



The Emmaus Journey of a Car

Peter was in Maryland for the Chapter of Holy Name Province the week of January 3rd. While he was there, he retrieved a call on his home answering machine which had come in on *January 5th*, the anniversary of his father's death. It was from a Baptist minister he had not seen in almost 20 years, someone he had been on sabbatical with in Israel in 1993. Harry had read our newsletter – part of the 1st batch we sent out in a bulk mailing – and saw that we were looking for a “new” car. His message was that he wanted to donate a 2001 Subaru Forester to Bethany Ministries.

The meeting of the Ministry of the Word which had been scheduled for the week after the chapter was cancelled, so Peter came back with 5 Friars who were driving to Siena on Friday, *Jan. 7th*. As they approached the Catskill exit, Peter was on the cell phone with Anna, who was driving the '99 Oldsmobile Cutlass which we share from Middleburgh to pick him up at the park & ride at the Catskill exit. The road was not bad (it was worse in NJ) but when Anna was driving through East Durham she hit some slush and skidded into the left lane. In order to avoid oncoming traffic, she turned to the right and the car spun around. It hit a tree, but she was not injured. The airbags deployed and the front wheel on the driver's side was bent at a weird angle. She had to get out on the passenger side. Meanwhile, a woman stopped to help, and stayed with her until she called AAA and got a tow truck.

Peter called his sister Marita, and she came with his brother in law, Rod to take him to the scene of the accident. As they were driving there, anxious to arrive before the tow truck left with Anna and the car, a State Trooper arrived and had to make out a report, even though there was no personal injury or damage to any property other than our car. This allowed Peter to get there in time. The tow truck driver took us both to Middleburgh (Peter's luggage went in the wrecked car), dropped us at Anna's apartment in town and dropped the car at the place where it is regularly serviced.

That event began a wonderful process of finding out that there really is a Bethany Ministries community. We borrowed a car from Fr. Tom Holmes (he is the local Catholic pastor) all day Saturday to get Peter's luggage to his house, (a mile & a half from the village), and to get personal things out of our former car. That night, Angela loaned us her van so we could travel to do a Mass in Morris (near Oneonta, NY) where Peter was covering for a priest who had died the day after Christmas. The next few days he got some much needed exercise walking into town, and getting rides to or from town from his neighbor, Pete, Frank, who runs the local liquor store, & Jean, whom he met in the Grand Union.

But that is only the beginning of this story. On Saturday, the day after the accident, we called the minister in Rhode Island and accepted his offer. We discovered that his wife of 51 years had died in October, and he did not need a 2nd car. After several phone calls, and several plans for getting the car from Rhode Island to Middleburgh (at first we offered him a few days of rest and prayer after he drove out, then we would drive him back), he came on Thursday, Jan 13 with a friend who volunteered to drive another car & bring him home. (He had planned to come on Wednesday, but that was the day of a significant storm).

On Friday, we waited on line at the DMV to get the title transferred and the car registered. It was no easy task, since it was a corporate, non-profit registration (for Holy Name Province) and there are new regulations since 2009. There were faxes from Chicago with the insurance card and attempted faxes from NYC with a tax document. We got the car registered that day, & used it to cover Masses in two counties over the weekend. Larry, one of the former parishoners of St. Joseph's, is the supervisor of the Schoharie DMV office, and he helped us get through Friday and finish the process of transferring the title on the following Tuesday.

We give thanks to God who has renewed our trust in the Lord, and we are filled with hope and joy by the gifts & prayers of so many members of our "Spiritual network" during the process.