Mazurka in F Major, Op. 68, No. 3, by Fryderyk (or Frédéric) François Chopin, composed 1829, published posthumously in 1855 (originally written for piano).

A Chopin classic literally springs to life on handbells. Chopin took the mazurka genre and made it his own, creatively extending it far beyond traditional conventions. In Mazurka (transposed from the original key of F Major to C to accommodate the bell range), the "A" section is repetitive and rhythmic, with a characteristic stress on the second beat. A Polish folk tune is quoted in the contrasting "B" section, using a drone motif under a sprightly melodic line in octaves.

Valuable in a school setting as a pedagogical piece that teaches dotted eighth-sixteenth rhythms, contrasting dynamics and form, the mazurka genre, and romantic/modernist music literature, Mazurka is also a fun-to-ring piece that offers an interesting, light moment in concert, festival, and worship settings.

Performance Notes

Clean, unison rhythmic ringing will make this piece sparkle. Rhythm warm-ups with ringers clapping/tapping and counting "one---a, TWO, three; one---a, TWO, three" will help all understand the basic structure of the A section. Practicing with malleted bells on tables may help with accuracy—use one mallet per bell in this instance, reflecting the required ringing motions. Bass ringers, especially, will be challenged to cleanly ring the rhythms accurately; keeping bells vertical will allow the notes to be accurately repeated more easily. The short *appoggiaturas* (grace notes) such as those in m. 18 are generally played "on" the beat, with time subtracted from the larger note that follows. Counting would be "one-ee--a, TWO, three," allowing the second beat of the measure to remain the targeted stress. (Note that the *szforzando* on beat 2 in m. 20 emphasizes this pattern.)

Sudden and drastic dynamic shifts can be enhanced by changing ringing style and stance: for *forte* the clapper strikes a "stationery" bell with a strong arm; for *piano* the casting can fall gently away from the clapper at the strikepoint with a gliding arm motion to produce a softer impact.

The contrasting "B" section is of completely different character, like suddenly entering a different room. It's based on a Polish folk tune, "Oj, Magdalino,"—a much quicker tempo with a lighter feel and a clean drone note. Note the accents in the introductory measures, which play around with the stress patterns. The F5 chime can be reassigned for cleaner ringing.

This piece may be performed either in straight rhythmic fashion or with some slight *rubato*. Various recordings can offer ideas for performance options.

Composer, Director, Teacher, Ringer, Mentor—**Kathleen Wissinger** embraces all aspects of handbells. Since 1988 she has directed beginning children's through advanced teens' and adults' groups, writing music for the entire range. Ten years of teaching handbells in a small private school inspire her to also create a unique pedagogical series of handbell music. Kathleen teaches middle school and high school handbell classes, directs the Prism youth ensemble at church, and is the founding Artistic Director for Mosaic, a community handbell ensemble. She frequently teaches at and directs handbell events—large and small, beginning through advanced, youth and adult, National Seminars and an International Symposium; has led introductory workshops for music education majors and coaching sessions for college handbell groups; and mentors start-up groups through her work with Area III.

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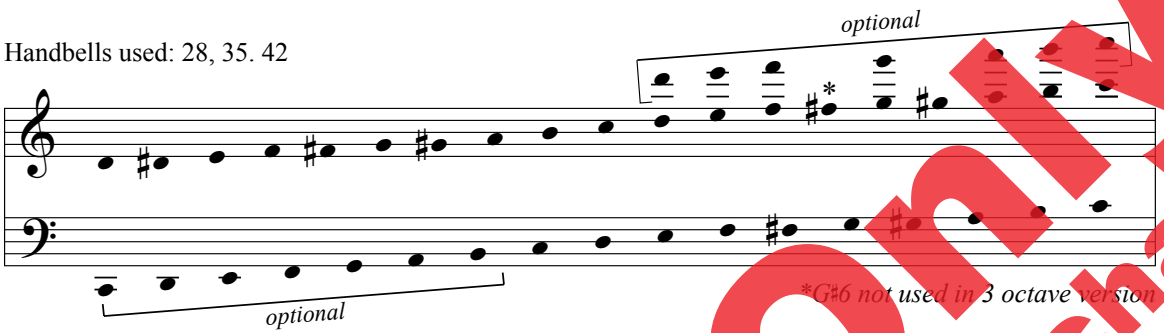
for Redeemer Classical Seventh Grade:
Barrett, James, Jefferson, Michael, Naomi, Ella, Kelsie, Ian, Gabriel and Seth

Mazurka

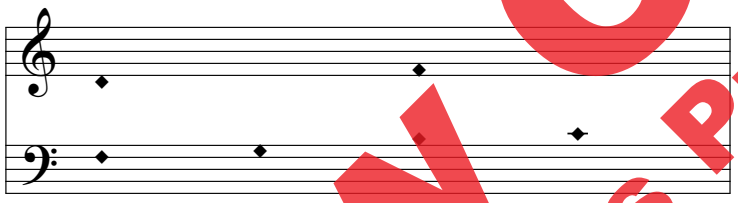
Op. 68, No. 3

for 3–5 octaves of Handbells with optional 3 octaves of Handchimes

Handbells used: 28, 35. 42



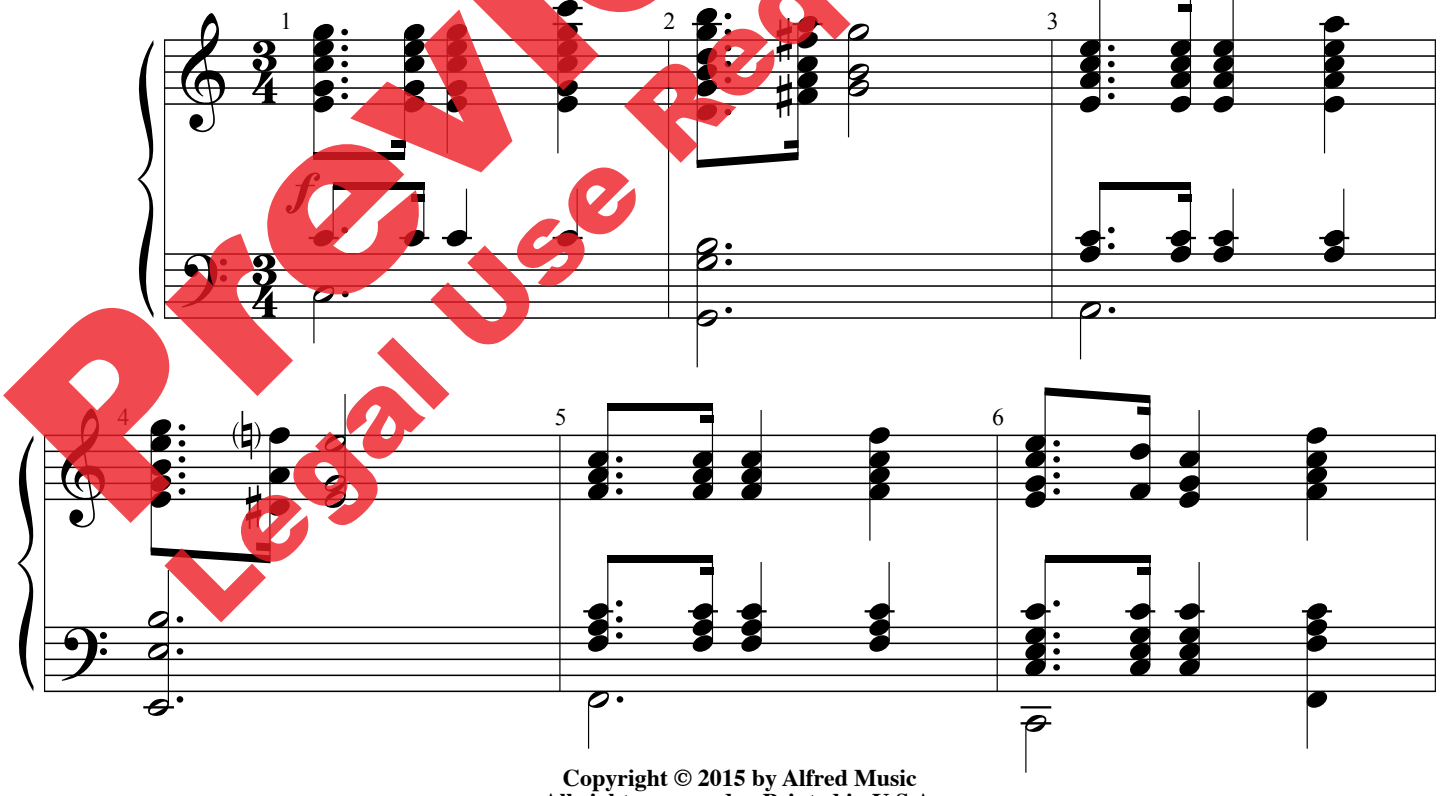
Handchimes used: 6



3 octave choirs omit notes in ( )
4 octave choirs omit notes in [ ].

By Frederic Chopin
Arranged by **Kathleen Wissinger (ASCAP)**

Allegro, ma non troppo (♩ = 116-120)



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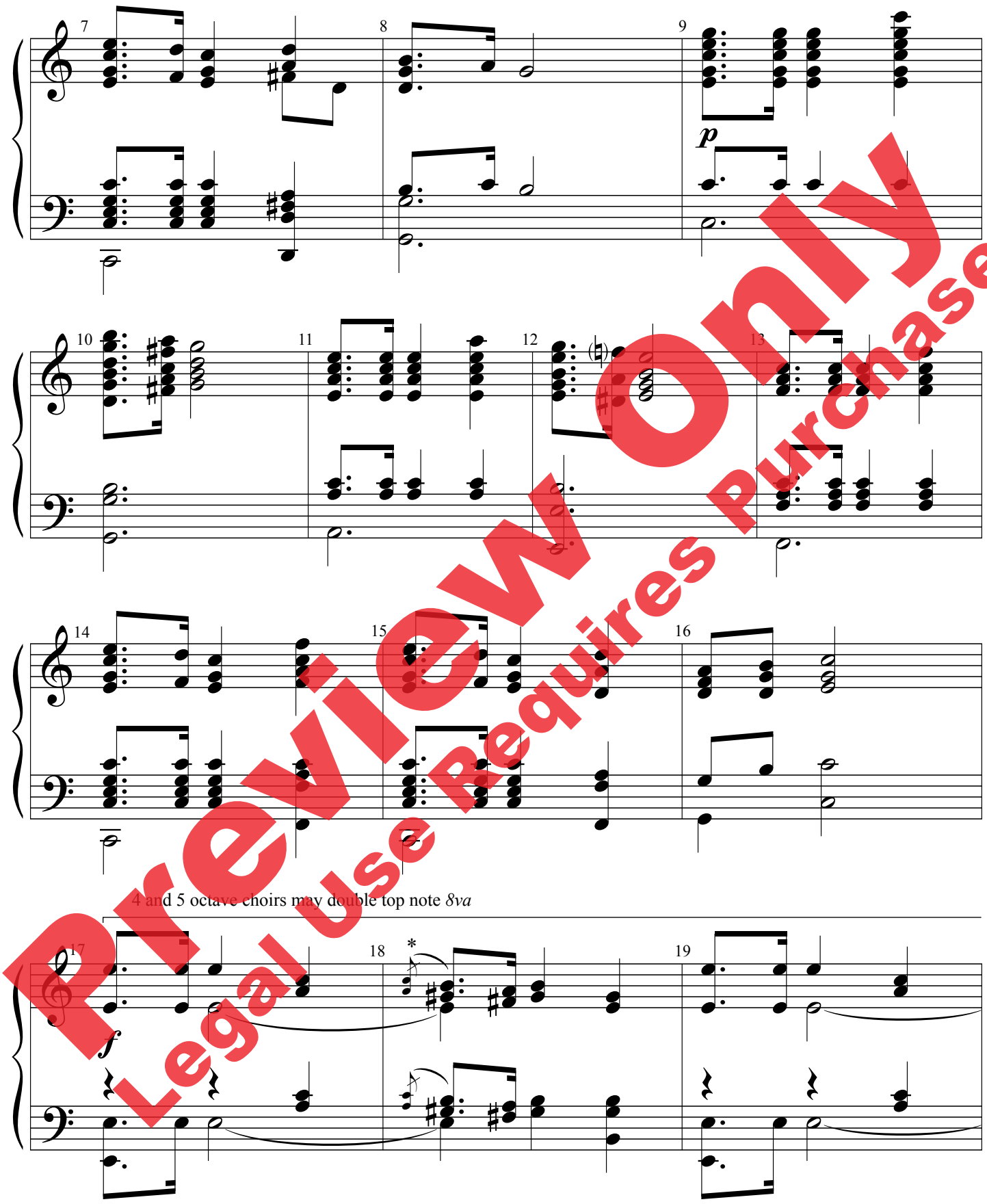

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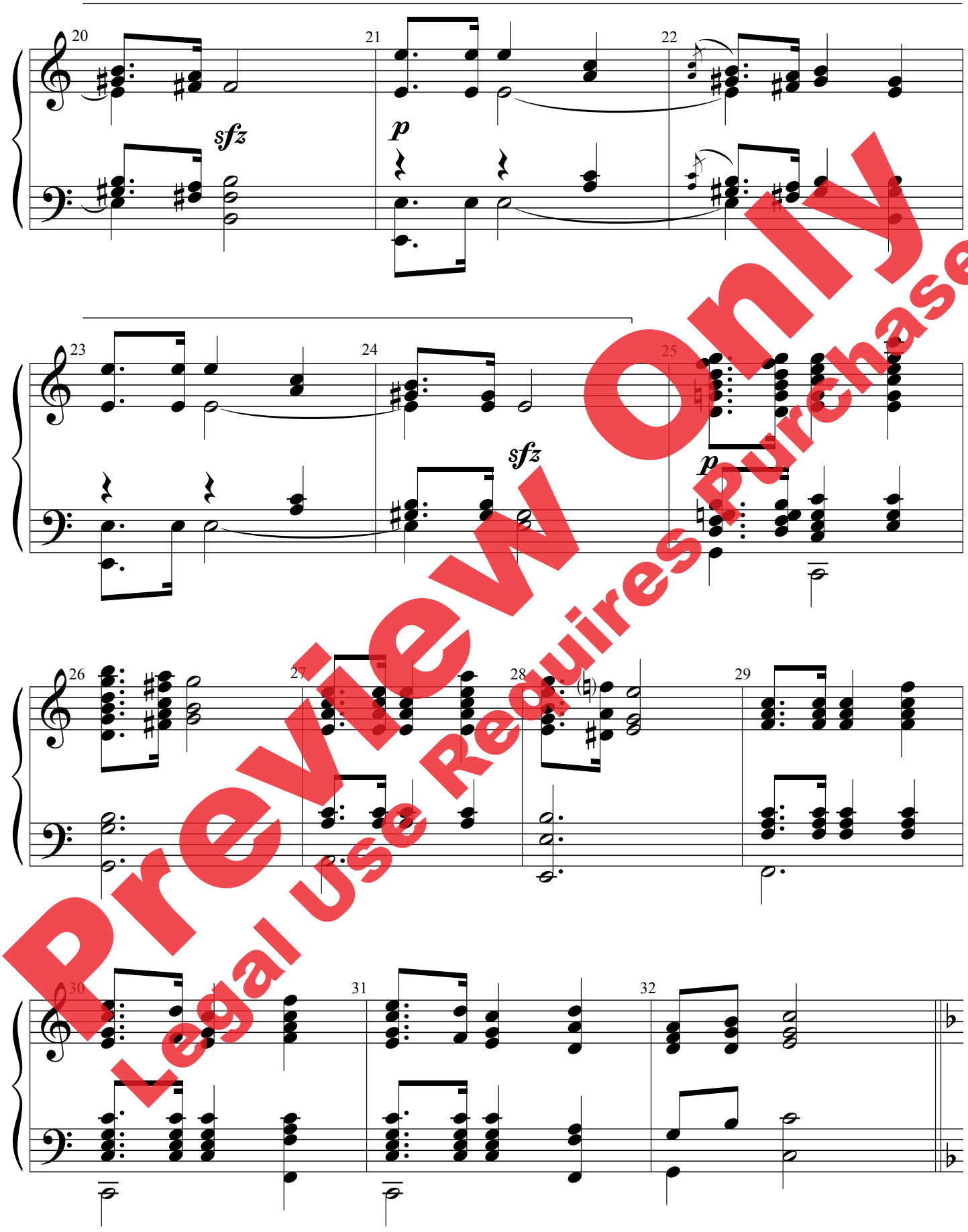
*Chopin's grace notes are to be played on the beat, not before. This will result in a slight delay of the main note.



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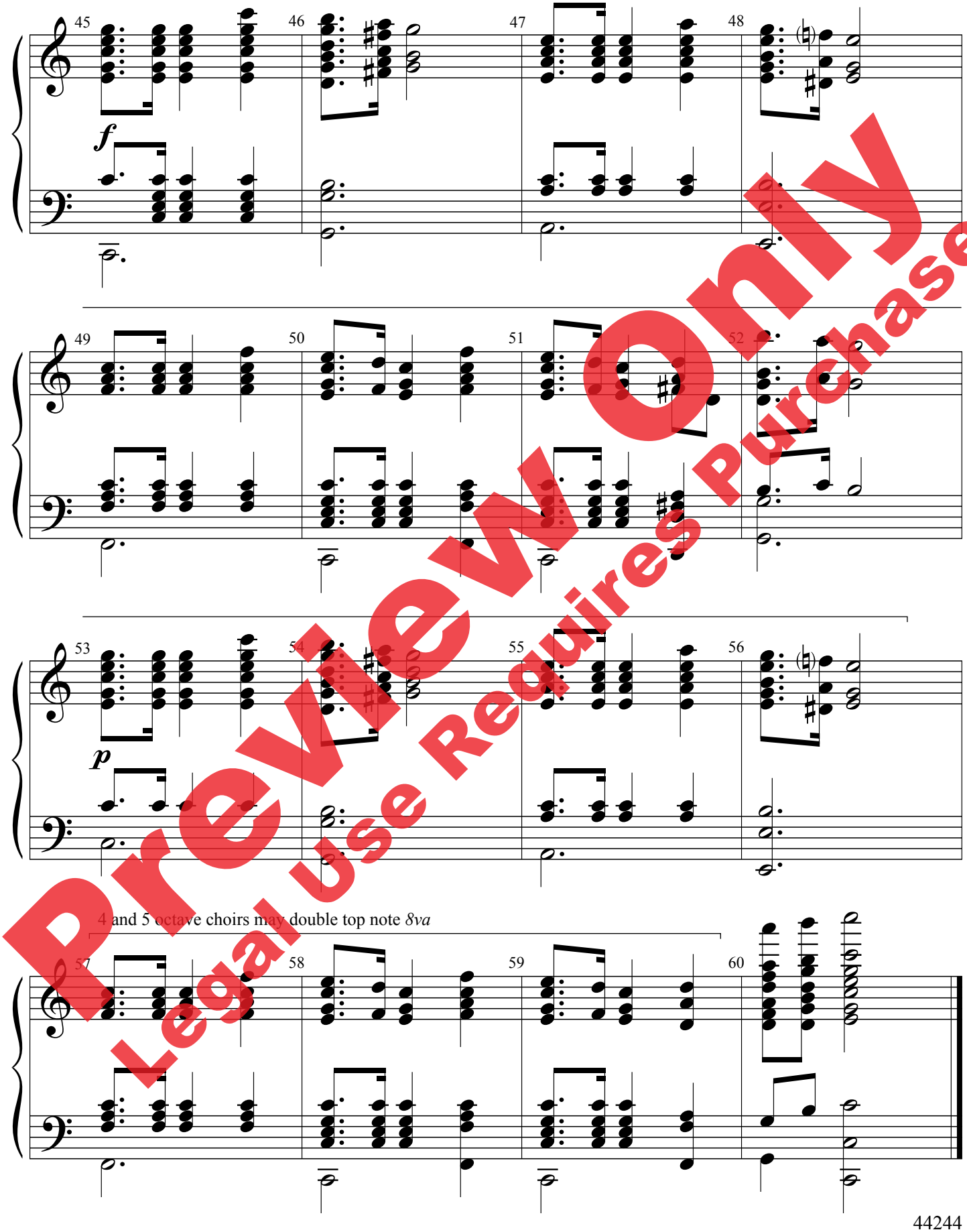
*The F5 chime may be played by the D5/E5 ringer mm. 33-44.

Tempo I

5 octave choirs may double top note *8va*



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