



Rev. Rosemary Doran

Rosemary's Reflections

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I stared at the pigeon. The pigeon stared back at me. I was on one side of the screen door leading to the balcony. It was on the other, outside on the balcony itself. The pigeon didn't want to be there. I didn't want it to be there either.

Periodically, a sympathetic or anxious pigeon friend would fly up and try to perch on the outside of the balcony and the birds would twitter excitedly – “Get me out of here!” – “How'd you get there in the first place? You should have stayed at home like I told you!” – and then pigeon number 2, unable to help, would fly off, maybe to update the flock. And it was back to square one. Stalemate. The problem was that the balcony is surrounded by netting, guaranteed to keep out birds and other little critters. Unfortunately, heavy winds and weather had torn the netting loose in places, places just large enough to accommodate an agile and inquisitive bird. Of course, we had been meaning to fix it... What to do? What to do?

Finally, I ventured cautiously on to the balcony, long pole in hand, and, keeping a nervous eye on the pigeon, pulled the netting away from its anchor and opened up a large hole for the bird to fly through to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. Only it didn't. I kept making encouraging noises like, “Shoo, bird” and gesturing grandly toward the opening. The pigeon regarded me with hostility and suspicion. Finally, in desperation, my husband had the brilliant idea of slamming the balcony door. The noise startled the bird so much that it flapped its wings and launched itself off the balcony into the wild, blue yonder. Bye-bye birdie! Peace was restored to the Doran household.

It occurred to me that there is a certain parallel between this and our lives as Christians. Sometimes, we find ourselves in a jam, either by choice or circumstances. We are stuck in a bad time or place in our personal lives, because we consistently refuse to live by God's rules, as taught to us by Jesus – the rules about loving and giving – and forgiving. Or, circumstances beyond our control in our world, our society, confront us with moral and spiritual dilemmas, which threaten our faith and witness. Like the pigeon, we desperately need to find a way out.

Jesus tells us that He is that Way. He warns His followers that sticking with Him will bring pain, persecution, maybe even death, but He will always be there to point the way out, the way forward, the way that leads to life, life eternal. The old hymn tells us that God loves the little sparrows and sees them when they fall. He probably loves pigeons too! And us – God loves us and sets us free from all the foolish and dangerous places we venture into. All we have to do is follow The Way.

Rosemary