

Optimam partem elegit

*Optimam partem elegit sibi Maria
Quæ non auferetur ab ea in æternum.*

*Mary has chosen the best part for herself,
which will never be taken away from her.*

Marian Communion Antiphon, assigned to the
Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary in the 1570 Missal

William Byrd (1543–1623)
edited by Richard Shakeshaft

The musical score is presented in five staves, each with a vocal part label on the left. The Soprano part is labeled 'Soprano Superius' and begins with a treble clef, a common time signature, and a whole note. The Alto I part is labeled 'Alto I Medius' and begins with a treble clef, a common time signature, and a whole note. The Alto II part is labeled 'Alto II Contratenor' and begins with a treble clef, a common time signature, and a whole note. The Tenor part is labeled 'Tenor Tenor' and begins with a treble clef, a common time signature, and a whole note. The Bass part is labeled 'Bass Bassus' and begins with a bass clef, a common time signature, and a whole note. A vertical line separates the initial whole notes from the subsequent musical notation. The subsequent notation is in a key signature of one flat (B-flat) and a 4/2 time signature. The lyrics 'Op - ti - mam par - tem e - le -' are written below the notes in each staff.

Soprano Superius
Op - ti - mam par - tem e - le -

Alto I Medius
Op - ti - mam par - tem e - le -

Alto II Contratenor
Op - ti - mam par - tem e - le -

Tenor Tenor

Bass Bassus