

GALILEO'S HERESY

Paula Haigh

Now that the traditional teaching of the Church about Creation and a literal reading of Genesis is being vindicated with the downfall of Darwinism, so also the traditional teaching about the structure of the universe is being admitted in various ways, and **Catholics should know about it**.

To begin with, there are presently at least **five good sources** for obtaining the truth on this important matter of geocentricity. The first of these is included in the extensive scientific work of the French Catholic scholar, Fernand Crombette (**d.1970**). His works have not yet been translated but some of them have been expounded in English, and all may be obtained from the *Cercle Scientifique et Historique*[CESHE].¹ "The Bible does not make mistakes" was the watchword of this gifted Catholic scientist.² Secondly, there is the first-rate paper by Solange Hertz³ entitled *Recanting Galileo*. Mrs. Hertz's work always possesses a spiritual dimension not to be found anywhere else. It is her unique gift. Thirdly, there is the work of the Dutch Protestant scholar, Walter van der Kamp(**d 1998**), founder of the *Tychonian Society* (Canada) and its quarterly journal, *The Biblical Astronomer*, formerly known as *The Bulletin of the Tychonian Society*. Mr. Van der Kamp has published a book entitled *De Labore Solis: Airy's Failure Reconsidered* [**1988**]⁴. Every Catholic should read the "Letter to John Paul II" that is included in an Addendum in this book. The Letter was delivered in person and gives scientific and religious reasons why the Holy Father should **not** consider a formal rehabilitation of Galileo⁵. Fourthly, a disciple of Mr. Van der Kamp, Dr. Gerardus Bouw, professional astronomer, computer scientist and current editor of *The Biblical Astronomer*, has authored a book entitled *With Every Wind of Doctrine: Biblical, Historical, and Scientific Perspectives of Geocentricity*⁶. One must beware, however, of Dr. Bouw's very anti-Catholic prejudices which sometimes cause him to distort history. Lastly, there has recently appeared *The Earth is Not Moving* by Marshall Hall⁷. His is a quintessentially popular treatment of this difficult subject, and he must be given much credit for bringing the arcana of modern mathematical physics down to the level of us scientifically illiterate mortals. Whatever may be the shortcomings of Hall's book, it is impossible not to enjoy his literary panache.

Needless to say, none of these works is known beyond a very limited circle of interested people because, contrary to the generally-held media-imposed assessment of things, there is very little real science these days. Instead, **we labor beneath a scientific imperialism** which, having usurped the place of theology and of metaphysics in the true hierarchy of sciences, puts upon unwitting school children and witless TV addicts, its own preferred heliocentric-evolutionary ideology into which it **bends every empirical fact**. This monstrous establishment of **academic sophistry** lords it over every aspect of intellectual life today and has succeeded in convincing almost everyone that this "science falsely so-called" is the sole possessor and distributor of all truth and rationality.

¹CESHE, Rue de l'Eglise, 08310 Annelles, France [attn: Dominique Tassot].

²Also in *Beyond Politics*. Solange Hertz. Veritas Press, California. **1995**. [refer to section titled "What's Up?"].

³Available from P. Ellwanger, 2057 W Hebron #1012, Carrollton TX, USA.

⁴Available from P. Ellwanger.

⁵John-Paul II has made statements about the Galileo case before the *Pontifical Academy of Sciences* on two occasions during his pontificate: the first in **1979** on the occasion of Einstein's birthday and the second on October 31, **1992**. No information available to me in **1992** about the nature of these statements [i.e., their legal and/or authoritative status].

⁶Available from the author at 4527 Wetzel Ave, Cleveland OH 44109, USA. Same address for *The Biblical Astronomer*.

⁷Available from M. Hall at *Fair Education Foundation, Inc.*, 211 Morningside Dr, Cornelia GA 30531, USA.

But the **Truth is irrepressible** and will break forth from under the dead weight of error willy nilly, sometimes here, sometimes there, as in a footnote in Bernard Cohen's *The Birth of a New Physics*.⁸ Artfully hidden among some details of Galileo's life, we find this gem of an admission: "There is **no planetary observation** by which we on earth can prove that the earth is moving in an orbit around the sun."

Sir Fred Hoyle is quoted by Walter van der Kamp in his book as admitting that the geocentric model of the universe is **no worse and no better** than the heliocentric one. The works listed above cite many other similar admissions of like nature by scientists of our time.

More and more because of Einstein's relativity theories, the universe is referred to as **a-centric**. Martin Gardner states the problem clearly:

*... The **ancient argument** over whether the earth rotates or the heavens revolve around it (as Aristotle taught) is seen to be no more than an argument over the simplest choice of a frame of reference. Obviously, the most convenient choice is the universe. [sic] Relative to the universe, we say that the earth rotates and inertia makes its equator bulge. Nothing except inconvenience prevents us from choosing the earth as a fixed frame of reference. In the latter case, we say that the **cosmos rotates around the earth**, generating a gravitational field that acts upon the equator. Again, this field does not have the same mathematical structure as a gravitational field around a planet, but it can be called **a true gravitational field** nevertheless. If we choose to make the earth our frame of reference, we do not even do violence to everyday speech. We say that the sun rises in the morning, sets in the evening; the Big Dipper revolves around the North Star. Which point of view is "correct"? **The question is meaningless**. A waitress might just as sensibly ask a customer if he wanted ice cream on top of his pie or the pie placed under the ice cream.*⁹ (Emphasis added)

Well, that might be the case for mathematical constructs, but for ontological truth, i.e., for conformity with reality, **we cannot agree** that the question is meaningless. Only one of the alternatives can be true in reality, and to base one's science on a fiction **cannot be productive** of wisdom. **Error always has consequences**. The real conclusion to be drawn from Gardner's explanation is that there simply is **no human way of knowing** the structure of the universe. But God has revealed it! This was the basis on which Galileo was **condemned** by the Holy office in **1633**. It is, therefore, **a fact of divine revelation**, a truth of Faith.

The same holds true for the origin of all things and the earliest history of mankind. So-called "salvation history" (no more than any history) does not begin with Abraham nor with any imagined "prehistoric" event or process. **All history begins with the beginning of time** on the **First Day** of the **First Week** of the World -- Creation Week. It is all very simply and most plainly given to us by God in Holy Scripture, for God knows that we not only desire to know these things but that we **need** to know them. Mythology proves that if men do not take God's word for the origin and structure of the universe, they will surely take the Devil's.

And so, it is a great pity to find Catholics apologetic and embarrassed about the action of the Church in the Galileo case. Here is a brief resumé of the facts in the Galileo case.

Due to the spread of the Copernican theory and complaints of theologians, the Holy Office in **1616** condemned the following propositions and explained **why** they are false:

⁸ Doubleday, 1960, p.88 note.

⁹ Martin Gardner. *Relativity for the Millions*. Publisher and date not available at this time. Reference was sent to me by a friend who lost publisher, date and page.

- I. The sun is the center of the world and completely immovable by local motion.
- II. The earth is not the center of the world, not immovable, but moves according to the whole of itself, and also with a diurnal motion.

The **first proposition** was declared unanimously to be foolish and **absurd in philosophy** and formally heretical inasmuch as **it expressly contradicts the doctrine of Holy Scripture in many passages**, both in their literal meaning and according to the general interpretation of the Fathers and Doctors.

With regard to the **second proposition** all were agreed that this proposition merits the same censure in philosophy, and that, from a theological standpoint, it is at least **erroneous in the faith**. Fr. Jerome Langford, from whose book these propositions are taken, goes on to explain the meaning of the censures in more detail:

*The theologian Antonio of Cordova, writing in 1604, explains the generic meaning of these censures. The **formally heretical** in the first censure means that this proposition was considered directly contrary to a doctrine of faith. This shows that the apparent affirmations of Scripture and the Fathers, that the sun moves, was held by the Consultors to be a doctrine of faith. In other words, there is no room for apologetic excursions here. The Consultors tagged the proposition with the strongest possible censure, as being directly contrary to the truth of Sacred Scripture. In the second proposition, the motion of the earth was censured as **erroneous in the faith**. This meant that the Consultors considered it to be not directly contrary to Scripture, but opposed to a doctrine which pertained to the faith according to the common consensus of learned theologians. In other words, Scripture was not as definite in stating the immobility of the earth. But the Holy Writ did **reveal** that the sun moved, and since human reason could conclude that the sun and the earth were not both moving around each other, the Consultors felt that the immobility of the earth was a matter which fell under the domain of faith indirectly, as a kind of theological conclusion.¹⁰ (Emphases added)*

Galileo himself, because he had published a book on sunspots in **1613** wherein he praised the Copernican theory, was personally admonished on the basis of these condemnations about the sun and the earth, by Cardinal (Saint Robert) Bellarmine. However, in **1632**, Galileo published his *Dialogue on the Great World Systems* in which he openly and enthusiastically, not to say dogmatically, advocated the Copernican system and shamelessly ridiculed the traditional Aristotelian geocentric system. This brought about his trial in **1633** by the Roman Inquisition or Holy Office. Of Galileo's condemnation, noted Church historian Ludwig von Pastor says: "Now if he adhered internally to an opinion which competent authority assured him to be contrary to Holy Writ, a suspicion was bound to arise **that he doubted the inerrancy of the Scriptures and since this was in itself a heresy**, he became suspect of heresy."¹¹ (Emphases added)

The Church cannot be accused of interfering in what may be considered the proper domain of the physical sciences because Galileo's crime was only indirectly concerned with the Copernican theory. **His heresy was specifically to doubt the inerrancy of Holy Scripture.**

¹⁰Jerome J. Langford, *Galileo, Science and the Church*. Foreword by Stillman Drake. New York: Desclee Co, **1966**, pp.89-90.

¹¹*History of the Popes*, Vol. 29, p.54.

And **Galileo knew this** very well. It's why he goes to such lengths in his "Letter to the Grand Duchess-Christina" (**1615**) to prove that the Scriptures are not to be interpreted literally when they speak of physical things but only when they teach on matters of faith and morals. He takes his stand on a decree of the *Council of Trent* (Session IV, April 8, **1546**) which I will quote here from the English edition of *Dogmatic Canons and Decrees*:¹²

Furthermore, in order to restrain petulant spirits, it decrees that no one, relying on his own skill, shall -- in matters of faith, and of morals pertaining to the edification of Christian doctrine -- wresting the sacred Scripture to his own senses, presume to interpret the said sacred Scripture contrary to that sense which holy Mother Church -- to whom it belongs to judge of the true sense and interpretation of the holy Scriptures -- hath held and doth hold; or even contrary to the unanimous consent of the Fathers; even though such interpretations were never (intended) to be at any time published. Contraveners shall be made known by their Ordinaries and be punished with the penalties by law established.

"...pertaining to the edification [i.e., building up] of Christian doctrine" points to a harmony of Faith and science. But if we now turn to **what Galileo says** and what he quotes as the Council's own words, we find **an attempt to dis-edify**:

*... I question the truth of the statement that the church commands us to hold as matters of faith all physical conclusions bearing the stamp of harmonious interpretation by all the Fathers. I think this may be an arbitrary simplification of various council decrees by certain people to favor their own opinion. So far as I can find, all that is really prohibited is the "perverting into senses contrary to that of the holy Church or that of the concurrent agreement of the Fathers those passages and those alone, which pertain to faith or ethics, or which concern the edification of Christian doctrine." So said the **Council of Trent** in its fourth session. But the mobility or stability of the earth or sun is neither a matter of faith nor one contrary to ethics.*¹³

Galileo would have us believe that there is an absolute separation in Holy Scripture between matters of faith and morals and matters pertaining to the physical sciences. That such is not at all the case, **Pope Benedict XV assures us** in *Spiritus Paraclitus* (Sept. 15, **1920**):

... by these precepts and limits [set by the Fathers of the Church] the opinion of the more recent critics is not restrained, who, after introducing a distinction between the primary or religious element of Scripture, and the secondary or profane, wish, indeed, that inspiration itself pertain to all the ideas, rather even to the individual words of the Bible, but that its effects and especially immunity from error and absolute truth be contracted and narrowed to the primary or religious element. For their belief is that that only which concerns religion is intended and is taught by God in the Scriptures; but that the rest, which pertains to the profane disciplines and serves revealed doctrine as a kind of external cloak of divine truth, is only permitted and is left to the feebleness of the writer. It is not surprising then, if in physical,

¹² *Dogmatic Canons and Decrees*. New York: Devin-Adair, **1912**, p.11.

¹³ *Discoveries and Opinions of Galileo*. Transl. and edited by Stillman Drake. New York: Doubleday, Anchor, **1957**, p.203.

*historical, and other similar affairs a great many things occur in the Bible, which cannot at all be reconciled with the progress of the fine arts of this age. There are those who contend that these fabrications of opinions are not in opposition to the prescriptions of our predecessor [Leo XIII] since he declared that the sacred writer in matters of nature speaks according to external appearance, surely fallacious. But **how rashly, how falsely this is affirmed, is plainly evident** from the very words of the Pontiff.*

.....
If the opinion of these men is once accepted, how will that truth of sacred story stand safe, immune from every falsehood, which our predecessor declares must be retained in the entire text of its literature? (D2186-2187) (Emphasis added)

Plainly, the distinction that **Galileo tries to uphold** on the authority of the *Council of Trent* is, according to Benedict XV, one **to be rejected** -- and abhorred. Galileo has "wrested" the sense of Trent. Another translation, that from Denzinger, will make **the real teaching** of the Church clearer:

*Furthermore, in order to curb **impudent clever persons**, the synod decrees that no one who relies on his own judgment in matters of faith and morals, which pertain to the building up of Christian doctrine, and that **no one** who distorts the Sacred Scriptures according to his own opinions, **shall dare** to interpret the said Sacred Scriptures contrary to that sense which is held by **holy mother Church, whose duty it is to judge regarding the true sense and interpretation of holy Scriptures, or even contrary to the unanimous consent of the Fathers, even though interpretations of this kind were never intended to be brought to light.**(D 786)^{14 15}
 (Emphases added)*

Now it is clear that the "matters of faith and morals" alluded to in this decree do not pertain solely and directly to Sacred Scripture but to those who rely on their own judgment in all matters of religion, i.e., faith and morals. Obviously, this is a **reference to Protestants** against whom *Trent* was specifically directed.

The second point to be noted is that it is for **the Church alone** to judge what is the true sense and interpretation of Scripture.

Thirdly, the reference to the unanimous consent of the Fathers refers back to those who dare to interpret the Scriptures contrary to that sense which is held by holy mother Church and/or who dare to interpret the Scriptures **contrary to the unanimous consent** of the Fathers.

Galileo well knew that the **Fathers of the Church held to a geocentric view** of the universe and taught the same in a unanimous way as any other view would have been immediately recognized by them as against Scripture and common sense or reason. But **Galileo deliberately tries** to separate the matter from Scripture and faith, and purely physical as against religious teaching. It is Galileo we have to thank for the **separation of faith from science**. And he did this in the only way possible -- by **basing his science upon error** -- the error of heliocentrism and a moving earth.

Galileo shines forth as the **first modernist**, for he distorts the Sacred Scriptures to fit his own opinions, and his opinions are always those derived from his practices in the physical sciences. He made much of the distinction between the spiritual and the physical meanings in Scripture claiming that the spiritual could be true and the physical false or irrelevant without affecting the integral

¹⁴*The Sources of Catholic Dogma*, Transl. by Roy Deferrari. B. Herder, 1957.

¹⁵ Idem

inerrancy of God's word. Because of this and the fact that he has so many followers today, it will be well to emphasize the definitive teaching of the Church in this matter. It is summed up by Pope Leo XIII in *Providentissimus Deus* (1893), paragraph numbers 124-127:¹⁶

*It may also happen that the sense of a passage remains ambiguous, and in this case good hermeneutical methods will greatly assist in clearing up the obscurity. But it is absolutely **wrong and forbidden** either to narrow inspiration to certain parts only of Holy Scripture or to admit that the sacred author has erred. As to **the system** of those who, in order to rid themselves of these difficulties, do not hesitate to concede that divine inspiration regards the **things of faith and morals**, and nothing beyond, because (as they wrongly think,) in a question of the truth or falsehood of a passage we should consider not so much what God has said as the reason and purpose which He had in mind in saying it -- **this system cannot be tolerated.***

*For all the books which the Church receives as sacred and canonical are written **wholly and entirely, with all their parts, at the dictation of the Holy Spirit**; and so far is it from being possible that any error can coexist with inspiration, that inspiration not only is essentially incompatible with error, but excludes and rejects it as absolutely and necessarily as it is impossible that God Himself, the supreme Truth, can utter that which is not true. **This is the ancient and unchanging faith of the Church**, solemnly defined in the Councils of Florence and of Trent, and finally confirmed and more expressly formulated by the Council of the Vatican. These are the words of the last:*

*The books of the Old and New Testament, whole and entire, with all their parts, ... are to be received as sacred and canonical. And the Church holds them as sacred and canonical **not because**, having been composed by human industry, they were afterwards approved by her authority; nor only because they contain revelation without errors, but because, having been written under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, **they have God for their Author.***

(Emphases added)

Hence, the fact that it was men whom the Holy Spirit took up as His instruments for writing **does not mean** that it was these inspired instruments -- but not the primary author -- who might have made an error. For, by supernatural power, **He so moved and impelled them to write** -- He so assisted them when writing -- that the things which He ordered, and those only, they, first, **rightly understood**, then willed faithfully to write down, and finally expressed in apt words and with **infallible truth**. Otherwise, it could not be said that He was the Author of the entire Scripture. Such has always been the persuasion of the Fathers. "Therefore," says St. Augustine, "since they wrote the things which He showed and uttered to them, it cannot be pretended that He is not the writer; for His members executed, **what their head dictated.**" And St. Gregory the Great thus pronounces: "Most superfluous it is to inquire who wrote these things -- we loyally believe the Holy Spirit to be the author of the book. He wrote it who **dictated it for writing**; He wrote it who inspired its execution."

It follows that those who maintain that an error is possible in any genuine passage of the sacred writings either **pervert the Catholic notion** of inspiration or make God the author of such error. And so emphatically were all the Fathers and Doctors agreed that the divine writings, as left by the hagiographers, are free from all error, that they labored earnestly, with no less skill than perseverance, to reconcile with each other those numerous passages **which seem** at variance -- the

¹⁶ Idem

very passages which in **great measure have** been taken up by the "higher criticism"; for they were unanimous in laying it down that those writings, **in their entirety and in all their parts**, were equally from the afflatus of Almighty God, and that God, speaking by the sacred writers, could not set down anything but what was true. The words of St. Augustine to St. Jerome may sum up what they taught:

On my own part I confess to your charity that it is only to those books of Scripture which are now called canonical that I have learned to pay such honor and reverence as to believe most firmly that none of their writers has fallen into any error. And if in these books I meet anything which seems contrary to truth, I shall not hesitate to conclude either that the text is faulty, or that the translator has not expressed the meaning of the passage, or-that I myself do not understand. (Emphases added)

Such is the solid, strong and **unbroken tradition** of the Catholic Church concerning the verbal inspiration and inerrancy of Scripture. The **modernists cannot change** this clear teaching even though some of them claim St. Augustine as their patron. When Saint Augustine has his "day in court" -- pity the modernists, of whom Galileo was the first.

The real point that Galileo did not want to face at his trial in **1632** and in all the controversies leading up to it was that **the Church**, represented by the theologians, had traditionally believed and **taught the geocentric nature of the universe**. And so, he was not prepared when, in **1616**, the heliocentric views of Copernicus were condemned.

In **1613**, one of Galileo's students, a young Benedictine monk and professor of mathematics at the University of Pisa, Fr. Benedetto Castelli, had become involved at table in a discussion of the Copernican theory with the Duchess Christina of Lorraine, mother of the Grand Duke Cosimo II, Galileo's patron. The Duchess, instructed by professor of philosophy Boscaglia, argued with Fr. Castelli that the **Copernican theory could not be true** since it **contradicted Holy Scripture**. Fr. Castelli did his best to refute the professor but hastened afterwards to consult his master, Galileo, who thereupon composed a long letter addressed to his pupil and containing his opinions on the proper relations between the physical sciences and religion. This "Letter to Castelli" circulated widely and caused a great deal of bitter controversy. Galileo then greatly revised and toned down the original in a "Letter to the Grand Duchess Christina," written in **1615** and circulated widely though not published in book form until **1636**. It is in the earlier "Letter to Castelli" that Galileo makes a startling statement -- startling, especially at that time, because Holy Scripture and "Nature" are shifted around in the medieval hierarchy, "Nature" displacing Holy Scripture as primary in physical questions. Here is what he says:

*Scripture being therefore in many places not only accessible to, but necessarily requiring, expositions differing from the apparent meaning of the words, it seems to me that in physical disputes it **should be reserved to the last place**, [such questions] proceeding equally from the divine word of the Holy Scripture and from Nature, the former as dictated by the Holy Ghost and the latter as the observant executrix of God's orders.*¹⁷ (Emphasis added)

Try as he might to equalize Holy Scripture and Nature, he has said that Holy Scripture must take the **last place** in physical disputes. This is **an open rupture** of that hierarchy of the sciences so firmly established in the good order of the medieval world. **Theology was the rightful Queen** of the

¹⁷ Stillman Drake, *Galileo at Work: His Scientific Biography*. University of Chicago Press, **1978**, p.225.

sciences, philosophy was her first handmaiden, and all the other lower natural sciences were likewise intended to be the servants of the highest science, just as all creatures are bound to serve God, their Creator. Here are some passages from St. Thomas on this subject of the relationship of theology to the other sciences, passages which Galileo must certainly have known at least from common teaching:

*Sacred Science [theology] is **established on principles revealed by God**. ... because Sacred Scripture considers things precisely under the formality of being divinely revealed, whatever has been divinely revealed possesses the one precise formality of the object of this science and therefore is included under Sacred Doctrine as under one science.*

*Sacred Doctrine being one, **extends** to things which belong to different philosophical sciences because it considers in each the same formal aspect ... as they can be known by divine revelation.*

*The **purpose of Theology** is eternal bliss insofar as it is a practical science. ... to which eternal bliss as to an ultimate end, the purposes of every practical science are directed. (ST, I, Q 1, a 2-5) (Emphases added)*

From these passages we can see how **theology may touch on every other science**, that no human science is excluded from its searching light because God, as the origin and destiny of every creature, **cannot be excluded** from any aspect of finite activity, however lowly it may be. This does not mean that every science has not its own proper object. It does. And the object defines a science's limitations. At the same time, the light of the **higher sciences of theology and metaphysics** are to illumine all below because only in this way will the lower sciences be **prevented from straying** into error.

St. Thomas continues:

*The fact that some doubt articles of faith is not due to the uncertain nature of the truths but to the **weakness of the human intellect**.*

*Yet the slenderest knowledge that may be obtained of the highest things is more desirable than the most certain knowledge obtained of lesser things. (ST, I, Q 1, a 5, ad 2) **Theology does not need philosophy and the other sciences**, but it makes use of them to make its own teachings clearer. (ST, I, Q 1, a 1, a 5, ad 2) (Emphases added)*

This latter point shows us one reason why a perfect harmony of truth is so desirable between theology and the natural sciences for the natural sciences are designed by God primarily as avenues to the higher knowledge of Him that comes by Faith and theology. St. Thomas goes on with these key passages for our study of Galileo:

***Theology is wisdom above all human wisdom**, not merely in any one order, but absolutely. For since it is the part of a wise man **to arrange and to judge**, and since lesser matters should be judged **in the light of some higher principle**, he is said to be wise in any one order who considers the highest principle in that order,*

Thus in the order of building, he who plans the form of the house is called wise and architect as opposed to the inferior laborers who trim the wood and make ready the stones. ...

Therefore, he who considers absolutely the highest cause of the whole universe, namely God, is most of all to be called wise.

*But Sacred Doctrine essentially treats of God viewed as the highest cause -- not only so far as He can be known through creatures just as philosophers know Him -- (That which is known about God is manifest in them, **Rom. 1:19**) but also so far as He is known to Himself alone and revealed to others. Hence, Sacred Doctrine is especially called wisdom. (ST, I, Q 1, a 6) (Emphases added)*

As Dr. Jerome Lejeune so aptly said, "Technology is cumulative; wisdom is not."¹⁸ Galileo might be called the first technological man as he is most surely one of the fathers of an experimental empiricism aimed solely at producing useful work and gadgetry. Empirical, technical knowledge is cumulative. But wisdom is an intellectual virtue and a Gift of the Holy Ghost. Since modern empirical **science has excluded God on principle** -- the principle of its method -- it has by that same principle, which is an evil one from Satan, **cut itself off from God**, the only source of true wisdom.

*Sacred Doctrine derives its principles **not from any human knowledge** but from Divine Knowledge, through which as through the highest wisdom all our knowledge is set in order. (ST, I, Q 1, a 6, ad 1)*

The principles of other sciences are either self-evident and therefore cannot be proved, or they are proved by natural reason through some other science [or, we could add, according to the modern mind, from experiment].

*But the knowledge proper to **this science of theology** comes through divine revelation and not through natural reason.*

*Therefore, it has no concern to prove the principles of other sciences, but **only to judge** them.*

*Whatever is found in other sciences contrary to any truth of this science of theology, must **be condemned as false!** "Destroying counsels of every height that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God." (2 Cor. 10:4-5) (ST, I, Q 1, a 6, ad 2) (Emphases added)*

And finally:

We must not attempt to prove what is of faith except by authority alone, to those who receive the authority; while as regards others, it suffices to prove that what faith teaches is not impossible. (ST, I, Q 32, a 1)

From all this we can see that the **theologians of Galileo's time** were so far from being in the wrong that on the contrary, they were but doing their bounden duty, and some were even greatly remiss in this, e.g., the Carmelite contemporary of Galileo, to whom Cardinal Bellarmine addressed his great Letter defending the traditional view.

The real **centerpiece of the Galileo affair** is the Letter that Saint Robert Cardinal Bellarmine wrote to the Carmelite friar, Paolo Antonio **Foscarini**, after reading Galileo's Letter to Castelli and Foscarini's sixty-four page book defending the compatibility of the new Copernican system with Holy Scripture. Foscarini died June 10, **1616**, just two months after his book had been condemned by the Congregation of the Index. Fr. Jerome Langford does not tell us if there is any record of the Carmelite

¹⁸Jerome Lejeune. *The Concentration Can.* San Francisco: Ignatius Press, **1990**, p.132.

¹⁹Jerome Langford, *Galileo, Science and the Church.* New York: Desclee, **1966**, p. 59 about Fr. Foscarini and pp. 60-63 for Cardinal Bellarmine's Letter.

friar's reaction to the condemnation, to Cardinal Bellarmine's Letter, or whether he submitted to the Church's judgment before he died.¹⁹

As one would expect of a saint, **Cardinal Bellarmine's letter** is a model of supernatural wisdom and prudence. It is fair to scientific opinion but unrelentingly firm in the defense of Catholic doctrine. I give the Letter in full, and I have **divided it into numbered paragraphs** for convenient reference. I take the text from Langford's book. (See note 19)

1. *I have gladly read the letter in Italian and the treatise which Your Reverence sent me, and I thank you for both. And I confess that both are filled with ingenuity and learning, and since you ask for my opinion, I will give it to you very briefly, as you have little time for reading and I for writing.*
 2. *First, I say that it seems to me that Your Reverence and Galileo did prudently to content yourself with speaking hypothetically, and not absolutely, as I have always believed that Copernicus spoke.*
 3. *For to say that, assuming the earth moves and the sun stands still, all the appearances are saved better than with eccentrics and epicycles, is to speak well; there is no danger in this and it is sufficient for mathematicians.*
 4. *But to want to affirm that the sun really is fixed in the center of the heavens and only revolves around itself [turns upon its axis] without traveling from east to west, and that the earth is situated in the third sphere and revolves with great speed around the sun, is a very dangerous thing, not only by irritating all the philosophers and scholastic theologians, but also by injuring our holy faith and rendering the Holy Scriptures false.*
 5. *For Your Reverence has demonstrated many ways of explaining Holy Scripture, but you have not applied them in particular, and without a doubt you would have found it most difficult if you had attempted to explain all the passages which you yourself have cited.*
 6. *Second. I say that, as you know, the Council (of Trent) prohibits expounding the Scriptures contrary to the common agreement of the holy Fathers. And if Your Reverence would read not only the Fathers but also the commentaries of modern writers on Genesis, Psalms, Ecclesiastes, and Josue, you would find that all agree in explaining literally (**ad litteram**) that the sun is in the heavens and moves swiftly around the earth, and that the earth is far from the heavens and stands immobile in the center of the universe. Now consider whether the Church could encourage giving to Scripture a sense contrary to the holy Fathers and all the Latin and Greek commentators.*
 7. *Nor may it be answered that this is not a matter of faith, for if it is not a matter of faith from the point of view of the subject matter, it is on the part of the ones who have spoken. It would be just as heretical to deny that Abraham had two sons and Jacob twelve, as it would be to deny the virgin birth of Christ, for both are declared by the Holy Ghost through the mouths of the prophets and apostles.*
 8. *Third. I say that if there were a true demonstration that the sun was in the center of the universe and the earth in the third sphere, and that the sun did not travel around the earth, but the earth circled around the sun, then it would be necessary to proceed with great caution in explaining the passages of Scripture which seemed contrary, and we would rather have to say that we did not understand them, than to say that something was false which has been demonstrated.*
-

9. *But I do not believe that there is any such demonstration; none has been shown to me.*
10. *It is not the same thing to show that the appearances are saved by assuming that the sun is at the center and the earth is in the heavens, as it is to demonstrate that the sun is really in the center and the earth in the heavens.*
11. *I believe that the first demonstration might exist, but I have grave doubts about the second, and in a case of doubt, one may not depart from the Scriptures as explained by the holy Fathers.*
12. *I add that the words "the sun also riseth and the sun goeth down, and hasteneth to the place where he ariseth, etc." were those of Solomon, who not only spoke by divine inspiration but was a man wise above all others and most learned in human sciences and in the knowledge of all created things, and his wisdom was from God. Thus it is not too likely that he would affirm something which was contrary to a truth either already demonstrated, or likely to be demonstrated.*
13. *And if you tell me that Solomon spoke only according to the appearances, and that it seems to us that the sun goes around when actually it is the earth which moves, as it seems to one on a ship that the beach moves away from the ship, I shall answer that one who departs from the beach, though it looks to him as though the beach moves away, he knows that he is in error and corrects it, seeing clearly that the ship moves and not the beach. But with regard to the sun and the earth, no wise man is needed to correct the error, since he clearly experiences that the earth stands still and that his eye is not deceived when it judges the sun to move, just as it is not deceived when it judges that the moon and stars move.*
14. *And that is enough for the present. I salute Your Reverence and ask God to grant you every happiness.*

Fraternally,
 Cardinal Bellarmine
 12 April 1615

Cardinal Bellarmine assures us that the consent of the Fathers and their commentators is **unanimous** in holding a geocentric and geostatic view of the universe based on Holy Scripture (#6). Just how far the contemporary Church has departed from Catholic tradition is emphasized by this as well as by the other points of Cardinal Bellarmine's Letter, for he refuses to recognize the distinction, rejected also in our times by Benedict XV and Leo XIII, between references to physical things and supernatural facts (#7) as dividing truth from possible error in Holy Scripture. Fr. Jerome Langford is of the modernist mentality and reads the *Decree of Trent* according to Galileo: "... the Fathers had to affirm, explicitly or implicitly, that the text under consideration pertained to a matter of faith or morals."²⁰ But as we have already shown, **this is not what Trent said** nor could have so said because both Benedict XV and Leo XIII have emphatically reaffirmed the integrity of Holy Scripture in all its parts and all its meanings, both physical and spiritual, both natural and supernatural.

²⁰Idem., pp.62-63

Galileo and the heliocentrists or Copernicans attacked a **truth of faith**, namely, that Holy Scripture is inspired and inerrant **in all its parts** and that **we may not depart** from the common agreement of the Fathers in our interpretations.

Besides these distinctions, there is the **authority of the Church** as the one guardian and only true interpreter of Holy Scripture. **Vatican I**, *Canons and Decrees*, Chapter III: Of Faith, says:

... all those things are to be believed with divine and Catholic faith which are contained in the Word of God,, written or handed down, and which the Church, either by a solemn judgment or by her_ordinary teaching (magisterium), proposes for belief as having been divinely revealed. ... although faith is above reason, there can never be any real discrepancy between faith and reason; since the same God Who reveals mysteries and infuses faith has bestowed the light of reason on the human mind, and God cannot deny Himself, nor can truth ever contradict truth. The false appearance of such a contradiction is mainly due, either to the dogmas of faith not having been understood and expounded according to the mind of the Church, or to the inventions of opinion having been taken for the verdicts of reason. We define, therefore, that every assertion contrary to a truth of enlightened faith is utterly false. Further, the Church, which together with the apostolic office of teaching, has received a charge to guard the deposit of faith, derives from God the right and the duty of proscribing false science, lest any should be deceived by philosophy and vain deceit (can.ii) Therefore all faithful Christians are not only forbidden to defend as legitimate conclusions of science such opinions as are known to be contrary to the doctrines of faith, especially if they have been condemned by the Church, but are altogether bound to account them as errors which put on the fallacious appearance of truth. (D1797-8)

It may be objected that based on the Decree of Infallibility from *Vatican I* -- which declares papal infallibility only when "he defines a doctrine regarding faith or morals to be held by the universal Church" [D18391 -- the Church could not or did not pronounce definitively or infallibly upon a teaching of Holy Scripture that concerned matters of physical science. However, it seems to me that **this is precisely what we are to learn from the Galileo case** -- that the Church, by reason of Her appointment as supreme guardian and interpreter of Holy Scripture and the entire deposit of faith, **can and must tell us the true meaning of Scripture**, and this infallibly, whether the Scripture speaks in that instance of natural or of supernatural things. This is exactly what the Church did in the Galileo case, and many say, with good reason, that the Church's decisions and pronouncements in the Galileo case **were indeed infallible**. And so it would seem from the words of *Vatican I* especially regarding the Church's "**right and duty of proscribing false science.**" The Fathers of *Vatican I* may have had in mind the evolution gaining such strength as "science" during those latter years of the 19th century, but they may also have had in mind the Galileo case, as will appear in the third paper of this series on the subject.

Contrary to what most modern commentators on the Galileo case maintain, Cardinal **Bellarmino did not make any mistake** except to believe (#2) what the Lutheran theologian Osiander said in his Preface to the book of Copernicus -- that Copernicus himself did not believe his theory to be fact but took it only as a convenient hypothesis. After **four centuries** of experiments and mathematical demonstrations, **there is still nothing** remotely resembling an irrefutable, demonstratively necessary proof of the heliocentric theory.

One of the most touted of the so-called proofs of the heliocentric theory is the Foucault Pendulum. Here is what a very competent engineer and long-time student of heliocentrism says about this famous gadget:

*There are some interesting things about these **Foucault Pendulum (FP)** displays that I never thought about before. They are centerpieces in some of the most influential places in the world. And they are built like altars, marble railings, floor stars and all. It shows how much the geocentricity-heliocentricity controversy means to those in power and just how important it is to them to **prove** that the Bible is wrong. The longest one is I think in the cathedral in Leningrad which the communists put up when they took over that church. ... The UN building has one, too. There they are, mesmerizing millions. Many, many shorter ones are put up in schools and colleges to **brainwash the students**. These are the ones with the most hidden gadgets to make them do what they do. There is a reason for all the emphasis on a physical demonstration of the earth's rotation, so if we can poke a few holes in the **FP** image, it will do some good. And it's **loaded with philosophical and religious aspects**, in the guise of physics. ...²¹ (Emphases added)*

Equally impressive are the words of Jewish columnist A. Goldberg:

*Now today everybody "just knows" that the earth goes round the sun (heliocentrism). Yet all attempts to show that the earth is moving have failed: "We cannot feel our motion through space; nor has any experiment ever proved that the earth actually is in motion." Invoked "proofs" such as the phenomenon of the earth's obliqueness (slight flattening at the poles), the Doppler effect (the apparent change in frequency of light as it moves towards or away from the observer), the Sagnac effect (stellar aberration and parallax), nutation, Herschel's star streaming, the Coriolis forces (the cause of water tending to drain clockwise in the northern hemisphere, anti-clockwise in the southern), and Foucault's pendulum ... are in fact more easily explained by the entire universe rotating about the earth once a day. And the toil of thousands of exasperated researchers ... **all conclusively failed** to show any rotational movement whatsoever. The result showed that the **earth is absolutely stationary**, and that it is the rest of the universe that is doing the moving. "Unthinkable!" to the bamboozled modern mind, "with undesirable philosophical implications"; **evolution is more unthinkable**, yet most of mankind hold by it -- "proclaim a lie again and again and in due course all people will believe you" (the late unlamented Goebbels).*

*All the research confirms or favours the Biblical Tychonic schema, with all the planets of the solar system (except the earth, which is **not a planet**) in epicyclic retinue about the sun ... with the whole array, moon and stars, centered on the earth ... the discovery that quasars (powerful radio sources) are distributed in vast concentric shells equally distributed about the earth, with the earth at dead centre, confuting the **atheistic Cosmological Principle** (that any point in the universe is the same as any other: **a-centrism**), and that the earth does indeed reside at the centre of a spherical universe, bounded by a shell of stars and galaxies -- the "stellatum" of the ancients, and surrounding them, the mysterious ... border of this physical universe. Gravity is a complete mystery, science being unable to ascertain its nature, source, propagation, or even just what it is. Gravity alone cannot account for the constant centrifugal*

²¹ R.G. Elmendorf, Glenshaw PA 15116. Letter of 15 April 1992. See also Marshall Hall's book (note 7). Hall has observed some of the "hidden gadgets" and describes them.

equilibrium and military precision of the celestial orbs, which by nature should quickly degenerate into awesome instability, were it not for the sustaining word of God ...

*The **Copernican heresy** so thoroughly reversed man's view of the cosmos, the social order and hierarchy of moral values, that it was as if a new species of being had arisen; no doctrine has had a more pernicious influence on the human spirit. The English, French and American revolutions **stemmed from it**, and it **paved the way for Darwinism, Marxism, Nietzsche, atheistic existentialism and Einstein**. Many wax lyrical of the "beauty and elegance" of the latter's Theory of Relativity, and all motion is relative, and that there are no absolute terms of reference. But it is **now being shown to be inconsistent**, contradictory, riddled with anomalies, and as formulated **cannot be correct**, violating the laws of thermodynamics. The more honest savants summarise thus: "**The earth is indeed the centre of the universe**. The arrangement of **quasars on spherical shells** is only with respect to the earth. These shells would disappear if viewed from anywhere else. This means that the Cosmological Principle will have to go. Also it implies that a coordinate system fixed to the earth is the preferred frame of reference in the universe; consequently both the Special and General Theory of Relativity must be abandoned for Cosmological purposes." (**Astrophysics and Space Science**, no. 43). But worse, it has led to the modern doctrine of moral relativism, that there are no moral absolutes, which results in anarchism, hedonism, despair and meaningless, mechanistic, impersonal materialism. ... **Geocentrism, like Creationism, arouses much fear and ire**, as it would mean millions of books will have to be rewritten, and most scientists would lose face, let alone the resulting **Kulturkampf**. This, despite the overwhelming evidence and the fact that Geocentrism is used as the truest possible model in all the applied sciences, eg. practical astronomy, navigation, rocketry, oceanography and gyroscopy. ... What we see in the sky, the evidence of the senses and common experience of all men, a diurnally (daily) rotating starry vault about the earth, is the true state of affairs, not a deplorable illusion. The real world is as it is perceived to be.²² (Emphases added)*

No, Cardinal Bellarmine did **not** make a mistake.

In the latter part of his "Letter to the Grand Duchess Christina" Galileo undertakes to explain the miracle of Joshua's Long Day (**Joshua 10**) according to the Copernican theory which, he says, is the only system that allows the day to be lengthened and thus uphold the literal Scripture. On the face of it, one is surely entitled to wonder how it can be that the sun is commanded to stand still in a cosmos wherein the sun is fixed at the center of the universe. But Galileo has proven, to his satisfaction, by his discoveries of the sun spots with his telescope, that the **sun revolves** on its own axis. So **let's grant him that much** in this attempt of his to twist the Scriptures into the new cosmology.

Now let us consider the extent to which it is true that the famous passage in Joshua may be accepted without altering the literal meaning of its words, and under what conditions the day might be greatly lengthened by obedience of the sun to Joshua's command that it stand still.

If the celestial motions are taken according to the Ptolemaic system, this could never happen at all.²³

In his earlier *Letter to Castelli* Galileo had emphasized the doubled motion of the sun, saying

²²Amnon Goldberg, *The Earth is Established -- It Cannot be Moved*, The Jewish Tribune, London, 11 January 1990.

²³R.G. Elmendorf. Letter 9 Sept 1992. Contact Mr. Elmendorf [208 S Magnolia Dr, Glenshaw PA 15116, USA] for more info on geocentrist theories of the cosmos.

... it is moved with two motions, that is, an annual motion from west to east and an opposite diurnal motion from east to west.

He then goes on to force his opponents to admit that only the annual motion is the sun's "proper motion" while the diurnal motion is not the sun's at all but that of the Primum Mobile which moves the sun and planets and all the stars "almost contrary to their natural and proper motions eastward."

From this he proceeds to assert that since day and night are the effects of the Primum Mobile in the Ptolemaic system, then if God had stopped the sun, as Holy Scripture says, the day would have been shortened instead of lengthened.

Whether this is a fair assessment of the Ptolemaic system or not, I leave to the experts to determine. What we can assert here is that in reality (a geocentric and geostatic system) there are not two contrary motions of the sun. Rather, there is but one composite motion that "ascends" toward the north in summer and "descends" toward the south in winter as it revolves around the earth from east to west. This movement is observable by all of us and can be diagrammed thus:

PHOTOCOPY OF A HAND SKETCH AVAILABLE ON REQUEST
[from P. Ellwanger: refer to Note 2]

The sun's path is thus a spiral one. As the sun first moves up and then down while going around the earth in the same direction.

Now it may be, as Galileo says, referring to Dionysius the Ateopagite, "that in this miracle it was the *primum mobile* that stood still, and that when this halted, all the celestial spheres stopped as a consequence -- an opinion held by St. Augustine himself, and confirmed by the Bishop of Avila. And indeed Joshua did intend the whole system of celestial spheres to stand still, as may be deduced from his simultaneous command to the moon, ..." ²⁴ All this can be granted. But where **Galileo distorts** both Scripture and common sense is in **his contention** that "if we were to accept the Ptolemaic system it would be necessary to interpret the words [of Scripture] in some sense different from their strict meaning." ²⁵

For one thing, **Galileo has bamboozled us** all along into forgetting that in the Copernican system, the sun is not moving at all. Therefore, Joshua's command makes no sense. But he has assured us that the sun does revolve on its own axis. **How would that cause day and night?** How does Galileo get around these objections? He seizes upon the phrase: "in the midst of the heavens". So the sun stood still in the midst of heaven, and hastened not to go down the space of one day. (**Joshua 10:13**)

To appreciate **Galileo's skill at throwing verbal dust** around, you must read the entire passage, but I will give only the concluding part:

But ... in agreement with the Copernican system, we place the sun in the "midst" -- that is, in the center -of the celestial orbs and planetary rotations, as it is most necessary to do. Then take any hour of the day, either noon, or any hour as close to evening as you please, and the day would be lengthened and all the celestial revolutions stopped by the sun's standing still in

²⁴ Drake. *Discoveries and Opinions*, p.211-212.

²⁵ Idem.

*the midst of the heavens; that is, in the center, where it resides. This sense is much better accommodated to the words, quite apart from what has already been said; for if the desired statement was that the sun was stopped at midday, the proper expression would have been that it "stood still at noonday," or "in the meridian circle," and not "in the midst of the heavens." For the true and only "midst" of a spherical body such as the sky is its center.*²⁶
(Emphasis added)

What a trickster! Not only does the sun never really move in order to stand still in this explanation, but **Galileo will amend the Scriptures** to fit Copernican/Galilean cosmology. Where, then, is the miracle? It has been explained away, or, the sun simply continued to do what it was doing -- nothing.

Let an expert have the final word. Arthur Koestler was as well aware as anyone of Galileo's rhetorical skills. Here is how he assesses the explanation of Joshua's Long Day according to Copernicus/Galileo:

*The final section of the **Letter to the Grand Duchess** is devoted to the miracle of Joshua. Galileo first explains that the sun's rotation around its axis is the cause of all planetary motion. "And just as if the motion of the heart should cease in an animal, all other motions of its members would cease, so if the rotation of the sun were to stop, the rotations of all the planets would stop too," Thus he not only assumed, with Kepler, the annual revolutions of the planets to be caused by the sun, but also their daily rotation around their axes -- an *ad hoc* hypothesis with no more "rigorous proof" than the analogy with the animal's heart. He then concludes that when Joshua cried: "Sun, stand thou still," the sun stopped rotating, and the earth in consequence stopped both its annual and daily rotation. But Galileo, who came so close to discovering the law of inertia, knew better than anybody that if the earth suddenly stopped dead in its track, mountains and cities would collapse like match-boxes; and even the most ignorant monk, who knew nothing about impetus, knew what happened when the horses reared and the mail-coach came to a sudden halt, or when a ship ran against a rock. If the Bible was interpreted according to Ptolemy, the sudden stand-still of the sun would have no appreciable physical effect, and the miracle remained credible as miracles go; if it was interpreted according to Galileo, Joshua would have destroyed not only the Philistines, but the whole earth. That Galileo hoped to get away with this kind of painful nonsense, showed his contempt for the intelligence of his opponents.*

*In the **Letter to the Grand Duchess Christina** the whole tragedy of Galileo is epitomized. Passages which are classics of didactic prose, superb formulations in defence of the freedom of thought, alternate with sophistry, evasion and plain dishonesty.*²⁷

The literature on Galileo is growing as the forces of this world move to consolidate their power structure. However, the **Decree** of the Holy Office **against Galileo** could not be more clear and definite with regard to the teaching of the Church. Here is the context of events and the decree of sentence as given by Fr. Jerome Langford:

²⁶ Idem., pp.214-215.

²⁷ Arthur Koestler. *The Sleepwalkers*. New York: Macmillan 1959, pp. 438-439.

... Wednesday, June 22, **1633**, Galileo was escorted to the Dominican Convent of Santa Maria Sopra Minerva and the sentence was read to him. It began with a review of the whole case, starting with the first denunciation of his opinion to the Holy Office in **1615**, then making public for the first time the verdict of the Theological Consultors in **1616**, on the two propositions which had been given them to examine, then recalling the audience with Cardinal Bellarmine and the injunction given to Galileo by the Commissary-General in **1616**, and **the decree of the Index** which had declared the opinion to be contrary to Holy Scripture. It cited the fact that Galileo had written the **Dialogue** in support of the **forbidden position** despite his protestations to the contrary. And even if he did not remember the personal injunctions, he had violated the admonition of Cardinal Bellarmine not to hold or defend the theory. Then it gave the sentence:

*We say, pronounce, sentence, and declare that you, the said Galileo, by reasons of the matters brought forth in trial, and by you confessed as above, have rendered yourself in the judgment of this Holy office **vehemently suspected of heresy**, namely, of having believed and held the **doctrine which is false** and contrary to the Sacred and Divine Scriptures, that the sun is the center of the world and does not move from east to west and that the earth moves and is not the center of the world; and that an opinion may be held and defended as probable after it has been **declared and defined** as **contrary to Holy Scripture**, and that consequently you have incurred all the censures and penalties imposed and promulgated in the sacred canon and other constitutions, general and particular, against such delinquents. From which we are content that you be absolved, provided that, first, with a sincere and unfeigned faith, you abjure, curse, and detest before us the **aforsaid errors and heresies** and every other error and heresy contrary to the Catholic and Apostolic Roman Church in the form to be prescribed by us for you.*

*And, in order that your **grave and pernicious error** and transgression may not remain altogether unpunished and that you may be more cautious in the future and an example to others that they may abstain from similar delinquencies, we ordain that the book **Dialogue** of Galileo Galilei be **prohibited by public edict**.*

We condemn you to the formal prison of the Holy Office subject to our judgment, and by way of salutary penance we prescribe that for three years to come, you repeat once a week the seven penitential psalms. Reserving to ourselves the right to moderate, commute, or take off, in whole or in part, the aforesaid penalties and penance.

And so we say, pronounce, sentence, declare, ordain, and reserve in this and in any other better way and form which we can and may rightfully employ.²⁸ (Emphases added)

Galileo's sentence was commuted; his daughter, a Carmelite nun, was allowed to recite the penitential psalms in his stead, and Galileo passed the remaining years of his life on his own country estate at Arcetri, near Florence, working on his final and probably favorite work, *Discourses on Two New Sciences* -- the work which has earned him the title of the Father of Modern Physics.

After giving the text of Galileo's abjuration, Fr. Langford says: "The condemnation of Galileo was now complete. The scientist had tried to batter down the old view of the universe **and the traditional exegesis of Scripture** by beating his **head against a wall** of conservatism and mocking those who felt that it should not be torn down ... "²⁹ Thus have the truths of faith, i.e., that the

²⁸ Same as Note 19, pp.153-154.

²⁹ Idem.

Scriptures are inerrant and that the Church can rule upon their meaning -- for all time -- these truths have been cast by Fr. Langford and most of his contemporaries, into the ephemerally temporal **political category** of a stiff-necked conservatism.

But the Decree of the Holy Office against Galileo has never been abrogated -- nor can it be. The wording is quite absolute. It is otherwise with the *Index of Forbidden Books*, as we shall see presently.

Living in the midst of triumphant modernism as we do today (in the **1990's**), it is easy to recognize in the Decree against Galileo what is perhaps the first specific condemnation of a primary modernist tenet: "that any opinion may be held and defended as probable [even] after it has been declared and defined as contrary to Holy Scripture." The modernists of today do this all the time. Witness Fr. Anthony Zimmerman's defense of polygenism, condemned by *Humani Generis* in **1950**; the questioning of the truths of faith concerning the Divinity of Our Lord, His knowledge of His Messianism and His physical Resurrection by the likes of Fr. Raymond Brown, and the wide-spread defiance of all the Church's most sacred and authoritative moral teachings by a host of so-called moral theologians.

Truly, **Galileo was the first modernist of note**, and the current attempts to exonerate him only prove that "birds of a feather flock together."

What is not to be found in the standard defenses of Galileo is the list of subsequent condemnations issued in the course of the 17th century and the many defenses of the geocentric system set forth by learned men of science in the Church as far as into the late 19th century. I am told by a friend that St. Anthony Mary Claret (**1807-1870**) was a firm geocentrist. And would it not be surprising to find a single saint of the **Church who was not?** Evidences for the infallibility of the Church's decision in the Galileo case will form **the matter of the last paper in this series.**

The Church was slow to give way to heliocentrism but less so in the case of evolution, though *Humani Generis* (**1950**) still holds. That the modern papacy, albeit unofficially, has recognized both errors as compatible with Holy Scripture, can only be a sign of that *apostasia* -- that gradual slipping and falling away from the total Deposit of Faith spoken of by St. Paul in **2 Thessalonians 2:3**. We may not believe "that in these latter times there has been spread a **general obscuring** of the more important truths pertaining to religion, which are the basis of faith and of the moral teachings of Jesus Christ." (D 1501) This was an error of the *Synod of Pistoia* and was condemned by Pope Pius VI in **1794**. The truths of Faith are never obscured -they are attacked and ignored and disbelieved. "The Light shineth in darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it." (**John 1:5**) It is the disbelief that constitutes the falling away from the Faith, and disbelief spreads when it is not vigorously combated.

Here is a brief summary of the gradual elimination of the Copernican heresy from the *Index*:

When the Index was revised under Pope Benedict XIV in 1757, largely through the influence of the Jesuit astronomer Boscovich, ... the phrase prohibiting all books teaching the immobility of the sun, and the mobility of the earth was omitted from the decrees. But in 1820, the Master of the Sacred Palace refused to permit the publication in Rome of a textbook on astronomy by Canon Settele, who thereupon appealed to the Congregations. They granted his request in August and two years later, issued a decree [1822] approved by Pope Pius VII ordering the Master of the Sacred Palace in future "not to refuse license for publication of books dealing with the mobility of the earth and the immobility of the sun according to the common opinion of modern astronomers" on that ground alone. The next edition of the Index

*did not contain the works of Copernicus, Galileo, Foscarini, à Stunica and Kepler which had appeared in every edition up to that time since their condemnation in 1616, [Kepler's in 1619].*³⁰

Insofar as our faith is based on the authority of God revealing, and insofar as Holy Scripture is the written word of God infallibly interpreted for us by the Church, a decline in Faith is brought about by a Scientism that **claims an authority higher** than that of Divine Revelation. As Scientism pushes out the intellectual content of divine faith in people's minds, Divine Revelation is stripped of any relation to vast areas of knowledge. It is from Holy Scripture that we learn the true story of our origins and early history, not from an evolutionary scientism. **It is from Holy Scripture** that we learn the true structure of the universe, not from pagan and atheistic cosmologists.

But if heliocentrism, a-centrism, and evolutionism are accepted as true, there is introduced into the mind a real **separation of science** defined as reason and the truths of Faith. This separation was more or less complete in Galileo when he stated that in the natural sciences, Holy Scripture held the last place. (*Letter to Castelli*)

What must be emphasized is that Galileo's science was and remains what is basically a **false science**, a scientism. That such is the case is proved by the fact that the two great errors which define its ideology - heliocentrism and evolution -- stand in direct and **defiant opposition to Holy Scripture** as the Church has traditionally interpreted it.

Holy Scripture **no longer holds any place** at all amongst the sciences but is said to have nothing whatsoever to tell us about the universe of nature -- for the Creator of allthings, while He is allowed by arrogant men to have revealed some vague spiritual truths, is deemed unable to communicate physical truths at all.

But that Holy Scripture as interpreted by the Church is the basis not only of our divine faith but also the guide and guarantee of attaining truth in the natural sciences is again brought home to us in the case of Georges Comte de Buffon (1707-1788). John C. Greene in his excellent survey of the rise of evolutionism in the natural sciences says of Buffon:

His views were sufficiently unsettling to provoke censure by the clergy. ...The first three volumes of the Natural History had slipped through the royal censorship in 1749, but Buffon was forced to preface the fourth volume, published in 1753, with a formal retraction of the heretical opinions expressed in the first, particularly those contained in his theory of the earth. In answer to the charges leveled against him by the theological faculty of Paris, Buffon made a solemn declaration: "That I have no intention of contradicting the text of Scripture; that I believe firmly everything related there concerning the creation, whether as to the order of time or as to the actual circumstances, and that I abandon whatever concerns the formation of the earth in my book, and in general everything which could be contrary to the narration of Moses, having presented my hypothesis concerning the formation of planets only as a pure supposition of philosophy." The Theologians were apparently satisfied with this, but they were

³⁰ Dorothy Stimson. *The Gradual Acceptance of the Copernican theory of the Universe*. Peter Smith, 1972. Originally published 1917. pp. 69-70.

*to discover twenty-five years later, when Buffon published his Epochs of Nature, (1788) that the heretic never really abandoned his theory of the earth.*³¹

The same has been said of Galileo by Dorothy Stimson and others, that "he **plainly perjured himself**" at his trial.

With scientists like Buffon and Galileo, not to mention many others of more recent vintage, Satan carries on his plans for disorder in the world to bring down the Church and destroy souls. A **false science**, condemned by *Vatican I Council*, continues to deceive many Catholics who strive to reconcile this false science with the truths of Faith. Unfortunately, they are aided and abetted by apostate theologians. But such an **unnatural yoking of truth with error** cannot hold for long, and Our Lady has promised that at the last, Her Immaculate Heart will triumph. The truth of God, Her Spouse the Holy Spirit, and Her unparalleled Purity are really the same.

This paper is the first in a trilogy of studies:

- I. Galileo's Heresy**
- II. Galileo's Empiricism**
- III. Was It / Is It Infallible?**

Paula Haigh • Nazareth Village I – #102 • POB 1000 • Nazareth KY 480048 • USA

Written in 1992; revised & computerized in 1999

origins@ev1.net

³¹ John C. Greene. *The Death of Adam*. Ames, Iowa State University Press, 1955, pp.58-59