

## Notes Recovered from a Search for Sanctity

By **Josh Dugat**

I promise to pay Ally Fagan one hundred Dollar for the hire of negro man name Able  
Abbot Eutropius Proust (January 1853)

The very stones and beams are all befriended  
By cleaner sun, by rarer birds, by lovelier flowers.

Thomas Merton: "A Letter to My Friends" (1941)

The very stones will cry out from the wall and the beam will respond from the woodwork.  
Habakkuk 2:11

Cain said to his brother Abel,  
Let us go out to the field.  
The field is what was here  
before the chapel. The world  
was here before the field.  
It is hard to find a place  
to hide from God. It is hard  
to find a place beyond the world.  
There are at least two kinds  
of silences. Only one is permanent.  
Only one can work to sanctify  
the others. That is a statement  
of faith, not certainty. The greater silence  
knows more than the poet  
ever will, and, in time, subsumes  
the poet and the lesser silences  
unto itself. It is a cycle  
only inasmuch as it is helpful  
to be understood as such.

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**Josh Dugat**

I barely understand  
how brick is made. Sand  
and lime, water, clinker.  
All winter, clay amends  
in silent labor. The ground  
does not cry out. Maple wilts its skin  
to paper. Slick as meat, a shape slips  
in the mold. To make a brick.  
To cast a stone. Your fingerprints  
adorn the vertebrae and sternum  
of the church. And what else?  
Glints of beebalm in the spring.  
Your sweat and knuckle hair,  
chipped fingernails. The faintest  
folds in drying matter,  
bending to your breathing –  
trace of morning's kiss  
from your beloved, whistle on your lips  
leftover from the lilting  
conversation with a killdeer. Something  
whispered to your brother.  
Who gets to say what singing is,  
and isn't? It is a statement of faith,  
not certainty, to say something  
can be doing both at once.