

“The Long and Difficult Road”  
Sunday of the Passion/Palm Sunday  
April 5, 2009  
By Rebecca Enney

After church on Passion/Palm Sunday, Mrs. Mawakasunga asked Elizabeth to remember to take a palm home for Aunt Gertrude. And Elizabeth, remembering the conversation she overheard between Pastor Ed and Aunt Gertrude last week, invited Barabas to come too.

“Sure, I guess . . .” said Barabas. Elizabeth has not yet told anyone that she overheard Pastor Ed and her aunt talking about the fact that it was Aunt Gertrude who paid for Barabas’s expensive operation the other summer.

When they got to Elizabeth’s house Barabas said “Here, you take my palm up and I’ll wait downstairs.” “No. Come on up with me.” Elizabeth insisted. So they both went upstairs.

Aunt Gertrude was sound asleep, snoring so loudly that they could hear her in the hallway, but the teeny tiny click of opening the door woke her up and she made a rather funny snorting sound, (snort, snort) which, because Barabas was already nervous, made him laugh, (snort, snort) which was also a kind of snorting sound!

Just then Elizabeth’s mother called her so Elizabeth ran downstairs, leaving Barabas alone with Aunt Gertrude!

“Aaaah! What do I say to this old lady who hates me!” thought Barabas to himself.

“Aaaah! What do I say to this strange boy, to whom I’ve been so mean . . . and so generous.” thought Aunt Gertrude to herself.

Finally Barabas managed to say “Here.” and stuck his palm towards her.

Aunt Gertrude started to struggle in the bed. Barabas furrowed his brow as he watched her manage to get out of bed and stand up. He noticed the big break in her neck! Then she took the palm and silently ripped it up.

Barabas felt the blood drain from his face. He just stood there, looking at the floor, as if paralyzed! Meanwhile Aunt Gertrude continued ripping. Barabas finally got the courage to peek up at her and saw that she was actually braiding the pieces.

“Oh!” he said aloud in a voice he barely recognized as his own. For being so sick, she was still very capable of using her hoofs to braid the palm. And when she was done, this is what she had made!

“Here,” Aunt Gertrude awkwardly said to Barabas. As she started to get back into bed, the covers fell on the floor. So Barabas picked up the covers and sort of tucked her in.



They looked at each other for a moment as if they were sizing each other up. Then Barabas glanced at the cross in his hand and said “Thanks.” Aunt Gertrude glanced at the blankets and said “Thanks.”

(Crucifix in place) This is the week called Holy Week, a difficult road to take.  
We follow Christ to the Cross you see, where He gave up his life for our sake.

They laid the path with palm branches and all the crowd did cheer.  
But all too soon their tone did change and became an ugly jeer.

Soon Jesus was sent to a trial and it certainly was far from fair.  
They nailed the King of the Jews to the cross and left him hanging there.

So this is the week called Holy Week, a difficult road we take.  
We follow Christ to the Cross you see, where He gave up his life for our sake.

Sometimes we must *practice* at loving someone whom we do not yet love. Barabas and Aunt Gertrude are practicing love. Practicing love can be a long and difficult road, but we choose it because Jesus leads the way and because God expects us to follow.

THE END