

From Starry Skies Descending

for SATB Chorus and Piano

Alfonso Maria de' Liguori
Public Domain translation
Adapted by Robert Sieving

Tu scendi dalle stelle
Alfonso Maria de' Liguori (1696–1787)
Arranged by Robert Sieving

Tenderly ♩ = 48

Piano

p

Pedal harmonically

4

S

A

T

B

p

p

p

pp

mp

O Di - o, O

O Di - o, O

O Di - o, Di - o,

O Di - o,

8

S
Di - o Be - a - to, O Di -

A
Di - o O Di - o Be - a -

T
Di - o, Di - - o Be - a -

Cue-sized notes are for rehearsal only.

12

S
p o, *rit.* O Di - - o.

A
p to, *rit.* O Di - - o.

T
p to, *rit.* O Di - - o.

B
p O Di - o Be - a - to.

rit.

16 *a tempo*

a tempo

a tempo

a tempo

a tempo

p

From star - ry skies de -

p unis.

From star - ry skies de -

p

pp

p

20

T

scend - ing, You come, O glo - rious King, — A man - ger low your

B

scend - ing, You come, O glo - rious King, — A man - ger low your

p

24

S *p*
O my dear - est Child most

A *p*
O my dear - est Child most

T
bed, in win - ter's i - cy sting; dear - est Child,

B
bed, win - ter's i - cy sting, dear - est Child,

8va
Piano accompaniment for measures 24-27.

28

mp
ho - ly, Shud - d'ring, trem - bling in the cold! Bless - ed One,

mp
ho - ly, Shud - d'ring, trem - bling in the cold! Bless - ed One, bless - ed

8
Shud - d'ring, trem - bling in the cold! Bless - ed One, bless - ed

Shud - d'ring, trem - bling in the cold! Bless - ed One, bless - ed

8va (loco) 8va
Piano accompaniment for measures 28-31.

32

bless - ed _ One! _____
 One! _____
 One! _____ What suf - fring You did bear, _ That
 One! _____ What suf - fring You did bear, _ That

(loco)

36

unis.
 What suf - fring you did bear, _ That
 What suf - fring you did bear, _ That
 I _ near You _ might be! _ What suf - fring you did bear, _ That
 I _ near You _ might be! _ What suf - fring you did bear, _ That

40 *rit.* *a tempo*

I — near you — might be! —
rit. *a tempo*

I near you might be! —
rit. *a tempo*

I near you might be! —
rit. *a tempo*

I near you might be! —

44 *rit.* *mp*

You

rit. *mp*
 mi - o, O Di - o. You

rit. *mp*
 O Di - o, mi - o, O Di - o. You

rit. *mp*
 O Di - o, mi - o, O Di - o. You

rit. *mp*
 O Di - o, mi - o, O Di - o. You

rit.

48 **Poco allargando** ♩. = c. 42

are the world's Cre - a - tor, God's own faith - ful Word, Yet

are the world's Cre - a - tor, God's own faith - ful Word, Yet

are the world's Cre - a - tor, God's own faith - ful Word, Yet

are the world's Cre - a - tor, God's own faith - ful Word, Yet

Poco allargando ♩. = c. 42
(loco)

here no robe, no fire For You, O bless - ed Lord. Yet

here no robe, no fire For You, O bless - ed Lord. Yet

here no robe, no fire For You, O bless - ed Lord. Yet

here no robe, no fire For You, O bless - ed Lord. Yet

56 *mp* *p*

here no robe, no fire For You, O bless - ed Lord. _____

here no robe, no fire For You, O bless - ed Lord. _____

8 here no robe, no fire For You, O bless ed Lord. _____

here no robe, no fire For You, O bless - ed Lord. _____

mp *p*

60

An - gels guard you, keep you from harm _____

An - gels guard you, keep you from harm _____

An - gels guard you, keep you from harm _____

unis.

An - gels guard you, keep you from harm _____

64

mp unis.

In your cra - dle safe_ and warm. _

mp

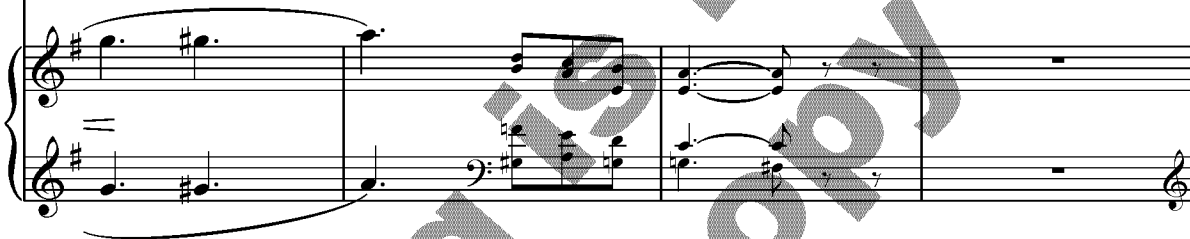
In your cra - dle safe_ and warm. _

*mp**mp solo*

In your cra - dle safe_ and warm. _ May An - gels guard and

mp

In your cra - dle safe_ and warm. _



68

p

O

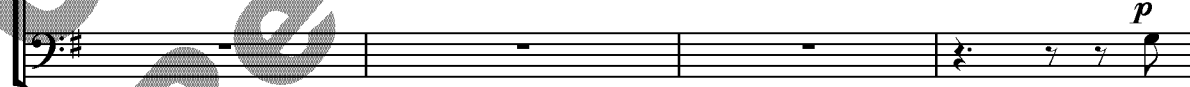
p

O

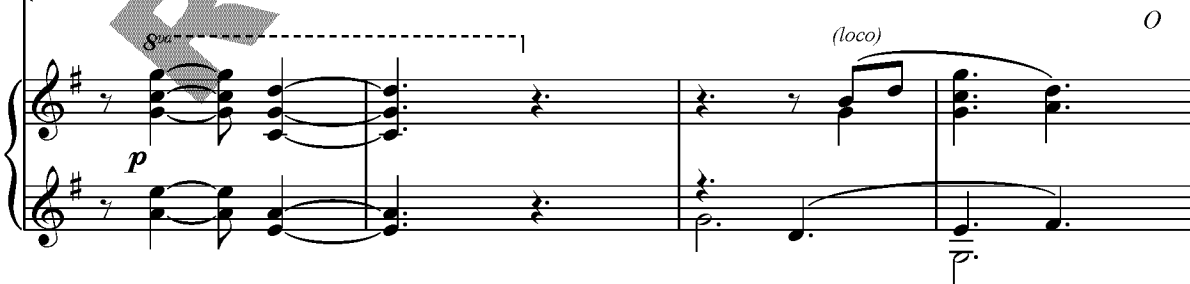
p tutti

keep you, In your cra - dle safe_ and warm. _

O

p

O



72

mp *p*

Di - o, O Di - o Be - a - to, O

mp *p*

Di - o, O Di - o Be - a - to, O

p

Di - o, O

76

rit. *mp*

Di - o, O Be - a - - - to.

rit. *mp*

Di o Be - a - - - to.

rit. *mp*

Di - o Be - a - - - to.

p *rit.* *mp*

O Di - o Be - a - - - to.

p *rit.* *mp*

NOTES

“From Starry Skies Descending,” as it is translated from the Italian title “Tu scendi dalle stelle,” was written in the earlier part of the 18th Century by the Neopolitan priest, Alfonso Liguori. The piece is also known by its original title, “Quanno nascette Ninno,” from Liguori’s poem written in his native Neopolitan language. In Italy, the melody is popularly associated with the zampogna, a large bagpipe, and is also called “Carol of the Bagpipers.” A particularly lovely setting of this beloved melody may be heard in Ottorino Respighi’s “Three Botticelli Pictures” (“Trittico botticelliano”).

FROM THE ARRANGER

Written in a gentle pastorale style, this piece offers the choral classroom an opportunity to consider the particulars of compound meter in relation to simple meter. Achieving the goal of a tasteful musical performance often depends on maintaining a smooth and expressive melodic line. A rehearsal suggestion is to have singers tap the inner eighth-note pulse through the growth and completion of phrases with an ear for accuracy and expressivity. First-rate ensemble singing with the agreeable bonus of exemplary intonation will result.

—Robert Sieving

ORIGINAL ITALIAN TEXT

*Tu scendi dalle stelle,
O Re del Cielo,
e vieni in una grotta,
al freddo al gelo.*

*O Bambino mio Divino
lo ti vedo qui a tremar,
O Dio Beato
Ahi, quanto ti costò
l'avermi amato!*

*A te, che sei del mondo
il Creatore,
mancano panni e fuoco;
O mio Signore!*

*Caro eletto Pargoletto,
Quanto questa povertà
Più mi inamora!
Giacché ti fece amor
Povero ancora!*

Alfonso Maria de' Liguori
(1696–1787)

*(The arranger only uses bits and pieces of
the original Italian text in his setting.)*

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

From starry skies descending,
Thou comest, glorious King,
A manger low Thy bed,
In winter's icy sting;

O my dearest Child most holy,
Shudd'ring, trembling in the cold!
Great God, Thou lovest me!
What suff'ring Thou didst bear,
That I near Thee might be!

Thou art the world's creator,
God's own and true Word,
Yet here no robe, no fire For Thee,
Divine Lord.

Dearest, fairest, sweetest infant,
Dire this state of poverty.
The more I care for Thee,
Since Thou, O Love Divine,
Wilst now so poor to be.

Public Domain translation

SCORE VERSION

From starry skies descending,
You come, O glorious King,
A manger low your bed,
In winter's icy sting;

O my dearest Child most holy,
Shudd'ring, trembling in the cold!
Blessed One, blessed One!
What suff'ring You did bear,
That I near You might be!

You are the world's Creator,
God's own faithful Word,
Yet here no robe, no fire For You,
O blessed Lord.

Angels guard you, keep you from harm
In your cradle safe and warm.
Angels guard you, keep you from harm
In your cradle safe and warm.

Adapted by Robert Sieving

Robert Sieving (b. 1942)

For biographical information visit: www.ecspublishing.com/composers