

Mass Choir Director's Notes

39th WELS Handbell Festival
Western Region: Zumbrota, MN
April 21 & 22, 2018

“O God Beyond All Praising,” Philip M. Young

THAXTED is often sung faster than 60 bpm. However, this broad tempo suits the melody and will serve us well when we get to the sixteenth notes on the last page. Carefully observe the LV and R markings in measures 8-18. In measures 39-46, it is important that the bells ring softly enough so that the handchime melody can be heard. We will observe the build-up in volume that is indicated on page 6. Please be prepared to look up for the rallentando, measures 63 to the end.

“Alleluia! Let Praises Ring,” arr. Brian J. Heinlein

A solid entrance is required in measures 5 and 19 when the melody is played in octaves. Strict observance of the LV's in measures 27-60 will be needed to keep the harmonies from getting muddy or blurred. Be prepared to look up in measure 53 for the ritardando and the return to tempo at measure 54 and again at measure 59-60. The broader tempo set in measure 60 sets the stage for a dramatic setting of the last verse. Let's use a BD (brush damp) to suddenly change the dynamic from loud to soft in measure 86. This means we will ring the chord in measure 86 loudly, brush damp the bell, and crescendo as we shake ring to the final mart-lift chord in measure 87.

“Faith of Our Fathers,” arr. Linda R. Lamb

The beginning arpeggio sets up the deliberate tempo, 80 bmp. Even though it has a soft beginning, make sure that softer doesn't mean slower. A nice build-up in volume occurs for the final phrases of the hymn. Treble bells will need to ring softly so that the handchime melody can be heard in measures 37-52. As stated for the other pieces, it will be important to carefully observe the LV and R markings. I will direct the eighth notes when we get to measure 75 to help keep the ritardando together. Note the change in dynamic for the coda, beginning at measure 76. Please watch me for the ritardando and diminuendo in measures 80 to the end. I will direct the eighth notes for beats 2 and 3 in measure 83.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

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