

were both grown men, but they left their work to walk with him, gave their catch to feed his followers. And Zebedee was old, but he helped, too, letting people sleep in his house when it rained.

"So you can imagine how they all felt when Jesus was crucified. James was so sad and so angry he knew he had to do more than just fish. If he couldn't have Jesus alive by his side, he could keep his ideas alive. James remembered the things Jesus used to say, and repeated them to everyone he met.

"James had a booming voice, and people listened to him. After a while, he made his way down to the Mediterranean Sea and talked to sailors there. A ship's captain gave James free passage all the way to Spain, on the other side of the sea. In Spain, Rome had colonies much like Judea, places where people fished and farmed and tended vineyards. James preached there. He started some small churches. Then he boarded a ship and sailed back to Judea.

"When James reached Judea, Herod was king." Father Gregory paused in his story, picked up the poker, and stirred the fire. "Remember Herod?" he asked the children.

"He's the king who killed all the babies because he thought they might be the Messiah?"

"Yes. The old Herod was crazy, fearful for his

power, and the new Herod was just as cruel. All over his kingdom, there were people calling themselves Christians, preaching, drawing crowds, setting up churches. When Herod found out that James, Jesus' cousin, was back from Spain, he sent some soldiers and—you know what they did. . . ."

Gregory looked around at all the upturned faces and slowly put his hands around his neck.

"They chopped his head off."

The children squirmed uncomfortably and the dogs looked up in interest.

"You think this is the end of James' story? Well, it's not," said Gregory, resting his elbows on his knees.

"After the execution, a ship made all of stone put in at Jaffa, manned by knights, none of whom spoke a word. The knights scooped up James' body and sailed away.

"The ship of stone sailed across the Mediterranean and into the great ocean beyond the Pillars of Hercules. In seven days it reached the west coast of Spain. It stopped in an inlet between rocky cliffs. This inlet was a holy place, the doorstep of a pagan priestess who had the power of early blades of grass in her fingertips. When the priestess saw the ship, she turned her face to the night sky and howled. Wild bulls came down from the mountain, and