

**(Note: The legend of the dogwood tree is not original with me. However, the following poem IS original. I arranged "The Old Rugged Cross" for use as background music for a recitation, however some original tune in 4/4 time would likely be better IMHO.)**

## **THE CARPENTER AND THE DOGWOOD TREE**

**Our Savior, Jesus Christ, was crucified on a wooden cross. According to legend this cross was made from the wood of a Dogwood tree. Jesus was a carpenter, but another carpenter also had a role in the crucifixion of Jesus. This is the story of that other carpenter and the Dogwood tree...**

**1.**

**It stood there tall on the mountainside  
Its trunk was straight and its limbs were wide.  
This mighty tree was without peer  
But I felt it quake as I drew near.  
For it was my duty to cut it down,  
This great strong tree that I had found.**

**2.**

**With axe and saw I felled it there  
I trimmed its limbs and laid it bare.  
With no thought of what fate would charge  
I shaped its wood into timbers large.  
Thinking not about the world's great loss,  
With my two hands I built a cross.**

**3.**

**I did not know of God's great plan  
As I worked the wood beneath my hand.  
But I could hear this Dogwood tree  
As it cried out with a mournful plea.  
"Dear God above," I heard it ask,  
"Won't you spare me from this awful task."**

**4.**

**Within my heart I felt its pain  
That from this task it could not abstain.  
"If this cup not pass from me,"  
I heard the prayer of the dogwood tree.  
"Then on this earth Thy will be done,  
And on me will die Your only Son."**

**5.**

**I took this cross that I had made,  
Of timbers cut from the dogwood glade,  
To the town below where they all cried,  
"This man Jesus must be crucified."  
And on this cross from a Dogwood tree,  
Our Savior died for you and me.**

**6.**

**Then came God's voice, from heaven above  
And brought this message of His great love.  
"Though you did not know why I asked,  
By faith alone you did your task.  
You served me well, my dogwood tree,  
And now I promise this to thee:**

**7.**

**From this day on your size will fade  
Not from your wood will another cross be made.  
And in memory of events before  
A cross will show in your petals four.  
Clefts and stains your flowers shall bear  
Symbols of His hands, and the nail prints there.**

**8.**

**Within your blossoms there will be  
A crown of thorns for all to see.  
And each year will come an angel band,  
To spread your beauty throughout the land,  
And your flowers will bloom in early spring  
In memory of My Son, the King."**