

Help from Heaven on the Highway of Life

Mucharaff has Pakistan under siege, the price of gas soars out of control, Southern California remains scarred from wildfires, Tabasco has flooded, and we have to put up with one more year of presidential campaigning.

Great. At least Discovery made it back safely and the Dow is bouncing back after another 360-point dive. As I bounced last week when our mini-quake hit, I thanked God that most of us still have roof over our head and the basic services we need for survival. With a few additional signs of hope from heaven, we'll all get by. After all, the Lord is always reaching out to help us in our journey of life, as we endure trials and tribulations.

Thursday, I was returning on I-5 from a luncheon honoring volunteers at San Joaquin County Hospital when a strange thing happened. Right as we approached the French Camp exit (which people use to access the hospital), the car ahead and to the right of me lost its left rear tire. With a sudden explosion like a small road side bomb, the rubber tore apart the rear bumper and sent pieces flying everywhere. I couldn't help but wonder how easy it would be to find myself among those patients whom I visit.

Fortunately, the car pulled safely to the side and no one was hurt. The fog-caused disaster on 99 is still fresh on our minds. So we learn to thank God for any reminders that, even though life is difficult, God's Grace is infinite.

Recently, a friend wrote me of a very remarkable "reminder" sent her way:

"For the past 2 years, i think, i have been seeing an image of Jesus on a big bill board with a quote from the Bible which i cannot remember. Anyway, i didn't think of anything unusual other than thinking how amazing people are to pay for such billboards. All this time as i passed it i always thought exactly the same thing, knowing how expensive those billboards are i was always amazed at the people for putting his image there for all to see.

"About 3 months ago i received a call from my friend Maria who asked me if i had seen this bill board and i said of course i have seen it and i have seen it many many times. She asked me if i could please go and find out exactly where it was because she had seen it but did not know the exit.

"Anyway, i went and did not find it. I asked Ely (*her helper*) who had seen it with me many times and she too said it was where i thought it was.

“I went again and again, and i could not find it. I called Maria and told her it was no longer there. She then told me what happened. She said the daughter of a new friend of hers had seen it and it so happened she had been praying and at the end of the prayer - while driving - she looked up and saw the bill board and thanked God for giving an ‘answer’ to her prayer in the form of his image right on the freeway. This happened a second time and, again, she happened to be praying. At the end of her prayer there was the image again. She didn’t live in the area and did not drive by the area often. Once again she felt God was giving her an answer by placing her in that right spot the moment she had finished her prayer.

“She - months, weeks, days later i do not know - then took her mom on a drive to that area to see the image on the freeway and they could not find it. The mom, a resident of Lodi, then asked the priest if he knew where it was, the priest said there had never been such an image anywhere on 99 and then proceeded to ask in mass if anybody had seen it - nobody had.

“She so happened to ask Maria and Maria confirmed she herself had seen it. Months had passed since then and the daughter had called the companies that do the bill boards to ask where it was, but the company (ies?) that does the bill boards in that area said it was impossible because they would have never allowed an image - so religious - on a bill board.

“They said they could not have, nor would they have, an image of Jesus Christ on any bill board because it was not allowed. This woman has called everyone from the city to other companies that do bill boards etc. etc. and nothing no such image ever on the 99 Lodi-Stockton corridor nor on 99, *period*. Now, i am a witness to this image because i not only saw it once or twice, as they did, but perhaps 50 times, if not even more. But now i am told that what i saw was not there, and never was. I am still puzzled that it is not there and have even traveled two more times to the area to look for it, but nothing, nada, zilch...*not there*.” She concludes: “I am confused because i cannot yet digest what has happened or why i have seen this image if it was not there...?” What, reader, would you say?

Since that day, despite having no clear answer to her question, my friend feels especially blessed by the Lord. And I recall the words of Jesus: “Blessed are those who have not seen yet still believe.” (John 20:21:29)

Yes, the Lord is always there for us on our journey of life. We just have to keep our eyes open, if we wish to see. But even if we don't, he does.