From the Desk of Fr. Leo

Robert Ingersoll, the famous agnostic, died in 1809. More than one hundred years ago, he travelled back and forth across America, attacking all religions, especially Christianity, maintaining we could know nothing about God or a future life. In one of his lectures, he tried to show that the story in the Gospel this weekend was a fake miracle, planned to build up the popularity of Jesus. Lazarus "made believe" he took sick, "made believe" he died. His sisters "buried" him in a cave and called Jesus. Lazarus was to stay in the tomb until Jesus called out: "Lazarus come forth."

To strengthen his story, Ingersoll asked, "Can anyone here tell me why Jesus said: "Lazarus, come forth"? Why didn't He simply say, "Come forth"? A little man stood up and gave the answer. "Yes, sir, I can tell you. If my Lord have not said 'Lazarus; all the people buried in that cemetery would have come forth to meet their Savior."

Ingersoll later admitted that the old man's statement really stumped him because it came from a deep faith, which you and I and all Christians share, that Christ died for all humanity and that all of humankind will rise at the call of Christ. The raising of Lazarus from the dead is a sign, a proof, a promise, not merely that Christ can raise individuals to life, but that He will give heavenly life to all who die in His love.

Too many react to the raising of Lazarus as did some of the Jews who complained: "If this Jesus cured a blind man, why could he not keep His friend from dying?" We might complain: "Why doesn't Jesus raise my mother – my dad -my child - my wife -my husband from the dead?" The point of the Lazarus story is not that Christ can raise this or that individual back to life, but that Christ can and will raise every dead person back to unending life. The story emphasizes that the heavenly Father gave to His Son Jesus the power to give life, the fullness of life, as St. John mentions:..."as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, so the Son gives life to anyone who chooses."

What the prophet of God tells the people of God in this weekend's first reading, Ezekiel is telling us today: "O my people, I will open your graves and have you rise from them, and bring you back to the land of Israel." St. Paul brings this out even more clearly in the second reading: "If the spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, then he who raised Christ from the dead will bring your mortal bodies to life also through His Spirit dwelling in you.

It is meaningful that we recall the raising of Lazarus at this point in Lent. For several weeks we have tried, like Lazarus, to be special friends of Christ, to have His spirit. We look forward two weeks to Easter, when Christ will rise from the dead, a pledge and promise that you and I will rise.

Fr. Leo Alban Asuncion

Though we are not able to meet together during this week, please keep these intentions in your personal prayers, as Father will continue to include them in his private masses..

Mass Intentions for the Week

Tues.	**March 31**	**N/A**
Racquiel Garcia (birthday)		Your wife
Wed.	**April 1**	**N/A**
Rodolfo Cristobal (birthday)		Lily Militar
Thur.	**April 2**	**N/A**
Bernardina Dela Pena†		Imelda
Fri.	**April 3**	**N/A**
Ava Banducci†		Bill & Diane Thomas
Sat.	**April 4**	**N/A**
Joseph Noe †		Family
Sun.	**April 5**	**N/A**
People of the Parish		
Port Costa		**N/A**
Walter Ligon †		Mary & Moira

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