

“Fear not, little flock”

by [Charles Hughes](#) in the [February 26, 2020](#) issue

*(Luke 12:32)*

This morning—outdoors, walking—  
I count the birds I see:  
Clouded late winter sunlight  
Discloses only three—

Small, half a block behind me,  
Ascending the mid-sky,  
Diving, but upward, urgent—  
As if to rise or die

In ecstasy, in answer  
To what they are and know  
Of seasonal transitions  
That come too slow, too slow—

As if plummeting toward heaven  
Might really hurry spring—  
As if the times and seasons  
Have been encouraging.

Who wouldn't turn to watch them  
On hearing reckless cries  
Above the traffic's clamor,  
Perhaps even recognize,

As Christ-hued, the exertions  
By three bird-specks of brown,  
Etching on pale-lit grayness  
That up can look like down?