

Wanjiku's Long Safari

There is a story about a certain East African woman named Wanjiku. She was very beautiful and energetic. All the people looked at her when she walked through the city.

Then God beset Wanjiku with many troubles. Her father died. Her mother died. Her husband died. Wanjiku began to despair. She cried out and asked God, "Why, Oh God? Why have you done this to me? Why have my dear ones died? My father and mother were very old, but my husband was not old at all. You, God, gave him water but he did not have time to drink it."

Her first-born child died suddenly. Then Wanjiku held her youngest child to her breasts and pleaded to God, "Don't take this one. He is my life. He is my support. Don't take my child. Who will take care of me when I am old?" But the child died in Wanjiku's arms.

Finally Wanjiku lost even her wealth and possessions. She stood up and raised her voice to God in heaven, "Why have you afflicted me so? Why have all my family died?" Then Wanjiku built a high tower to climb up to heaven to talk with God about the death of all her family. She did not understand the meaning of death. But the tower collapsed.

Then Wanjiku looked around and saw the horizon stretching out to link together heaven and earth. She said, "Now I know a good way of reaching God." So she started to walk toward the horizon. She thought that in this way she would finally reach heaven. Wanjiku walked. She walked very far. She walked around the whole world without reaching heaven. But she kept walking. People laughed when she passed them. They asked Wanjiku, "Where are you going?" Wanjiku explained her plan to walk to heaven in order to talk with God about the meaning of death. People laughed even louder and said, "All of us human beings will die. What about you?"

But Wanjiku continued to walk around the whole world. Finally she reached Jerusalem in Israel during Easter time. She was one of the women at the empty tomb of Jesus Christ very early on Sunday morning as the Gospel of Easter says. At that time Wanjiku received light concerning her problems and an answer from God concerning the meaning of death. She learned that it is necessary to die before meeting God in heaven. Death is the door to enter everlasting life.

We follow Christ in his death and resurrection. In Jerusalem Wanjiku understood many

things and believed. (Adapted from a story by Father Joseph Donders, M.Afr.)