

Pastoral Remarks For The Funeral Service Of
SSG Amy S. Krueger, USA
Delivered at Kiel High School on Saturday November 14, 2009
by The Rev. David Mercer.

Let us keep something in mind today that has been said before in this past week: *Not everything happens for a reason.* There are events, incidents, and situations that occur in this world which make absolutely no sense and have no higher purpose behind them.

Think of everything that goes on in our world: natural disasters that claim the lives of small children and mysterious illnesses that do the same. Dishonesty at various organizational levels that leaves people without their life savings they were depending on for retirement. And, humankind's incredible cruelty to other human beings.

There is something fundamentally flawed with the line of thought which says these things all happen "for a reason."

Today we find ourselves looking even higher and asking questions of the God who made us. Considering the way that God's name has been used as of late, what are we to think of God today?

We need to understand that this world is not a puppet show with each of us as a puppet and God up there pulling the strings causing us to behave in one way or another. We are not toy dolls, nor are we robots with a computer in our head instead of a brain.

We were created by God, but we were created with the ability to make choices. Because God desires that we respond to Him out of our own freewill, God has given each of us the ability to choose "good" or to choose the opposite of good -- that which we call "evil."

On November 5, 2009 in Ft. Hood Texas, there was an individual who used the freewill that God had given him, and he made a clear choice for evil. The result of his choice is that we are gathered here today to honor one of our own, SSG Amy Krueger of the United States Army and a native daughter of the State of Wisconsin; through no fault of her own, Amy fell victim to the evil actions of another.

This brings us to address a very basic question that a lot of people ask: "*Why did God take Amy from us?*" Well, here is the answer to that question: God didn't -- did not -- take Amy from us. Rather, Amy was taken from us by someone else -- in a senseless act of transgression.

The differences between the two are quite clear: God is good. God is

merciful and kind. God creates and gives life.

But the Ft. Hood shooter chose to take a path opposite of that. He rather, chose NOT to be good, and merciful, and kind. He chose NOT to support life, but rather to take life in a way that is entirely cruel and unjust.

The terrible irony here is that he chose to do that in the name of God. I'm not going to launch into a lecture about religious differences, so I will only say this: *The Ft. Hood shooter may be in for some surprises*. It is not my place to judge him, but I can assure you that God will. Scripture tells us that judgment belongs to the Lord (Deuteronomy 32:35).

In this he will come to the terrifying realization that a Holy God does not decree the random, senseless, acts of murder that he committed that day.

Just as there are things that do not happen for a reason, I can tell you that there are lots of other things that do. The rising and setting of the sun, the first snowfall, and the opening of the first springtime flower. It is God's will when a hungry person is fed, a naked person is clothed, and a homeless person is sheltered.

It is God's will when a police officer captures a criminal -- before that criminal can do any further harm to society. It is God's will when a society functions in ways that are fair and just. In Romans chapter 13 the Apostle Paul tells us that human government has been established by God for the purpose of preserving order and restraining evil.

We all benefit when there are those among our citizens who make the choice to stand up and be among those who restrain the evil in our world. SSG. Amy Krueger was one who made such a choice. Amy Krueger used her power of freewill to choose that which is good.

On September 11, 2001 Amy saw as did the rest of us, that there is a great evil at work in the world....and somebody has to get out there and fight it. Amy could have chosen to not serve -- she could have opted to stay behind and enjoy college life. She could have chosen to party or to seek a life of glamour and indulgence.

But Amy knew something about American history. She knew that unless someone is willing and able to defend America, we can't have an America left to defend...let alone live in and enjoy. Freedom comes with a price tag attached to it, and for most of us in this country it is usually one of our fellow citizens who pays that price -- not us.

Those fellow citizens go by many different ranks and they may wear different uniforms, but they are each one sworn to defend the same

constitution.

The other day as I took my son to school where he is in Second Grade, we had a conversation in the car...and we were talking about Amy. My little boy had never even met Amy Krueger, but he had learned a lot about her in these past several days.

As he got out of the car, I said to him: *“Son, just remember that you can go to school and play on the playground and be in the Boy Scouts, because of Amy Krueger and many others like her.”* He said to me, *“I will, daddy! I’ll remember!”* And he slammed the car door and offhe scampered.

No, not everything happens for a reason. Amy’s death did not happen for a reason, at least not for any that God would purpose. But, Amy’s **life** did happen for a reason. Amy was a gift of God to this community and to America. Life is better because she was here!

Today we give thanks to God for Amy Krueger, and appropriately, we say our “thank you” to Amy too. But one thing that we do not say to Amy is “goodbye.” No, today we don’t say “goodbye” to Amy Krueger. What we say instead is, “See you later.”

Amy Krueger is a member of the Body of Christ, a community of people who have pinned their hopes on Jesus Christ and His promise of eternal life. That is why this day we don’t say “goodbye” to Amy, but rather we say “see you later.” In a few moments we will hear about that part of it from my colleague.

Thank you, Lord God, for giving Amy to us. Thank you for the kind of young woman that she was, and thank you also for the Easter gift of “see you later” instead of “good bye.”

Amen.