March 7, 2011

To:

Dr. Ben Wiker
Drew Mariani
Cassandra Everts
Fr. Francis Hoffman

Dear Ben, Drew, Cassandra, and Fr. Hoffman,

Greetings to you in the Lord of our great Catholic Church.

I am writing to all of you regarding the program that aired on Feb. 28 on the *Drew Mariani Show* in which Dr. Ben Wiker was a guest. He discussed issues regarding cosmology and cosmogony.

Ben, I think the last time we met was at Madonna House in Birmingham Alabama about ten years ago when we were both doing programs for EWTN. A lot has happened since then.

Let me first say, Ben, that I think your motives for doing such programs and writing your books are admirable. You are trying to show the world that the Catholic Church is not against science, and thus the world should cease making the Church an anti-science strawman to ridicule. So I don't write this letter to attack you or your motives. Please understand that I stand with you in trying to protect the Church, especially from the disaster that befell her after the Galileo affair. My only concern is that, according to the scientific evidence to which you may not be privy, I believe you are going about it in the wrong way.

The first caller on Mr. Mariani's program was a geocentrist who mentioned the fact that if we see the same thing all around us in space, this suggests that we are in the center of it all. This is otherwise known as the isotropy of space. Your retort, which used the example of the homogeneity of the rising raisin bread, is the typical answer given by modern cosmology, but it really can't be used any longer. There are two reasons why.

The first deals with the di- quad- and octupole alignment of the Cosmic Microwave Background Radiation (CMBR) with our ecliptic and equinoxes. I could site dozens of peer-reviewed papers for you, but I can make it very simple by citing the leading astrophysicists today, Dr. Laurence Krauss, who teaches at Arizona State University. Confronted by the CMBR alignment with us here on Earth, Krause admits that Copernican cosmology could be all wrong and that we may soon have to accept that the Earth is in the center of the universe. In an article on-line titled: "The Energy of Empty Space that Isn't Zero" that you can get at:

(http://www.edge.org/3rd_culture/krauss06/krauss06.2_index.html)

Krauss says the following:

> "Alan Guth was sitting next to me at the conference when I handed him the article. He was smiling, but he always smiles, so I didn't know what to make much of it, but I think that the results that came out of the cosmic microwave background (CMB) studies were twofold.
>
> "Indeed, as the Times suggested, they validate the notions of inflation. But I think that's just journalists searching for a story. Because if you look at what quantitatively has come out of the new results they're exactly consistent with the old results. Which also validate inflation. They reduce the error bars a little bit, by a factor of two. I don't know if that is astounding. But what is intriguing to me is that while everything is consistent with the simplest models, there's one area where there's a puzzle. On the largest scales, when we look out at the universe, there doesn't seem to be enough structure — not as much as inflation would predict. Now the question is, is that a statistical fluke?
>
> "That is, we live in one universe, so we're a sample of one. With a sample of one, you have what is called a large sample variance. And maybe this just means we're lucky, that we just happen to live in a universe where the number's smaller than you'd predict. But when you look at CMB map, you also see that the structure that is observed, is in fact, in a weird way, correlated with the plane of the earth around the sun. Is this Copernicus coming back to haunt us? That's crazy. We're looking out at the whole universe. There's no way there should be a correlation of structure with our motion of the earth around the sun — the plane of the earth around the sun — the ecliptic. That would say we are truly the center of the universe.
>
> "The new results are either telling us that all of science is wrong and we're the center of the universe, or maybe the data is simply incorrect, or maybe it's telling us there's something weird about the microwave background results and that maybe, maybe there's something wrong with our theories on the larger scales. And of course as a theorist I'm certainly hoping it's the latter, because I want theory to be wrong, not right, because if it's wrong there's still work left for the rest of us.

In other words, your raisin bread analogy simply won't stand scientific scrutiny any longer. Not only is the CMBR isotropic and non-homogeneous (as the caller pointed out to you) it is also polar, with all the axis of the poles pointing back to our ecliptic and equinoxes. The obvious question is: how does the remote CMBR know we are even here, much less pointing directly at us? This is evidence you need to incorporate in your apologetic, that is, if you intend to make a more current bridge between religion and science.

Further evidence hails from the periodicities in galaxy distribution. Again, I could give you a plethora of peer-reviewed papers to read up on this, but the gist is that the recent Sloan Digital Sky Survey (SDSS) of 2005 showed quantized galaxy distribution in the range of $z = 0.0246$ that begin in a void area. In other words, the galaxies are preponderantly arranged in concentric circles around the Earth, since we are in the void area. If you take the data out to the farthest reaches of the SDSS survey, it shows seven concentric circles of galaxies around the Earth. If you would like to see a picture of the Fourier analysis mapping I can get you one. Again, these are peer-reviewed papers accepted by such prestigious journals as *Physical Review* and *Astrophysics and Space Science*.

Again, the point I'm trying to make is that the raisin cake analogy does not fit the scientific evidence. Krauss and his colleagues have admitted it (yet are not so quick to advertise it to their students). Krauss' only recourse is to suggest that there is something wrong with the data, but that, of course, is only wishful thinking. In fact, the peer-reviewed papers say it is 99.99% certain. He is left with the unthinkable alternative that he can't refute – the Earth is in the center of the universe.

I can also give you more such evidence if I show you peer-reviewed papers on gamma-ray bursters, x-ray bursters, quasars, binary stars, globular clusters and BL lacertaes. They all show quantized distribution around the Earth, which means that Earth is in the center of it all.

Hubble was one of the first to see this truth. In his 1937 book, *The Observational Approach to Cosmology*, he said these words when he saw the red shift that showed Earth in the center of it all:

> "…Such a condition would imply that we occupy a unique position in the universe, analogous, in a sense, to the ancient conception of a central Earth.…This hypothesis cannot be disproved, but it is unwelcome and would only be accepted as a last resort in order to save the phenomena. Therefore we disregard this possibility...the unwelcome position of a favored location must be avoided at all costs... such a favored position is intolerable…. Therefore, in order to restore homogeneity, and to escape the horror of a unique position…must be compensated by spatial curvature. There seems to be no other escape."

What is the "spatial curvature" that will give Hubble a chance to escape an Earth-centered universe? Well, it's the same thing as your expanding raisin cake. If one curves space and pretends that the curve is expanding, the center becomes indefinable. How do you get an expanding universe? Well, you have to invent the Big Bang, and you must also say that the red shift measures how fast the Big Bang expands. But the first problem they encountered with this *ad hoc* explanation is that Hubble's red shift equation only produced a billion years of time, but evolutionists (such as Lemaitre) were already declaring the Earth was 4.5 billion years old based on the geologic column (which, by the way, because you have not opened yourself up to alternate theories of sedimentology and stratigraphy, you keep insisting that the Earth is very old, but without any proof).

Since they couldn't have the Earth older than the universe, they had to tweak Hubble's expansion "constant" to coincide with evolution, which they did three times. But the alternative, as Hubble himself admitted, was very simple – the Earth was in the center and no expansion of the universe was needed. Red shift could be explained as an intrinsic phenomenon, which was Hubble's alternative choice. But obviously, no one, including Hubble, wanted an Earth-centered universe since that fact would force them to admit that the Catholic Church was right all along when it condemned Galileo's heliocentrism as formally heretical in 1633. They were desperate to promote an alternative, but getting it to work correctly was the big problem. Hubble remarks about the dilemma in his book:

> "Theories may be revised, new information may alter the complexion of things, but meanwhile we face a rather serious dilemma. Some there are who stoutly maintain that the Earth may well be older than the expansion of the universe. Others suggest that in

> those crowded, jostling yesterdays, the rhythm of events was faster than the rhythm of the spacious universe today; evolution then proceeded apace, and, into the faint surviving traces, we now misread the evidence of a great antiquity."

Even after they tweaked Hubble's expansion equation as much as they could, they still didn't have enough time for evolution. So Lemaitre proposed that the Big Bang expanded in "starts and stops." In other words, the universe would expand for a while and then stop. While it stopped, evolution could catch up, and then the universe would resume its expansion. There was, of course, no proof for this *ad hoc* scenario. It was just a convenient way to pacify the science community that the universe was billions of years old and that evolution and cosmology were a perfect match. They weren't, and it would soon come to roost years later.

You had also mentioned Stephen Hawking's book, *The Grand Design*, on Mr. Mariani's show. Fortunately, I read that book about two months ago so I was able to follow your argument. I applaud you for showing the bankruptcy of Hawking's desire to take God out of the picture, but I must say, however, that if you are a follower of Big Bang cosmology then your explanation really didn't escape the dilemma in which Hawking finds himself. Wanting the Big Bang is one thing; showing how it could possibly work is quite another.

You had criticized Hawking for promoting M-theory, but the truth is, in order to make the Big Bang work it will require something like M-theory to even attempt to hold it all together. Although Mr. Mariani pointed out that Georges Lemaitre, a Catholic priest, had invented the Big Bang (and by this he implied that the Catholic Church is not against science), the fact is that neither Lemaitre nor anyone else could ever get the Big Bang to work correctly. If you remember reading in his book, Hawking says on pages 161-164 that the universe is very finely tuned. Everything has to fit together precisely otherwise nothing will work. Well, the problem with the Big Bang, as Hawking so astutely points out, is that it will require a melding of Quantum Mechanics and General Relativity which, heretofore, have been absolutely unmeldable. M-theory was invented by Ed Witten to try to unite the two opposing theories. Of course, M-theory hasn't yet been successful in doing so because it itself is a flawed theory (as even you pointed out). But M-theory, even though it is hanging on by a thread, is all they have left to give some semblance of scientific logic to the Big Bang. Every other theory has failed, and this is why, at the end of his book, Hawking can only hope for a resolution someday in the future.

Interpreting the red shift as an expansion seemed like a good idea to Hubble and his colleagues, since it gave at least a temporary escape from an Earth-centered universe. But they had an additional problem. There was hardly any energy to propel the expansion. In fact, if they added up all the matter and energy they saw in the universe, they only had 4% of what they needed to allow Newton's and Einstein's force laws to make the expansion work. In other words, without that needed matter and energy, the Big Bang will be the Big Bust. So Hawking, like everyone else in modern cosmology today, is looking for this 96% missing matter and energy, and it has been appropriately dubbed Dark Matter and Dark Energy. M-theory tries to find a bridge between the incompatible theories of QM and GRT so that the Dark Energy and Dark Matter might have a non-dubious origin. QM, by itself, can't produce the needed energy since it produces 10 to the 120th power too much. The upshot is, modern cosmology is in a desperate attempt to keep the universe

expanding, otherwise, they will all have to become geocentrists – the very think Hubble feared most of all.

In fact, there was a recent article in *Physical Review* of 2008 titled: "Living in a Void: Testing the Copernican Principle with Distant Supernovae," that said modern cosmology's problem of not being able to find the needed Dark Matter and Dark Energy could be solved quite easily if we adopted a geocentric universe. *ScienceDaily* picked up on the *Physical Review* report and published an article in 2008 titled: "Dark Energy: Is it Merely and Illusion?" and said the following:

> "Dark energy is at the heart of one of the greatest mysteries of modern physics, but it may be nothing more than an illusion, according to physicists at Oxford University. The problem facing astrophysicists is that they have to explain why the universe appears to be expanding at an ever increasing rate. The most popular explanation is that some sort of force is pushing the acceleration of the universe's expansion. That force is generally attributed to a mysterious dark energy. Although dark energy may seem a bit contrived to some, the Oxford theorists are proposing an even more outrageous alternative. They point out that it's possible that we simply live in a very special place in the universe – specifically, we're in a huge void where the density of matter is particularly low. The suggestion flies in the face of the Copernican Principle, which is one of the most useful and widely held tenets in physics. Copernicus was among the first scientists to argue that we're not in a special place in the universe, and that any theory that suggests that we're special is most likely wrong. The principle led directly to the replacement of the Earth-centered concept of the solar system with the more elegant sun-centered model. Dark energy may seem like a stretch, but it's consistent with the venerable Copernican Principle. The proposal that we live in a special place in the universe, on the other hand, is likely to shock many scientists."

As I said earlier, modern science has been pushed to the brink of having to accept geocentrism even more now since their "homogeneous" Cosmic Microwave Background Radiation has turned out to be quite anisotropic at the outer edges, creating poles that are aligned with our ecliptic and equinoxes; in addition to every other source of matter and energy they find in outer space that points to the earth being in the center of it all (e.g., galaxies, gamma ray bursts, etc.).

Of course, if the Big Bang isn't true, then neither are the great ages they give for the universe. I know you believe the Earth is old, but I am almost certain that you haven't considered the new evidence from stratigraphy and sedimentology which shows that the geological column is not confined to being produced over millions of years but could have been made in a matter of weeks or months. Catholic scientist Guy Berthault has done astounding work on this phenomenon. Other issues, for example, *Scientific American's* article in Dec. 2010 that admitted the existence of soft tissue such as collagen and red blood cells in a Tyrannosaurus Rex, demonstrates conclusively that the 70 million year age given to these creatures is preposterous since such soft tissue couldn't last even 70,000 years, much less 70 million.

I want to make a few more points before I close. The first concerns your new book, *The Catholic Church and Science: Answering the Questions and Exposing the Myths*. Last night I read your chapter

on the Galileo affair. First let me say that I admired your section on Copernicus. It's not often that historians will divulge the fact that Copernicus' model simply didn't work, and actually needed more epicycles to help it along than Ptolemy did. I also admired your consideration of the "relativity" dimension of heliocentrism and geocentrism, showing that modern science opts for more of an acentric point of view; and that because of that perspective no one can knock geocentrism as an alternative. If you haven't seen the quote from Einstein yet, allow me to give it to you:

> The struggle, so violent in the early days of science, between the views of Ptolemy and Copernicus would then be quite meaningless. Either coordinate system could be used with equal justification. The two sentences: "the sun is at rest and the Earth moves," or "the sun moves and the Earth is at rest," would simply mean two different conventions concerning two different coordinate systems.

I believe you mentioned the same principle on Mr. Mariani's show, but you followed it up later by saying "we know the sun revolves around the Milky Way and the earth revolves around the sun," which, if not qualified, is unexplained by the "acentric" perspective you had touted earlier in the program.

But my chief concern about your chapter on Galileo was precisely your treatment of Galileo. It seemed to me that you made a concerted effort to tone down the Church's condemnation of Galileo and heliocentrism. In fact, regarding the Church's condemnation of heliocentrism you said hardly anything at all; and at the same time that you reduced Galileo's condemnation to a "particular grade of heresy – not the most serious, but not trivial either." But how is the reader to know precisely what the "particular grade" was and precisely how "serious" it was unless you explain it to them? Since you immediately changed the subject in the next sentence, the reader gets the impression that the condemnation was really no big deal.

But the reality is quite different. The truth is, heliocentrism was judged as a "formal heresy" by the Sacred Congregation in 1633, and Pope Urban VIII not only accepted the Congregation's judgment, he sent out letters to all the papal nuncios and universities of Europe telling them of the Church's decision and requiring their allegiance. Prior to this, Urban was in protracted discussions with the Grand Duke of Tuscany, Cosimo Medici, telling the Duke of the utter heresy that Galileo was seeking to establish and that such a heresy would be very damaging for the Church unless checked.

The "particular grade of heresy" that you speak of was that Galileo was "vehemently suspect of heresy," and the very reason he could be "suspect" of heresy was that just prior to his sentence heliocentrism had been declared a formal heresy. The only reason Galileo was given a lower "grade" (viz., "vehemently suspect") and not actually declared "guilty of heresy" was that the Congregation could not determine whether Galileo really believed in his own heliocentric hypothesis. The fact that Galileo repented of his heliocentrism, which was noted in a letter he wrote to Francesco Rinuccini the year before he died (1542), shows that the Congregation's judgment was probably correct.

Incidentally, it would have been admirable if you had mentioned in your book that Pope Paul V's Commission of cardinals assigned by the Inquisition in 1616 had also concluded heliocentrism was a "formal heresy," which was the Church's answer to the treatise on heliocentrism published by Fr. Paolo Foscarini in 1615. And it would have been nice to see you mention that geocentrism was held in absolute consensus by the Church Fathers, and that Cardinal Bellarmine used the argument from the Council of Trent against Galileo that whatever the Fathers held in consensus had to be believed by Catholics. It would have also been nice to see you mention that the 1566 Tridentine catechism of Pius V held geocentrism as a teaching of the Church, a catechism made especially to summarize the doctrines of the Church.

I also think you should have done a little more research on the initial publication of Copernicus' book, *de Revolutionibus*. You claim on page 42 that "Protestants were the first to lodge Bible-based objections to Copernicanism," but the fact is the Church had already rejected Rheticus' 1541 book, *Narratio Prima*, on heliocentrism, which was published two years before Copernicus' *de Revolutionibus*, and placed it on the *Index of Forbidden Books* published between 1559-1593. And although, as you say, Luther was against Copernicus, it was the Lutheran, Andreas Osiander, that softened up Copernicus' book with a pleasant yet somewhat deceitful introduction in order to present it to Pope Paul III. But shortly after it was presented to Paul III, Catholic theologians sought for Paul III's rejection of the book. Bartolomeo Spina, the Master of the Sacred Palace from 1542 until his death in 1547, sought to have Copernicus' book banned, which was eventually carried out by his Dominican colleague Giovanimaria Tolosani, who died two years later in 1549, which was approved by the pope. Tolosani wrote a detailed geocentric treatise in 1546, which he dedicated to Paul III and which included an endorsement from Spina. In it Tolosani vehemently rejected Copernicus' universe and declared it an extreme danger to the faith precisely because of its attempt to deliteralize Sacred Scripture. As you can see, it was the Catholics that first rejected Copernicus, not the Protestants.

On the same page (45) you begin a long treatment of Galileo's apparent tendency toward atomism, and you then make the conjecture that this atomism was the main culprit in the Church's antagonism toward Galileo and that Copernicanism was more or less a side issue, if I am reading you correctly. Since you spend the next nine pages of your twenty-page chapter on this topic, I assume this is your thesis for the chapter. But it appears as if you are doing the same thing Redondi tried to do – get the Catholic Church off the hook for condemning Galileo and heliocentrism by refocusing the argument on a different topic. But the fact is, Ben, although there may be some concern that the Church was suspicious against Galileo due to atomism, the historical record shows that it was heliocentrism, and that alone, that came under the greatest suspicion and eventual condemnation, not only in 1633, but more importantly in 1616, so much so that in 1616 Galileo was given a canonical injunction not to speak or write about heliocentrism ever again. *The Assayer*, which you claim presented Galileo's atomism, wasn't written until 1623, so it seems your analysis is a bit anachronistic. Similarly, it was only Galileo's heliocentrism that was the object of Alexander VII's placement of Galileo's book on the Index in 1664. Atomism never came up for discussion, and we wouldn't expect it to, since Scripture doesn't talk about atomism, but it does talk about the sun going around the earth.

Another issue that you address in your chapter is that concerning John Paul II and the Church's present position regarding the Copernican theory. You state: "Obviously, the Church does not stand by its original condemnation of the Copernican theory (although, of course, we have moved far beyond Copernicanism in science)."

Allow me to offer another perspective. First, although you are certainly correct as you stated earlier in the chapter that modern science is more "relativistic" in its perspective of cosmology, the fact remains that either the universe rotates around a fixed earth or the earth rotates within a fixed universe, since we must explain how the seasons are created. So, in that sense, we have not "moved far beyond Copernicanism." That issue should be made clear to the reader. Relativism says that either one can be correct, but it does not tell us which one is correct.

Second, although in an unofficial sense one could possibly say that *certain prelates* in the Church do not stand by the Church's original condemnation of Copernicanism, it is not true to say that "the Church" herself does not stand by its original condemnation. The obvious reason is that there has been no official reversal by "the Church" of the canonical decree against either Galileo or Copernicanism stemming from the original 1616 or 1633 judgments. In fact, as late as 1965 when the Church was posed with the question of whether to address the Galileo affair at Vatican II, a sentence dealing with Galileo was excised from the drafts of Gaudium et spes. Prior to that, in 1941 the president of the Pontifical Academy of Science, Agostino Gemeli, stated: "…although Galileo did not provide a decisive demonstration of Copernicanism, neither did Newton, Bradley, or Foucault" (*Retrying Galileo*, p. 278).

You then say, "in 1992…Pope John Paul II declared that the Church should not have condemned Copernicanism and that the Church had mishandled the Galileo affair." This is at best a half truth. First, nowhere in John Paul II's speech to the Pontifical Academy of Science does he say he is speaking for "the Church," much less does he claim to be "declaring" an official statement for "the Church." It seems that you are trying to put more force on his speech by using the word "declared" since that word has historically carried the notion of ecclesiastical authority, but technically speaking, John Paul II did not "declare" any doctrine for the Church in his 1992 speech.

Second, if it's true, as you say, that John Paul II said "the Church" should not have condemned Copernicanism and that "the Church" had mishandled the Galileo affair, the logical consequence of this judgment is that, if "the Church" of yesterday was wrong, then either "the Church" of today and John Paul II can also be wrong. Ecclesiastically speaking, John Paul II is in no better position to judge the issue than his papal predecessors; and, if the matter is as "relative" as you claimed earlier in the book, then, scientifically speaking, John Paul II is likewise in no better position to judge the issue.

Third, John Paul II's 1992 speech is full of equivocal statements. I suggest you read Fr. Coyne's and Ernan McMullin's critique of it (and they are both heliocentrists). The 3000-word speech is all over the proverbial map, and it is full of historical mistakes and lacunas, including its attempt to blame the Galileo affair on "theologians" when in fact it was conducted by two popes and the head of the Sacred Congregation. The speech was written by Fr. Paul Poupard, a noted liberal from France.

You then say, “Nor was the Church now affirming Copernicanism – we know that neither the Earth nor our sun is the center of the universe, and the orbits of planets are not perfectly circular.”

First, you don’t know whether the Earth is in the center or not. According to the “relativistic” position that you proposed on Mr. Mariani’s show, the earth could indeed be in the center and you have no way of disproving it. And as we have seen above, using analogies of expanding raisin cakes is not going to prove an alternative case. Stephen Hawking himself says he has no proof for Copernicanism, but chooses it only because he wants to be “modest.” The first quote from Hawking is similar to the view the first caller used on Mr. Mariani’s show:

> ...all this evidence that the universe looks the same whichever direction we look in might seem to suggest there is something special about our place in the universe. In particular, it might seem that if we observe all other galaxies to be moving away from us, then we must be at the center of the universe

The second quote from Hawking is similar to the answer you used to respond to the caller, but notice that Hawking has no scientific assurance that his preferred view of the universe is correct, and neither can you:

> There is, however, an alternate explanation: the universe might look the same in every direction as seen from any other galaxy, too. This, as we have seen, was Friedmann’s second assumption. We have no scientific evidence for, or against, this assumption. We believe it only on grounds of modesty. (*A Brief History of Time*, pp. 42, 47).

More importantly, by your statement on page 54: “Nor was the Church now affirming Copernicanism – we know that neither the Earth nor our sun is the center of the universe, and the orbits of the plants are not perfectly circular,” it appears that you may be unaware of the real issues. First, whether the planets had circular or elliptical orbits was <u>never</u> an issue in the 1616 and 1633 condemnations of heliocentrism. In fact, the diversion you create by appealing to the “orbits” was the very diversion used in 1822 to get Canon Settele an imprimatur for his book on heliocentrism; and which also led to Galileo being taken off the Index in 1835. This is how it happened. Maurizio Olivieri, head of the commission in 1820, fabricated evidence that led both Pius VII in 1822 and Gregory XVI in 1835 to make dubious concessions to Galileo. Olivieri claimed that the Church of 1616 and 1633 had condemned Copernicanism only because Copernicanism did not include elliptical orbits of the planets, not because Copernicanism said the earth moved. He further argued that since the Church now knew in 1822 that the planets have elliptical orbits, then the Church’s 1616 and 1633 judgments were irrelevant. This was, of course, a lie. The 1616 and 1633 judgments were only concerned with one issue – whether the Earth moved, regardless whether the Earth moved in a circle or an ellipse. But no one could have discovered Olivieri’s twisting of the truth in either 1822 or 1835 since Napoleon had stormed the Vatican in 1809 and took all the Galileo records back to France and didn’t return them until 1845. In reality, the only concern of the 1616 and 1633 judgments was whether the sun or the earth moved at all, and if the earth didn’t move then it must occupy the center, facts which are clearly seen in the specific wording of the two condemnations in 1633:

> "The proposition that the sun is the center of the world and does not move from its place is absurd and false philosophically and formally heretical, because it is expressly contrary to the Holy Scripture."
>
> "The proposition that the Earth is not the center of the world and immovable but that it moves, and also with a diurnal motion, is equally absurd and false philosophically and theologically considered at least erroneous in faith."

Hence, I think you should see that your attempt to address the true nature of the Galileo affair by diverting our attention to elliptical orbits or atomism is very misleading.

One thing good I will say about John Paul II's speech to the PAS in 1992 is this. He stated:

> It is a duty for theologians to keep themselves regularly informed of scientific advances in order to examine…whether or not there are reasons for taking them into account in their reflection or for introducing changes in their teaching.

We have followed his advice and did our research into the "scientific advances." Those advances tell us that it's no longer permitted to use the expanding raisin bread argument to prove a heliocentric viewpoint. We have found that it is also incorrect to say the earth is not in the center since the periodicities of the energies and the matter in the universe are clearly in concentric shells around the earth. We have found that it is also incorrect to tout the Big Bang unless one has some scientific way of proving that it could happen. We've done our homework. So my hope is that you and your colleagues will consider "introducing changes in your teaching" because of these "scientific advances."

I want to make one other point. On the program you said that those who espouse a geocentric or young earth view of the world are "fundamentalists." You exact words were: "a fundamentalism that has bleeded into the Catholic Church." In light of the new cosmological evidence we are finding that demonstrates the distinct possibility that the Earth is in the center of the universe, may I suggest that perhaps it is you yourself that could be the "fundamentalist" here, that is, if you insist on holding to Copernican or Big Bang cosmology without considering the viable scientific alternatives that are against your "fundamental" cosmological beliefs.

Moreover, if you want to call us "fundamentalists" for adhering to the literal interpretation of Scripture, may I ask that you call to remembrance the fact that our most important doctrines in the Catholic Church are based on the literal interpretation of Scripture, to the consternation of the rest of the world. When Matthew recorded Jesus saying "This is my body," the Church had no qualms taking that statement in a very literal sense, even though neither the Church nor science could understand how Christ's body could replace the bread. Most Protestant denominations refused to interpret Mt 26:26 in a literal manner, and yet it's ironic that we call them "fundamentalists" when it concerns other portions of Scripture. In other words, "fundamentalism" has become a club with which we beat each other when we don't like someone interpreting Scripture literally, yet we all interpret Scripture literally when it is to our liking.

But our history shows that whether it was John 3:5 for baptism by water or John 20:23 for confession of sin to a priest or James 5:14 for the sacrament of the sick, the Catholic Church took the same "fundamentalist" approach to Scripture; and she did the same for all the passages concerning geocentrism, although no one had a clue how the laws of force and motion allowed it. They just accepted what Scripture said, just as they did Mt 26:26. So, I am forced to conclude that it's not really "fundamentalism," per se, that is the problematic issue for you, since the Church has a whole history of such "fundamentalism" when it comes to interpreting Scripture.

The problem is that you believe science has proven its case for heliocentrism and therefore anyone who reads the geocentric passages literally or who adheres to the 1900+ years of tradition supporting geocentrism must be wrong. But I think it's time for you to reassess that position. We have done our homework, Ben, and what we have found from some of the most famous and reputable scientists in the world today is that there is no longer any proof for heliocentrism and, in fact, all the scientific evidence gathered in the last 100 years is actually pointing toward geocentrism. As such, we deserve a place at the table and we should not be cavalierly dismissed as "fundamentalists."

There are reams of evidence just like this to which you need to avail yourself before you make any hard and fast conclusions about the age and placement of the Earth on programs like *Relevant Radio*. At the very least you should become familiar with this evidence and present it as a viable alternative to your view. I don't think that is too much to ask from a professed Catholic. What frightens me is that you or *Relevant Radio* would be tempted to silence alternative views, which from past history seems to be the case. Some of my patrons have tried for two years asking *Relevant Radio* for an opportunity to give the scientific evidence I am giving you, but someone behind the scenes always nixes it for one reason or another. That is very sad. It's funny, but I find much more acceptance to our scientific evidence among secular people than I do among a majority of my fellow Catholics. If *Relevant Radio* is still opposed to having me present the alternative, may I suggest a formal and public debate between us. If you give your ok, I will find a sponsor, date and location amenable to both of us. I think something like this is long overdue.

I hope that you and *Relevant Radio* will reconsider its position. As I said, because of the amazing scientific facts we have found we deserve a place at the table, especially since our Church has a whole history of teaching geocentrism as doctrine and actually condemned heliocentrism and never officially retracted it to this very day. The only difference between 19+ centuries of Church teaching on geocentrism and us today is that we have the science to show why the Holy Spirit led the Church to teach geocentrism beginning from the early Fathers to our modern day. The science is there, Ben. It's unfortunate that I find a lot of Catholics today don't want to look at the science, at least fairly and honestly, because they fear being ridiculed by the world and their fellow churchmen. I know it's hard to face, but it's not going to go away by putting our heads in the sand.

Lastly, I believe we are on the cusp of a revolution in science, which will then lead to a revolution in biblical interpretation and magisterial authority. It's exactly the kind of paradigm shift we need in a world that is on the brink of destruction. Who knows? Maybe we can turn it around and use this revolution to prepare people for the kingdom of God. Wouldn't you and *Relevant Radio* like to be one of the first to give this new information to the world? God is waiting for someone brave to do

so; and that's what it takes to preach the Gospel – bravery. St. Paul says in Romans 10 that "the heavens declare the glory of God…and their voice has gone out to all the world." What better way to show people the glory of God than revealing to them what our Fathers, medievals, catechisms and majority of popes taught us long ago – that the Earth is motionless in the center of the universe. We are special. We are God's. We are not, as Carl Sagan claimed, "a speck of dust in the remote recesses of the universe far away from any help from God." That is what is blocking them from seeing the truth. I'm asking that you help us remove that awful barrier.

God be with you.

Robert Sungenis

Sungenis@aol.com

Catholic Apologetics International
PO Box 278
State Line, PA 17263
1-800-531-6393