Easter Sunday — April 9, 2023

From the Desk of Fr. Leo

A preacher I heard a few years ago noted that in the encounter Mary Magdalene had with Jesus, she did not recognize him. The disciples on the road to Emmaus did not recognize him, and other resurrection accounts indicate a similar problem. This preacher suggested that this was necessary because Jesus' friends had to become detached from his flesh in order that they might become attached to his body. If they were to carry on in relationship to Jesus, they must learn to look for him to forms other than human flesh in which they had known him.

It is that process of discovering Jesus in their midst in new ways which occupied the disciples for the remainder of their lives. Their discoveries are the substance of the New Testament writings. Jesus did not depart but remained present. The body of Christ was found in new and different forms.

This weekend's reading from the Acts of the Apostles is a case in point, in fact one of the most important of those discoveries. It takes place a few years after the resurrection. The church, once a group composed of Jewish believers, has grown, has been persecuted, and has spread to areas beyond Jerusalem. It has found that the bread and wine of its common meal provide a place of encounter with the risen Christ. It has discovered that its gathering as a community is a manifestation of Jesus' presence. But something new happens to St. Peter.

He was asked to visit a Gentile named Cornelius. St. Peter, a devout Jew, was resistant to this request, still assuming that Jesus was to be found in Israel alone. In a dream God revealed to St. Peter that all people are acceptable to God. Now St. Peter discovers, in his own words, "that God shows no partiality, but in every nation any one who is God fearing and does what is right is acceptable to God." "The body of Christ is to be found in all of humanity, not merely on some part of the human body.

Often Christians have seemed to proclaim a Christ who has vanished and left no traces behind. We appear to be proclaiming nothing more than a historical event which happened once upon a time. If we communicate a faith about something that happened long ago; a man who, lived in times past, such a faith is no more than belief in a historical record.

The original Christians experienced Jesus in their midst. As St. Peter told Cornelius, Jesus appeared to them, who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead. But you and I are often left with the impression that for us today there is no direct encounter with the risen Lord. We sing "Jesus Christ is risen today." but mean "Jesus Christ was risen once upon a time." Christ is risen indeed. His body walks the earth today, healing, teaching, feeding, suffering, dying, and rising. You and I and and the human race are the living answer to the question Mary Magdalene passed that first Easter. The Lord is taken from his tomb and placed in the center of his world. He is risen indeed. Alleluia!

Fr. Leo Alban Asuncion

Mass Intentions for the Week

Tues.	**April 11**	**11:00AM**
Urfia M. Stamatelaky †		Pena Family
Wed.	**April 12**	**11:00AM**
Bill Valli †		Franca Ponti
Thur.	**April 13**	**11:00AM**
Bob Banaga †		Marcella de Leon
Fri.	**April 14**	**11:00AM**
Philip A. Marcos †		Pena Family
Sat.	**April 15**	**4:30PM**
Thomas Wolthuis †		Bill & Diane
Sun.	**April 16**	**9:00AM**
Marina Alonzo †		Pena Family
Port Costa		**11:00AM**
People of the Parish		

† †††††††