

“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?