

he has been indirectly discriminated against.⁵ The employer's requirement that the employee work on Sundays would potentially place Christians at a particular disadvantage when compared with other persons. However, it would still be open to an employer to justify the Sunday working requirement by showing that it was 'a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim'. More case law is sure to follow.

RE-ORDERING: CULTURAL CLASHES OR MOMENTS OF REVELATION?

JOHN FORD

Bishop of Plymouth

*An address to the Architects' Study Day convened by Chichester Diocesan
Advisory Committee at Lancing College, Sussex, on 19 July 2005*

Anyone who has travelled in the Holy Land cannot fail to have encountered the work of Antonio Barluzzi. He was responsible for the design of the vast majority of the structures on the holy sites during the early part of the last century. He was an Italian, therefore well placed to liaise with the Roman Catholic authorities and in particular the Franciscan Order who had been appointed guardians of the holy places, and his work proliferated across Jordan and the emerging State of Israel. Barluzzi's work always attempted to interpret the event commemorated by taking some of the biblical description, some cultural norm of the time, and bringing these into the present, thus involving the visitor not only in contemporary space but also in an ongoing translation both of the biblical text and of the event that text recorded. It would appear that he did all this with such success that he was retained to build sacred space on each new site as it was developed.

Barluzzi's work is to be found at the Shepherd's Fields on the edge of Bethlehem, on the slopes of the Mount of Olives overlooking the city of Jerusalem, in Bethany and on seven or eight other major pilgrim sites. For something approaching two decades his approach found favour with those creating the pilgrimage experience. It is difficult therefore to imagine how he must have felt when his supplied design for the Basilica in Nazareth was rejected in favour of a style which one might describe as being rather more postmodern. By that I mean rather than illicit a smooth translation of biblical event into contemporary experience; the Nazareth church is

⁵ IDS Employment Law Brief 789, September 2005.

designed to present the simplicity and poverty of the first century home in juxtaposition with and to the eternal home of heaven depicted in the grand mosaic and also to the position and role of Mary in that eternal home and in the lives of those who journey towards it. Is this a clash or a moment of revelation?

The architectural clash of postmodernism is not something with which I am especially familiar. However, its rather more *avant garde* style in contrast with the more formal expressions of modernism and its collage approach to a mix and match style even when this produces potential clashes is, of course, repeated in other areas where the prevailing cultural norms inherited from the modern period are under criticism of deconstruction. A clash or a moment of revelation?

Whether or not there is such a reality as postmodernism is beyond the scope of this paper. However it does seem to me that the inherited predictability of the modern period with its associated trust in the inevitability of progress and human discovery is now being questioned or even rejected along with many, if not all, Enlightenment worldviews. It might well be that this emerging cultural reality has not yet been named, but I conjecture that most modernist understandings have shifted and we are in the process of some profound changes. And the Church in all its forms both as people and buildings is not, and should not be, protected – indeed it cannot be since it is the air that most members of the Church breathe.

What does all this mean for the liturgical spaces for which we have some responsibility? Everyone who has day-to-day charge of ecclesiastical buildings is engaged in the same task as was Barluzzi and every church architect before and since—taking something from the scriptures or tradition, some cultural norm of the time, and bringing these into a building or its furnishings and design in such a way as to involve the regular worshipper and the visitor not only in contemporary space created or illuminated but also in an ongoing translation both of the biblical text and its living reality. In other words the buildings are part of the living story and can and must be used as a way of translating or even interpreting that story into contemporary culture – be that postmodern or whatever you want to call it.

Part of the struggle that we have with the proclamation of the gospel in this changing culture is that much of our inherited structure and form is deeply rooted in worldviews which are widely questioned if not rejected—the seamless robe of Barluzzi's interpretation is no longer necessary in a world where patchwork and mix and match are perfectly acceptable—it is not a clash ... but potentially a moment of revelation.

Allow me to illustrate this by reference to the internal ordering of our places of worship. Broadly speaking, with adjustment for traditions at either end and for the shades of opinion in the middle—basically our sacred space can be described as either a preaching box or a place of sacramental

encounter. The preaching box, designed and furnished to focus on the Word and its reading and exposition with pews in ranks, fixed and facing the front; a gallery around the walls with more pews thus maximising the seating capacity of the space. All of this focussed very clearly on the three-decker pulpit from which the Word was read and preached for the edification of the faithful. At its height, the worship in church buildings of this kind was built around some hymns and readings with an hour-long sermon and prayers. For today's culture this is not particularly attractive. Postmodern person, if such a being exists, finds concentration for anything more than a few minutes next to impossible. It is a fast moving generation, skimming the surface (literally surfing—*à la* the internet) and moving from one thing to the next more often by way of images rather than text. If our sacred space is to be designed for this emphasis on the Word then it is more than likely that it will need to contain electronic equipment and not only for sound but also for vision. In this new design screens will need to feature as well as pulpits and lecterns.

In the space for sacramental encounter over recent years there has been much debate about the place of the altar and how people sit in relation to it and how all of the various configurations make statements about the Church and its nature, ministry and purpose. Those engaged in giving advice for the care of churches and permission for alterations and additions have spent countless person hours in discussing these matters and many will have been on the receiving end of either praise or criticism. The positioning of the altar in relation to the place from which the Word is read; the configuration of the assembly; the font—and even whether these always have to be placed in the same spatial relationship with each other, have been significant questions in the mind of parish clergy, architects and diocesan advisory committees for several decades. Much of this debate has followed after what I describe as the work of liturgical archaeology. We are indebted to the liturgical scholarship of the last century the result of which has brought great riches to our contemporary liturgy and also to a new awareness of the nature and purpose of the Church. Our contemporary liturgical rites bring much-needed colour and variety to our worship, and the Church of England liturgical rites today are the best we have ever had at our disposal.

However, liturgical scholarship has mined the history and tradition of the Church across two millennia and learnt lessons from the past about the shape and content of the liturgical celebrations of our foremothers and fathers, but what it has not done is given much attention to the prevailing culture out of which these earlier rites have arisen. The discovery of the way in which earlier centuries celebrated the eucharist is only part of the task. In the light of that discovery the Church of today has to ask what that tradition offers us—as we offer the same eucharist in our day and within our culture.

Through liturgical scholarship one of the things we have re-discovered is that part of the eucharistic celebration is a meal and therefore the assembly

gathered around the table. This alone has provided architects and DACs with a proliferation of work! However, like it or not, communal meals of a formal nature, even family meals around the dining room table, are not as common in our society as they once were. The questions that this raises for the celebration of the eucharist in contemporary cultures are not possible to address in this paper but illustrate the point that there is a very real communication issue. Also the opposite eucharistic emphasis—that of the celebration as mystery—presents a similar communication issue. In common usage mystery is attractive but it is assumed that the mystery will unfold towards a solution. So here our communication issue also involves a serious need for translation so that the Christian mystery can be experienced as something, which embraces us in a process of revelation, rather than be looked upon as a conundrum to be solved.

It might well be an overstatement but I don't think there has been a time in the history of the Church when its buildings have been so critically important as a prime medium for the communication of the gospel. The Orthodox scholar Andrew Walker says that we now inhabit a culture which is once again an oral, story-telling society very similar to that in which the gospel was first preached. Stories which are in and of themselves illustrations are an accepted means of communication. We live in a high image/low text culture. This has many implications for the design, renovation and renewal of our buildings. First and most important we must be bold and allow our buildings to speak: of the mystery and majesty of God as well as of his immanence; of the things of eternity and the values of the Kingdom. Our forebears did it in many ways—relief carvings, stained glass etc. These are still skills at artists' finger tips. But we have to have the courage to ask: what might be the twenty-first century equivalent of these art forms? Our church buildings are sacred space and we should never be afraid of proclaiming that. They are sacred space and they are to be used for a particular function—as a place of assembly for the defining act of the Christian community—to make eucharist.

But whilst they are sacred space they must be used eucharistically. The eucharist is not a service that a select group of people choose to attend. It is a celebration of what the holy communion are—God's people, called and set apart for service of the world. At the end of the eucharist we are sent out in the service of that world and that world is what we bring on our hearts when we return to the altar. As the world is gathered into the physical space of the building at the eucharistic offering so the world need access to the building at other times. And this returns to the central importance of our buildings as a medium for the communication of the gospel. How will the truth of the gospel be communicated by the building if there is no one in the building to whom the message can be communicated?

The resource that is so treasured has to be shared with others. Our buildings have got to be used and in being used they have to be allowed to speak. They must speak of God and they must be open to all – they are for worship and for service. Interestingly, pursuit of this aim is almost certain

to present some cultural clashes. In the cathedral context where the regular pattern of daily worship whilst not being greater than a parish church, probably takes on a larger profile, there are constant difficulties. People visit it as art gallery, theme park, museum, shelter from the cold and wet and dozens of other reasons, all of them fine and acceptable; until that is they interrupt its prime purpose as a place where God is worshipped and adored. Then there are clashes but they are also opportunities to engage in dialogue with others about God and his will and purpose for the world.

Clearly people will visit parish churches for many of the same reasons they visit cathedrals but parish churches have a great advantage. They are still set within the context of a community - or more accurately, communities. And the use of our buildings by the community that we serve is surely a gospel imperative. Clashes there will be, but opportunities will also abound. The challenge for those of us with the responsibility for the care of the buildings is to encourage others to respond to the opportunity—and not to be part of the clash!

FLOGGING CHILDREN WITH RELIGION: A COMMENT ON THE HOUSE OF LORDS' DECISION IN *WILLIAMSON*

SYLVIE LANGLAUDE

School of Law, University of Bristol¹

On 24 February 2005 the House of Lords delivered a significant judgment on freedom of religion, parental rights to religious freedom, corporal punishment and children's rights. This paper examines *R (Williamson) v Secretary of State for Education and Employment*.² It argues that the House of Lords adopts a much more generous approach to freedom of religion or belief than the European Court of Human Rights. But it is also critical of the argument derived from children's rights.

The abolition of corporal punishment at schools in England and Wales developed from the Education (No 2) Act 1986,³ to section 548 of the

¹ I am grateful to Professor Malcolm Evans and Dr Julian Rivers for their comments. All errors are mine.

² *R v Secretary of State for Education and Employment, ex parte Williamson* [2005] UKHL 15, [2005] 1 FCR 498, [2005] 2 AC 246, noted at (2005) 8 Ecc LJ 237. For convenience, references hereafter to the speeches in the House of Lords are simply prefaced *Williamson*.

³ Applicable to maintained schools (state schools) and non-maintained schools