

**From the Crèche to the Cross**  
**Rev. Krystal Goodger**  
**John 13:31b-35**  
**Maundy Thursday**  
**April 2, 2015**

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**Rev. Krystal Goodger**  
**John 13:31b-35**  
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**Rev. Krystal Goodger**  
**John 13:31b-35**  
**Maundy Thursday**  
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**From the Crèche to the Cross**  
**Rev. Krystal Goodger**  
**John 13:31b-35**  
**Maundy Thursday**  
**April 2, 2015**

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**Rev. Krystal Goodger**  
**John 13:31b-35**  
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crucifixion. I also doubt that three days later any of us will rise from the dead. So what are we left with?

What is left is our in between. How do we, have we, will we live our lives? What is our in between? What is our legacy?

The Dash by Linda Ellis

I read of a man who stood to speak

He referred to the dates on her tombstone,

at the funeral of a friend.

from the beginning...to the end.

He noted that first came the date of her birth  
but he said what mattered most of all

and spoke of the following date with tears,  
was the dash between those years.

For that dash represents all the time  
And now only those who loved her

that she spent alive on earth.  
know what that little line is worth.

For it matters not, how much we own,  
What matters is how we live and love

the cars...the house...the cash.  
and how we spend our dash.

So, think about this long and hard.  
For you never know how much time is left

Are there things you'd like to change?  
that can still be rearranged.

If we could just slow down enough  
and always try to understand

to consider what's true and real  
the way other people feel.

And be less quick to anger  
and love the people in our lives

and show appreciation more  
like we've never loved before.

If we treat each other with respect  
remembering that this special dash

and more often wear a smile,  
might only last a little while.

So, when your eulogy is being read,  
would you be proud of the things they say

with your life's actions to rehash...  
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We remember, celebrate, praise, and worship Christ because of his miraculous birth, suffering, death, and resurrection. But we are Christians and strive to live a Christian life also because of his in between, his dash.

It is Maundy Thursday. Today we remember when Christ met with his disciple and shared a simple meal and the sacrament of Communion. Today, we reflect on the importance of the crèche to the cross. Today, we celebrate the dash.

**From the Crèche to the Cross**  
**Rev. Krystal Goodger**  
**John 13:31b-35**  
**Maundy Thursday**  
**April 2, 2015**

Here we are, a few of God's faithful people, gathered here this night. Jesus gathered his friends, around a table to mark the ancient rite of Passover. 2000 plus years later, we are doing a similar act as faithful people gather to hear the Word of God and to be nourished by the Sacrament we call the Eucharist. Doesn't it seem just like yesterday that many of us gathered here at night around God's Word and Sacrament to feast at this Table and to receive ashes to remind us of our own humanity, our own sinfulness and our need for reconciliation and redemption?

Last Sunday, we began our worship with joy and celebration as we recalled the events of Jesus' entrance into Jerusalem. But we no sooner heard the fading sounds of "All Glory Laud and Honor" than we were reminded of how the week would end.

Sunday marked the beginning of Holy Week. Tonight, we have officially begun what the Catholic Church calls the Triduum, the three days that link Maundy Thursday to the Resurrection of Jesus from the grave. Tonight, we come to celebrate a continuation of powerful religious and spiritual symbols of our faith and our tradition.

Every year, I remind myself that Maundy comes from the Latin word, for mandate, and is primarily associated with tonight's scripture from John "A new commandment I give you, that you love one another as I have loved you". It is at the Last Supper that Jesus also proclaims to his disciples, "This is body ... this is my blood ... do this in remembrance of me." The Church has taken very seriously that charge to "do this in remembrance" of Jesus for over 2000 years.

Lent is almost over. Maundy Thursday is here and soon it will be Easter. This year, like every year, we stop to look back. We pause to remember the events recorded in the Gospels. We follow a tradition of Holy Week that our parents, grandparents, and generations before that have done. Today we remember.

Today we look to the end. The end of a story. The end of a life. The end of a dramatic 3 days. Today Jesus will eat with his disciples, and be betrayed. Tomorrow he will go before Pontius Pilate, be crucified, die, and be buried. We so often want to skip today and tomorrow. We don't want to dwell on the pain, suffering, and sadness of these days. It is in human nature to want to jump from Palm Sunday directly to Easter. But Easter is only important because of Maundy Thursday and Good Friday. Easter only makes sense if today happens! The resurrection can only take place if Christ first dies. The end only makes sense because of the beginning and the beginning only has meaning because of the end.

That's exactly what I want to talk about tonight. The end, the beginning, and the moments in between.

Let's begin at the beginning. Our Isaiah passage is very familiar during Advent and Christmas time. Christ was born of a virgin birth. Now that's interesting right! If someone was born a miraculous birth today, we would think that was cool. But within a week I'm sure the media would find something else to be excited about. Jesus was born a miraculous birth, but that means absolutely zero if he did nothing

with his life! Yet even at the beginning, our story was pointing us to the end. Do you remember some of your favorite Christmas hymns? How about What Child Is This or We Three Kings?

*Nails, spear shall pierce him through      The cross be borne for me, for you. Hail, hail the Word  
made Flesh,      The Babe, the Son of Mary!*      - What Child is This, verse 2

*Myrrh is mine, its bitter perfume      Breathes of life of gathering gloom      Sorrowing,  
sighing, bleeding, dying      Sealed in the stone-cold tomb*      - We Three Kings, verse 4

John Donne writes, “The whole of Christ's life was a continual passion; others die martyrs, but Christ was born a martyr. His birth and His death were but one continual act, and his Christmas Day and his Good Friday are but the evening and the morning of one and the same day. From the crèche to the cross is an inseparable line. Christmas only points forward to Good Friday and Easter. It can have no meaning apart from that, where the Son of God displayed his glory by his death.”

Last Sunday we rejoiced with Jerusalem as Jesus rode into the city upon a donkey. This was foretold in Zachariah 9.

So today, we have come to the center of Holy Week. Where Isaiah 53 foretold of Christ's suffering and death.

I chose only a few scripture verses for today. It is said that Jesus fulfilled over 300 prophecies! Jesus birth, life, death, and resurrection fulfilled the Old Testament and time period prophecies. This brings hope, not only for what Jesus promised, but also for the other prophecies that foretold of salvation. From the crèche to the cross Jesus fulfilled prophecies, causes hope, and brings salvation.

Christ's birth and death are important. But none have meaning without the other. Without a miraculous birth, Jesus just ended his life in a unique way. Without the resurrection, Jesus was just a great man who had a wonderful beginning, taught, and performed miracles. Without the extraordinary birth, Jesus couldn't have been fully human and fully divine. Without the resurrection, no one would have remembered the virgin birth. There would be no crèche without the cross, and no cross without the crèche. Advent, Christmas, for heaven's sake, even Easter—without the crucifixion none of these holy days mean anything.

Advent, Christmas, Palm Sunday, and Easter, are wonderful and exciting event. People who normally do not come to church show up, we often have trumpets and other instruments, we wear our nicer outfits, and people everywhere are joyous. They are exciting, fun, and high energy events. But we must also look at, is the time in between. The ends are important, but let's not forget the events in the middle.

If Jesus was born of a virgin, suffered, died, and rose again but did nothing in between, would we be here today? If Jesus had a miraculous birth, suffered, died, and rose again but did not teach, preach, and heal the sick, would the church be here today? If Jesus had an extraordinary birth, suffered, died, and rose again but did not perform miracles, have disciples, and inspire a nation, would the beginning and end have the same meaning and significance?

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