

“Advent IV”
December 23, 2007
By Rebecca Enney

It is just a few days until Christmas but things are looking rather sad for the Mawakasungas. In real life, there are times when sad things happen at Christmas. Elizabeth’s cousin Martin is now gravely ill. Martin is the same age as Elizabeth. He lives in Dar Es Salaam in Tanzania in Africa. He is in the best hospital there and the doctors just can’t seem to figure out what is wrong, so they can’t figure out how to make him better. Here he is in the hospital bed with his mommy, Aunt Naomi and little sister, Baby Ruth.



This is Nurse Fran. Mr. and Mrs. Mawakasunga asked her to come over to their house so they could talk about Martin. Maybe somehow SHE could help, even though they are thousands and thousands of miles away from Martin.



Elizabeth had been asked to go play in her bedroom, but she wants to know about Martin so she crept down to the doorway and listened in on the adult conversation.

“Tell me again about his symptoms.” said Nurse Fran. So Elizabeth’s mommy and daddy explained all they knew about Martin’s illness.

“Would it help if we called the hospital in Dar Es Salaam and YOU talked to the doctors?” Mrs. Mawakasunga asked Nurse Fran. “I doubt that it would help. It sounds like they are doing everything they can for Martin.” she answered.

“Maybe we should make a trip over,” said Elizabeth’s father. “I can make emergency arrangements though work for a flight by Tuesday.”

“Tuesday! That’s Christmas Day.” thought Elizabeth sadly to herself.

“We can send Elizabeth over to the Heffelfinger’s.” said mommy. “Uncle Floyd will gladly take her in.”

Nurse Fran wisely said “We ALL need to pray.”

Elizabeth quietly went back to her room. Even though it was only 7:30, she climbed into bed and got under the covers.

Sometimes in life, when it seems that the problems are too large to ever figure out, the best you can do is to crawl into bed and pray. And that is what Elizabeth did.

In the Gospel lesson this morning, Joseph was troubled and HE went to bed and HE prayed. During the night God sent him an answer. God told Joseph that he SHOULD take Mary to be his wife and that when her baby

was born he should name him Jesus which means ‘God saves’ and he shall be called Emmanuel, which means ‘God is with us’.

Maybe that will happen for Elizabeth. Because, you know, God DOES listen to the prayers of children.

Elizabeth prayed “Dear God, I am sorry that I wanted lots of toys for Christmas. I know about you getting born at Christmas time and I know that you have come to save the world. So my presents are NOT so important anymore cause of Martin being sick and all. Could you please save my cousin Martin who lives in Dar Es Salaam in Tanzania in Africa. He is very, very, very sick and the doctors need your help. I don’t know the name of the hospital he is in, but I think you know. Could you go there and help. Thank you.”

And all night long Elizabeth prayed and prayed. “Please God, go help Martin. Please God, go help Martin. Please God, go help Martin. Please God, go help Martin. Please God, go help Martin.”

And on and on she prayed. Every time she woke up she prayed again. “Please God, go help Martin.”



Much later, after Nurse Fran had left and Elizabeth was sound asleep, her mommy went into Elizabeth’s bedroom and made sure that she was covered. Then she gave her daughter a gentle kiss. Then Mrs. Mawakasunga started to cry.

THE END