

"Cokeswithin"
99, Kerching Drive
Twickenham, Middx, UK

The Very Rev. Rowan Williams
Archbishop of Canterbury
Lambeth Palace,
London SE1 7J

24th March

Dear Archbishop.

I have been a supporter of yours for some time and have had no real problem with either your being Welsh, or involved with The Druids. My mother was Welsh so I feel a sort of strange kindred spirit.

My Vicar suggested that I write to you as he felt that you would be able to offer some wise and timely advice on this delicate and sensitive matter that has and continues to affect my active involvement in my local church.

My church is situated on a Red Route, which as you know means that no one is allowed to park in or around the red markings on the road. Believing that I am in God's plan, and doing his will in going to this church both morning and evening each Sunday, I make the decision to park outside the church asking for God's protection on my vehicle, and that nothing untoward will happen to it. Sadly, the local council, and their parking representatives do not feel the same way. I am not suggesting that they have been sent on a mission from Satan, or are in any way manifesting anything directly evil, but I have felt somewhat disappointed that each time I return to my car, I receive a hefty fine.

I have been a great believer in Tithing; As it clearly says in Leviticus: 'A tithe of everything from the land, whether grain from the soil or fruit from the trees, belongs to the LORD. (I'm sure that if they had cars in the Old Testament, these would have been mentioned too, don't you think?)

So coming back to my problem, I have decided that I can justify the £80 a week parking fines on the basis that it can count towards my Tithe or 10% of my income. But now, having attended for the last 3 years, I have run up a rather unsettling debt of £12,480 simply through parking outside the church.

I enclose an invoice for 10% of my total costs, asking if you would consider paying this, by way of your tithe to me, as I have paid to the church, and to the Parking authorities.

Yours Ecumenically,



Bob Howard

Ps. The 10% Invoice will again be tithed to the tune of £124.80, which in turn will be tithed again totalling £12.48p, and finally tithed at £1.25p. It doesn't look so bad when you look at it like this does it?

Sales Invoice

Date: _____ Invoice No: _____

From: _____

Qty	Description	Amount exclusive of V.A.T. £	V.A.T. Not £
	10% of £12,480.00p parking charges to be requested by way of a tithe.	£1,248.00p	



 THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND

LAMBETH PALACE

Mr B Howard
Cokeswithin
99 Kerching Drive
Twickenham
Middx

Mr Andrew Nunn
*Lay Assistant to
The Archbishop of Canterbury*

04 April

Dear Mr. Howard

The Archbishop of Canterbury has asked me to write thanking you for your 24th March letter and to reply. I was disturbed to hear that you have been persistently breaking the law by parking on a red line outside a church whilst you attended worship. The Archbishop cannot in any way condone law breaking of this sort and whilst he is course sorry that you have run up such an enormous debt he could not be seen to support your actions by contributing to the fine.

Christians have just as much a responsibility as non-Christians. Causing disruption and inconvenience by blocking the traffic to society is anti-social, and will bring the Church and the name of Our Lord Jesus Christ into disrepute.

Yours sincerely


"Cokeswithbin"
99, Kerching Drive
Twickenham, Middx, UK

Mr Andrew Nunn,
Lay Assistant to The Archbishop of Canterbury
Lambeth Palace,
London SE1 7JU

10th April

Dear Mr Nunn,

Thank you very much for your letter on behalf of The Archbishop. Having re-read my original letter, and your reply, I can now see that it was wrong to break the law in such a blatant way, and then have the nerve to write to you and ask you to help financially. I heartily apologise for the errors of my ways in this matter.

I realise that my actions may well have given the church a bad name and feel now that I need to make some kind of formal act of contrition.

Do you think I will be excommunicated from the church?

I know that today there is a very special marriage taking place with which you, the Archbishop and all the staff at Lambeth Palace are preoccupied, but I was reading in the paper that Prince Charles and Queen Camilla are going to confess that they "*repent of and bewail their manifold sins and wickedness*". I feel that I should do the same thing, don't you?

Do you think that the Archbishop would take me through a similar ceremony?

With regard to the original invoice I sent you, I would be happy to work off this large bill in some form of penance. Please let me know if anything springs to mind that you feel would be appropriate.

I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Yours apologetically

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'B. Howard'. The signature is written in a cursive, somewhat stylized script.

B. Howard



 THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND

LAMBETH PALACE

Mr B Howard
Cokeswithin
99 Kerching Drive
Twickenham
Middx

Mr Andrew Nunn
*Lay Assistant to
The Archbishop of Canterbury*

21 April

Dear Mr. Howard

Thank you for your 10th April letter and for your expression of regret for your actions.

The person most immediately affected by you parking on a red route while attending church (other than those road users inconvenienced by your action) was the priest of the church you attended. It is I think to him or her that you should apologise in the first instance and discuss the extent to which a formal confession and absolution are necessary. My suggestion therefore is that you discuss the matter with your parish priest.

With very best wishes

“Cooke’swithin”
99, Kerching Drive
Twickenham, Middx, UK

Mr Andrew Nunn,
Lay Assistant to The Archbishop of Canterbury
Lambeth Palace,
London SE1 7JU

9th May

Dear Mr Nunn,

Thank you very much for your reply dated 21st April.

I am currently writing this letter to you, 56,000 feet up in the air somewhere over the Atlantic Ocean. I am returning from America where I embarked on a mission to seek out my parish priest who was taking a three-month sabbatical. It was his idea to write to you in the first place so I thought it only right to keep him up to date with my progress.

My search took me south to Palm Springs, then to San Diego, Los Angeles, through Santa Barbara and finally up to a small town called Gorda. Apart from the rather eerie feeling that everyone there was somehow related, I managed to talk to Bob, the gas station attendant, who remembered seeing my elusive reverend only a matter of hours previously. It seemed that every time I got close, he was one step ahead of me.

Sadly I never managed to meet him. However, this story does have a very happy ending. On my return trip, I stopped at a small “Danish-inspired” town called Solvang. Parking my car, this time carefully you will be relieved to hear, I walked in to one of the many souvenir shops and it was there our eyes met.

Flørnehilda was serving behind the counter selling model Viking dolls and tins of green pea soup (a town speciality so I’ve been told) and we immediately clicked. And now, sitting next to me on the plane home is my fiancé Flørnehilda, soon to become my bride. So I now have someone to whom I can confess and share my specific problems, even though my quest to seek out my parish priest was in vain.

I hope that you can show this letter to the Archbishop, and that he may be able to send us a personal greeting of congratulations. He wouldn’t be free to take our wedding would he by any chance? We would fit around his diary if there were any chance of this happening. I thought it was worth asking just in case?

Let me know about the Archbishop’s availability and I would also like to offer an invitation to you and your family to my wedding for being so kind and thoughtful with your replies. Once we have a date we can go from there.

Yours most sincerely



Bob Howard and the soon to be Mrs Flørnehilda Howard



 THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND

LAMBETH PALACE

Mr Andrew Nunn
*Lay Assistant to
The Archbishop of Canterbury*

Mr B Howard
Cokeswithin
99 Kerching Drive
Twickenham
Middx

17 May

Dear Mr. Howard

Thank you for your 9th May letter written while you were returning from the USA. Congratulations on finding so suddenly and so unexpectedly your fiancée. I hope you will be very happy together. Unfortunately the Archbishop will be unable to solemnise your marriage. I hope you understand that his diary is very congested and pleasure must take second place to duty.

With very best wishes,