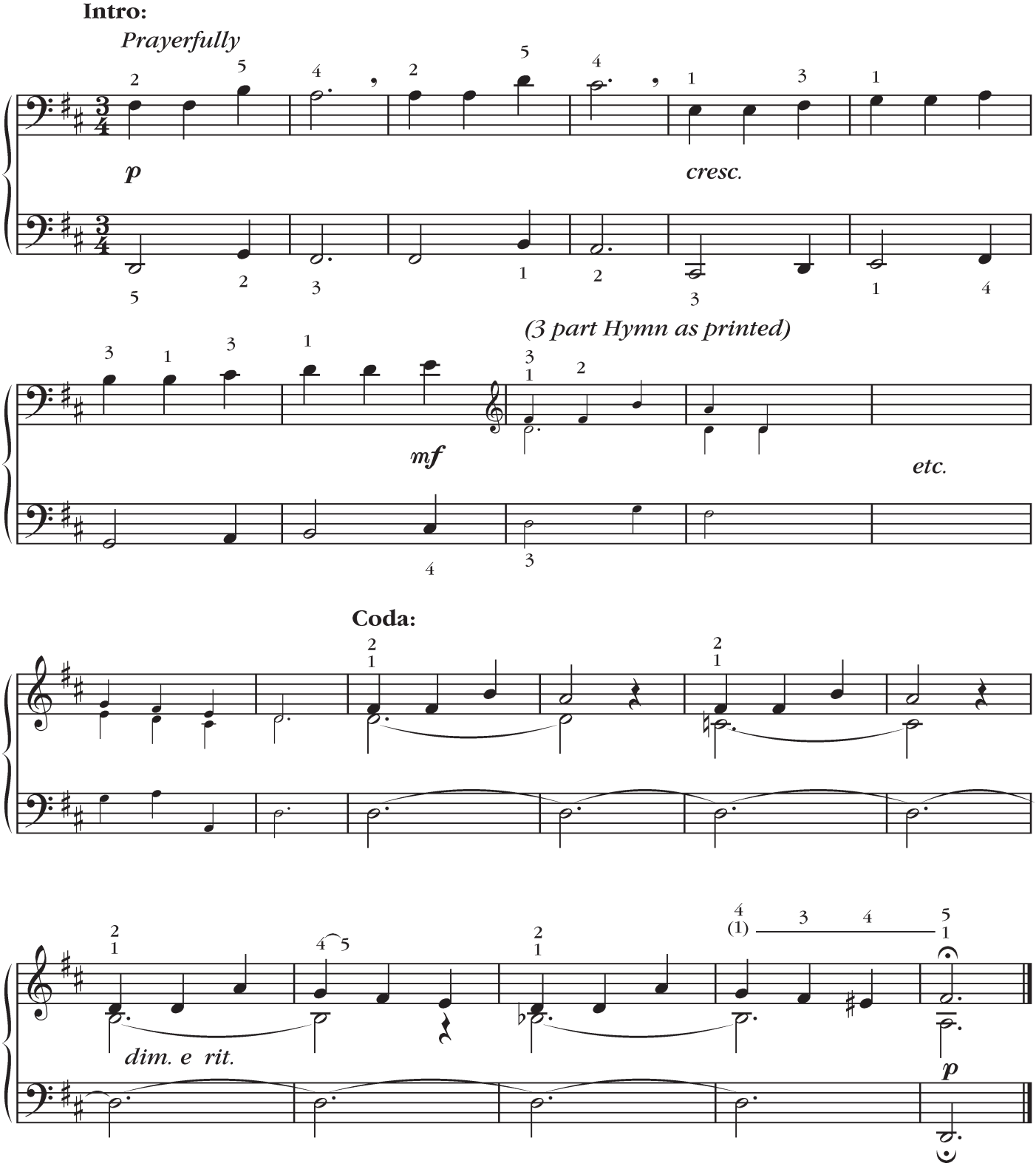


I Know My Father Lives

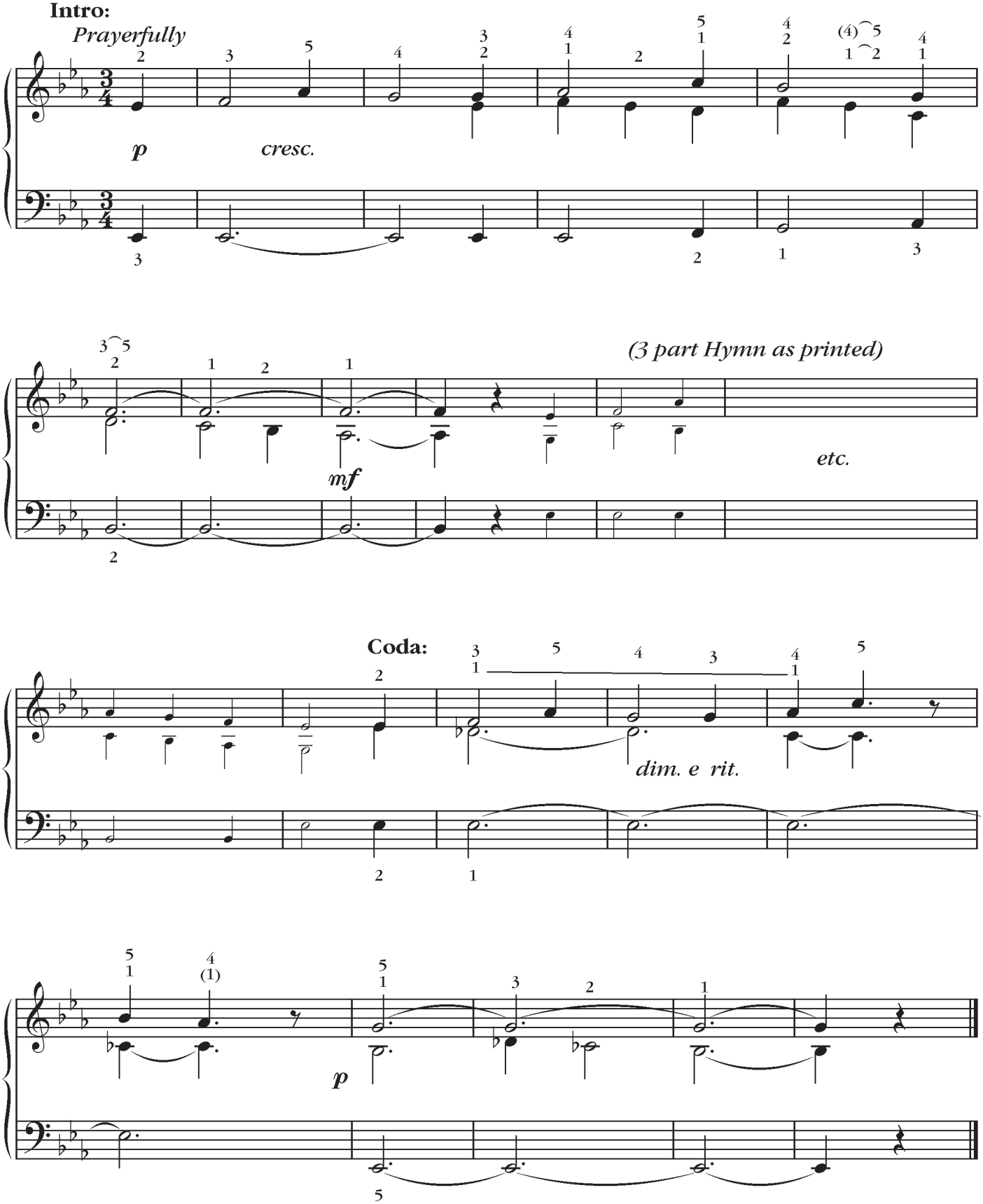
(Option 1: manual-only sound)



Teach Me to Walk in the Light



With Humble Heart



APPENDIX: BASIC REGISTRATION GUIDELINES

In addition to the information contained in the Preface to *Manual-Only Hymns,* the following information and suggestions may be helpful.

Remember that each organ stop marked 8' sounds at what might be called "normal" pitch. That is, Middle C played on the organ with any 8' stop will sound the same pitch as Middle C played on the piano. Stops marked 4' sound one octave higher, and 2' stops sound two octaves higher than 8' stops. Conversely, 16' stops sound one octave lower than 8' stops.

Organ stops are often thought of as being divided into four broad categories, depending on their tonal quality: Principal (or Diapason), Flute, String and Reed. Principal, Flute and String stops are collectively called *flues,* because in pipe organs they are all similar in construction (somewhat like a simple whistle). In contrast, reed stops utilize a vibrating tongue (reed) to generate their sound and they are often divided into two categories: chorus reeds and color reeds.

Principal (or Diapason) tone is the backbone of the organ and the basic sound for hymn playing. Its full and rich foundation sound is found on all church organs.
Flute stops are comparatively sweet- and hollow-sounding, reminiscent of the orchestral flute.
String stops are more keen and cutting, with less body. They often appear in pairs, with one being tuned slightly sharp to produce a celeste (undulating) effect.
Chorus Reed stops (trumpets, tubas, etc.) are brilliant and penetrating. Color Reed stops (Clarinet, English Horn, etc.) are more mellow and resemble the orchestral instruments for which they are frequently named.

For quiet preludes, Flutes and Strings will often be most appropriate. For hymns and more vigorous postludes, Principals and chorus-type Reeds may be effective, depending on the nature of the music, the size of the congregation and other factors.

Stops from each tonal family often appear at 4', 2' and 16' pitches as well as at 8' pitch. As a **general** rule, when adding higher pitches choose stops from the same family (Principals 8' and 4' or Flutes 8' and 4', for example).

Many organs also include *couplers,* which cause the stops from one keyboard to be played on a different keyboard. A Swell to Great coupler, for example, adds whatever stops may be in use on the upper (Swell) keyboard to any stops that may be drawn on the lower (Great) keyboard.

On some LDS Church organs, the volume of the entire instrument is controlled by a single *expression pedal.* It is useful for a gradual and steady crescendo or diminuendo, but avoid constantly "pumping" it open and closed. On some organs, two expression pedals (one for each keyboard) are furnished for additional dynamic control. A *crescendo pedal* may also be provided. It progressively adds stops from softest to loudest in a predetermined order. It will generally not be found useful when playing a typical service. A well-regulated *tremulant* (tremolo) may be used **sparingly** for quiet preludes. It is most useful on the solo line of a solo/accompaniment combination. However, its overuse can become annoying, and it is not suitable for use when accompanying congregational hymn singing.

Use the fewest number of stops needed to accomplish the musical task at hand. The addition of unnecessary stops masks the clarity and distinctive "color" of the ensemble. Think of the four categories

of organ tone as a “palette” of primary tonal colors. Maximum vividness and contrast will be achieved when the tonal colors are not constantly mixed.

When changes of registration are desired during a prelude or postlude or between verses of a hymn, the changes can be accomplished in various ways. Occasionally there is time (between verses of a hymn, for example) for the organist to add or retire a stop by hand. If an adjustable combination action is available, stop changes can be set in advance and activated by the touch of a finger or toe. (Factory preset combinations are often of limited use.) Using a registration assistant, who stands by the console and assists in making the needed changes, is yet another possibility. The assistant can also serve as a page-turner, if needed.

Testing your registrations for balance, color and volume as heard by the congregation is difficult to do at the console. You might ask another organist or musician to sit in the middle or back of the chapel during a service and offer comments to you afterwards.