

O Virtus Sapientiae

Hildegard von Bingen (1098-1179)

O virtus Sapientiae,
quae circuiens circuisti
comprehendendo omnia
in una via, quae habet vitam,
tres alas habens,
quarum una in altum volat,
et altera de terra sudat,
et tertia undique volat.
Laus tibi sit, sicut te decet,
O Sapientia.

O strength of Wisdom
who, circling, circled,
enclosing all
in one lifegiving path,
three wings you have:
one soars to the heights,
one distils its essence upon the earth,
and the third is everywhere.
Praise to you, as is fitting,
O Wisdom.

The musical notation consists of five staves of neumes on a treble clef staff. The lyrics are written below each staff, corresponding to the neumes. The first staff starts with 'O' and ends with an asterisk followed by 'Sa-pi -'. The second staff starts with 'en - - - ti - ae,' and ends with 'com-pre - hen -'. The third staff starts with 'den-do o - mni - a' and ends with 'tres_ a - las_'. The fourth staff starts with 'ha - - bens, qua - rum_ un - a_ in_ al - tum_ vo - lat,' and ends with 'et_'. The fifth staff starts with 'al - te - ra de_ ter - ra su - dat, et_ ter - ti - a un - di - que_ vo - lat. Laus_'. The lyrics continue from the fourth staff: 'ti - bi sit,____ si - cut_ te_ de - cet, O_____ Sa - pi - en - ti - a.'