

Keeping the Hours

By **Thomas Alan Orr**

Our service to the world might be simply
to keep a place where there is no noise.

Thomas Merton, *The Springs of Contemplation*

MATINS *12:00 AM*
Attend to silences between
the whistling notes of the midnight train.

LAUDS *3:00 AM*
Lift up the night shift laborers
whose fingers reach for daylight.

PRIME *6:00 AM*
Walk the foggy lane from house to road,
imagining unseen stars.

TERCE *9:00 AM*
Give thanks for breaking clouds
that shower gold upon the world.

SEXT *12:00 PM*
Dance on the roof of the nearest church,
barefoot with abandon.

NONE *3:00 PM*
Embrace the cold wind sweeping
over empty fields. Not all is forsaken.

VESPERS *6:00 PM*
Love the leaves that fall with a quiet whisper
and bless their going down.

COMPLINE *9:00 PM*
Surrender the sorrows of this day to the day
and sleep the sleep of a joy beyond understanding.



Thomas Orr

Thomas Alan Orr lives in Morristown, Indiana. His second book of poems, *Tongue to the Anvil*, was published in 2014 (Restoration Press). Recent work also appears in *Yellow Chair Review* and *Flying Island*.