

## Two Poems

By **David Hodges, OCSO**

### A Day in the Life of a Monk

“How many years . . .?”  
the stranger asks.  
I no longer know,  
I have no guide;  
the present seems to fill  
all time, prayer fills  
all the spaces.

The day moves on  
from psalm to psalm,  
the Abbey bell records  
the passing years  
on my island home.

Lavender blooms and fades,  
the sun is high or low,  
the swallows come and go,  
the graveyard fills  
with wooden crosses;  
still the same  
white cowls in choir.

Yet, stranger, tell me  
if my place is filled.  
Tell me, is my psalter spread,  
or am I there  
among the dead?

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**David Hodges**

## A Day at Tautra Mariakloster\*

The Church all wood and glass,  
lit up like a lighthouse  
in our Vigil prayer,  
rising in the dark night air  
for those in sorrow or despair.

By the old grey boathouse,  
mist and rain disperse.  
Seabirds on the shoreline;  
the sun begins to shine  
on gulls and terns

awake since early nocturns.  
Water lapping gently,  
sanderlings intently  
studying the tidal menu.  
Sky and fjord, blue on blue.

Bright, late morning,  
warming sun.  
Oystercatchers joining,  
amid the stones and muck,  
the snipe and eiderduck.

After Sext and None,  
afternoon draws on;  
blossom on plum and pear,  
the warm air, and not a sound  
until the Vespers bell resounds.

At Compline, through our wall of glass,  
pure chance, entranced,  
we see a newbuilt oil rig pass,  
towed slowly up the fjord,  
as we praise and bless Our Lord.

\* *Cistercian monastery of nuns on the Trondheim fjord of Norway*