

To See Ourselves

Finding myself several quid short of a super injunction, I am placed in the unfortunate position of having to use this newsletter to disclose details of an incident in my private life I would have preferred to remain secret. In short, if I don't come clean, there is every prospect that someone else will rat on me.

The details are simple. During the half-term break I was involved in a serious accident. It was raining and I was going too fast. It was my fault alone and nobody else was involved. What is less simple, is how the front wheel of my shopping trolley collapsed at high speed as I rushed our groceries back to the short-stay car park.

What I do know is that the trolley stopped instantly, whilst the Vicar and groceries continued at terminal velocity. I found myself sailing over the handlebars, as it were, and managed to clear the car park fence at an altitude approaching Olympic qualifying standard. Luckily the ground broke my fall and I came to rest beneath the front spoiler of a Citroen Picasso.

What stays in my memory is how slowly moments pass in times of crisis. I won't say my life flashed before my eyes, but I was clearly able to process random thoughts such as: 'This is going to hurt,' 'That Citroen's a nice colour,' 'I must write about this in the newsletter if I survive,' and 'Here comes the ground now.'

But above all, I am ashamed to admit that my final prayer was 'Dear Lord, please don't let there be anyone I know around to see this.' As someone who claims not to care too much for dignity or reputation, indifferent to those who pass judgement on his appearance, faith or actions (so long as they are right before God), it was a telling revelation of my residual vanity and pride.

No-one wants to look a fool, but it seems that I still have a long way to go in that forgetfulness of self and true Christian humility which consists not in thinking less of myself, but thinking of myself a whole lot less.

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