

# Listening Guide

## Josquin: *Ave Maria . . . virgo serena (Hail Mary . . . gentle virgin)*

**DATE OF WORK:** 1480s?

**GENRE:** 4-voice motet

**BASIS:** Chant to Virgin Mary (opening only)

**TEXT:** Rhymed poem (a couplet, 5 quatrains, and a closing couplet)

**WHAT TO LISTEN FOR:** Rhymed strophic poem to the Virgin Mary, each verse beginning *Ave* (Hail).  
4 voices (SATB) in varied settings, including imitative polyphony, dialogue (high vs. low voices), and homorhythm (all voices moving together).  
*A cappella* performance (choral, without accompaniment).  
Expressive final text (*O Mater Dei*) set homorhythmically, in personal plea from composer; closing hollow cadence.  
Meter change, from duple to triple and back.

### TEXT

Ave Maria, gratia plena,  
Dominus tecum, virgo serena.

Ave cujus conceptio  
Solemni plena gaudio  
Caelestia, terrestria,  
Nova replet laetitia.

Ave cujus nativitas  
Nostra fuit solemnitas,

Ut lucifer lux oriens,  
Verum solem praeveniens.  
Ave pia humilitas,  
Sine viro fecunditas,  
Cujus annuntiatio,  
Nostra fuit salvatio.

### TRANSLATION

Hail Mary, full of grace,  
The Lord is with you, gentle  
Virgin.

Hail, whose conception,  
Full of solemn joy,  
Fills the heaven, the earth,  
With new rejoicing.

Hail, whose birth  
Was our festival,

As our luminous rising light  
Coming before the true sun.  
Hail, pious humility,  
Fertility without a man,  
Whose annunciation  
Was our salvation.

### DESCRIPTION

4 voices in imitation (SATB);  
chant used; duple meter.

2 and 3 voices, later 4 voices;  
more homorhythmic texture.

Voice pairs (SA/TB) in close  
imitation, then 4 voices in  
imitation.

Voice pairs (SA/TB); a more  
homorhythmic texture.

Ave vera virginitas,  
 Immaculata castitas,  
 Cujus purificatio  
 Nostra fuit purgatio.  
 Ave praeclara omnibus  
 Angelicis virtutibus,  
 Cujus fuit assumptio  
 Nostra glorificatio.  
 O Mater Dei,  
 Memento mei.  
 Amen.

Hail, true virginity,  
 Unspotted chastity,  
 Whose purification  
 Was our cleansing.  
 Hail, famous with all  
 Angelic virtues,  
 Whose assumption was  
 Our glorification.  
 O Mother of God,  
 Remember me.  
 Amen.

Triple meter; clear text  
 declamation; homorhythmic  
 texture.

Imitative voice pairs; return to  
 duple meter.

Completely homorhythmic;  
 text declamation in long notes,  
 separated by simultaneous  
 rests.

Opening of motet with imitative voice entries at regular intervals:

Soprano  
 A - ve Ma - ri - a, gra - ti - a ple -

Alto  
 A - ve Ma - ri - a, gra -

Tenor  
 A - ve Ma - ri - a,

Bass  
 A - ve Ma - ri - a,

Imitation with paired voices (top 2 voices answered by bottom 2):

A - ve, cu - ius na - ti - vi - tas, na - ti - vi - tas

A - ve, cu - ius na - ti - vi - tas, na - ti - vi - tas

No - stra fu - it sol - lem - ni - tas, sol - lem -

No - stra fu - it sol - lem - ni - tas, sol - lem -