

LESSON IN LIVING

BIRD WATCHING

Elma Allen Milano

Actually, I am not qualified to be called a "bird watcher," but, I do enjoy sitting in my back yard and watching the doves which eat, fly around and keep me entertained. Most of them are gray with a blue cast to their feathers which almost have a purplish hue. One of them, however, is a large *white* bird. It fascinates me because when I see movies on the life of Christ, the dove that alights on His shoulder after His baptism, is always depicted as being a white one.

What other lessons do I learn from them? They gravitate toward those of their kind; they fly and work in clusters. Without human means of communication they seem to instinctively know where to go and what to do. When one dove goes sailing out, the others follow. When the sun goes down, they *all* turn in and disappear in the trees somewhere; I've never seen them at sleep.

Due to their large numbers, I know some must die but I never have found a dead one on my premises. It makes me wonder *how* they die. Surely some are eaten by cats, but I do not see many felines in my neighborhood and wonder.

The overhang on my house has a number of bird holes. These are homes for smaller birds. At first, I filled the holes in and then had to repeat this annually. Now, I leave them alone and they come back each year to occupy a hole and build a nest in their familiar roost. Soon, I hear little peeping sounds which lets me know their eggs have hatched. Afterwards, I see baby birds venture out and attempt to fly to the nearest telephone wire where they teeter away as they become stronger. First thing you know, they are fully grown and gone away to who knows where?

One of my favorite hymns has always been "Memories of Galilee," found in an old hymnal on page 122. Here are words of the first verse & chorus:

MEMORIES OF GALILEE
*"Each cooing dove and sighing bough
That makes the eve so blest to me
Has something far diviner now
It bears me back to Galilee -
O Galilee! Sweet Galilee!
Where Jesus loved so much to be;
O Galilee! blue Galilee!
Come, sing thy song again to me*
"

How wondrous are God's creations. Let us all look, listen, and learn to appreciate what He has created for us to enjoy, including beautiful birds!

This was written in 2007 when Elma was 87-years-old The entire Lesson in Living series is on lintonmilano.com