

On silence

by [Angela Alaimo O'Donnell](#) in the [October 30, 2007](#) issue

"The eleventh degree of humility is concerned with the manner of speech . . ."

Chapter 7, St. Benedict's Rule

Speak little, speak low,
new truths I do not know,

I the she who's ever
talking, always and not ever

listening for the quiet voice
teaching me that choice

isn't to obey my silly heart.
Now only do I start

to hear Your blessed name
pattered by the rain,

sung by the rising sun,
uttered as I run

with each breathing cell
of my soul's singing shell,

these limbs I love
by which I move

closer, close to You.
The body speaks true:

what my tongue wants most

the silence of the host.