

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this dissertation is to consider how a newly established Anglican Centre (the Church of Ireland Centre) within a secular university (Dublin City University) should express its own Christian ethos and identity. It considers how the Centre should engage with the public square. The dissertation takes account of the fact that Anglicans and other reformed Christians are a very small but culturally significant minority in the Republic of Ireland. It acknowledges that the Republic of Ireland is transforming into an actively secular society both through public policy and societal pressure from parts of the community while at the same time becoming post-secular in terms of its globalised, diverse population. This secularisation / post-secularisation tension in itself impacts on the perceived right of Christians to speak into the public square and to have a voice in the educational sphere.

The dissertation defines ministry in the context of the contemporary University to include prophetic engagement with, and dialogue in, the public square of the institution, as well as the provision of critical faith-based educational opportunities for students, staff and the wider public alike.

The dissertation documents the origins, establishment, agreed outputs and initial activity of the Church of Ireland Centre in its secular setting in Dublin City University. Stott argued that the University is the contemporary equivalent of the Agora and the Areopagus of Athens where Paul debated with the philosophers and learned citizens of the city (Acts 17: 16-34). The dissertation considers the example of Paul's evangelization in this learned, cultural context and uses Stott's analysis to apply it to the contemporary public square. The dissertation also draws on Warner's characteristics of an Anglican university as well as the five marks of mission of the Anglican Communion to subject the Centre's framework, locus and activity to an Anglican sharpening.

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