

## Response to David Palm Regarding the Galileo Trial

As recorded on the *Creative Minority Report* blog

August 30, 2011

**Palm:** thepalmhq said...I am presenting a series of postings on neo-geocentrism which may be of interest to some here at The Reluctant Traditionalist. (My posting on "Neo-Geo Double Standards and Exaggerations on Magisterial Documents" demonstrates that there are no papal documents that establish geocentrism as a matter of faith, per Joanna's question.)

**R. Sungenis:** Unfortunately, Mr. Palm hasn't allowed anyone to question his assertions, since he has disallowed responses in his blog combox. The same is true on Dave Armstrong's blog, which Mr. Palm uses to post his anti-geocentric writings. I believe this is inconsistent with the fact that he places numerous comments in the Creative Minority Report combox in objection to geocentrists who post here. Thus I am now responding on the same blog.

**Palm:** With regard to whether geocentrism and acentrism are just equally viable scientific views, the amount of special pleading necessary to uphold geocentrism indicates that they're. See e.g.

<http://forums.catholic.com/showpost.php?p=7615355&postcount=59>

**R. Sungenis:** Here are the claims from the URL Mr. Palm provided, and my responses:

**Claim:** Everywhere else in the observable universe, planets go around their stars and moons go around their planets. But ours is different, you know?

**R. Sungenis:** Planets and moons don't go around objects. They go around the center of mass. Modern science admits that the universe can revolve around a center of mass, and that Earth could be that center of mass. Newton said the same in the *Principia*: "That the center of the system of the world is immovable: this is acknowledged by all, although some contend that the Earth, others that the sun, is fixed in that center."

**Claim:** Everywhere else in the observable universe, massive objects rotate on their axis. But the Earth is different. Indeed, these other objects have an equatorial bulge from this rotation (just as you would expect). The Earth has an equatorial bulge too, but of course we know it's not from rotating on its axis, it's from the whole universe revolving around the Earth.

**R. Sungenis:** Here is what Arthur Eddington, a physicist in Einstein's day and supporter of Einstein's views, said on that issue: "The bulge of the Earth's equator may be attributed indifferently to the Earth's rotation or to the outward pull of the centrifugal force introduced when the Earth is regarded as non-rotating" (*Space, Time and Gravitation: An Outline of the General Relativity Theory*, 1923, pp. 24, 41).

**Claim:** Objects that revolve around other objects create tidal forces that slow the rotation. The Earth experiences a slowing of its rotation and you might think that this is from the moon's tidal force on the Earth. But no, actually the Earth doesn't rotate on its axis and it is really the entire universe that is slowing down, just in the amount that you would expect from the Moon's inertial drag.

**R. Sungenis:** No one has shown that either the solar or sidereal rotation has slowed down, at all. It is still 24 hours and 23hrs and 56 min., respectively. Hence, the universe hasn't slowed down. In fact, the geocentric model accommodates this fact much better than the heliocentric, since the sheer volume and mass of a rotating universe will create an inertia that is virtually unstoppable, whereas a tiny rotating Earth would be quite easy to disrupt, and should have been if Newton's laws are correct.

**Claim:** The Earth's rotation is influenced by earthly phenomena such as earthquakes. This is even true when the earthquakes are man-induced, by injecting material into faults. But it is not actually that the Earth's rotation is slowing, the whole universe's revolution around the Earth is influenced by earthquakes, natural and man-made.

**R. Sungenis:** No, since no one has measured a rotation that is less than 24 hours, ever. What Mr. Palm is referring to is the fact that Newtonian science demands that an earthquake (or the recent Tsumani in Japan) should slow the rotation of the earth and move its axis. In fact, the claim was recently made that the Tsunami moved the axis six inches and slowed the rotation proportionately. But no one measured any change in rotation or the axis. It is merely a mathematical calculation. Hence, we have a major contradiction between heliocentric science and Newtonian force laws, that is, heliocentric science says the Earth's rotation should have slowed down, but it hasn't. It is still as accurate as it was thousands of years ago, even with all the earthquakes we've had during that period.

Moreover, if the earth's axis changed by six inches, it would cause major disruptions in weather, magnetic fields, water levels, etc. And if we add up all the earthquakes and tsunamis the earth has sustained over its lifetime, the shift of the axis would be in miles, not inches; and the rotation would have slowed in hours, not minutes. But we don't see any of that happening, at all.

**Claim:** Stellar parallax should not exist in a universe that is centered on the Earth. It would never have been predicted in a geocentric model. But stellar parallax does exist. Oh, the neo-geos say, no problem. It's just that the movement of the stars just happens to be centered on the Sun, not the Earth (oh, the neo-geos don't want to say "centered", but that's what is required to explain it.)

**R. Sungenis:** Mr. Palm has admitted that stellar parallax will exist if the sun is aligned with the stars instead of the earth. Nothing further need be said.

**Claim:** So we calculate things like the geostationary positions for satellites and the Lagrange positions around the Sun based on a heliocentric model of the solar system. And lo and behold the magical "aether" just happens to push when you need it to push and relax when you need it to relax so that the neo-geo can claim that it all works out the same in his universe too (but--and this is important--he could NEVER have been able to do the same calculations and dare to try to place those satellites there.)

**R. Sungenis:** In the geocentric model, geostationary positions and Lagrange points have nothing to do with ether. The same centrifugal and Coriolis forces that determine the geostationary orbits and Lagrange points for the heliocentric system will do so in the geocentric.

**Claim:** As another observer noted on another forum: "To date not one prediction of that view of reality has been shown false.

**R. Sungenis:** Not true. The Japen tsumani, according to Newton's laws for a rotating earth, should have decreased the rotation to less than 24 hours, but it didn't. In fact, all the earthquakes and tsunamis throughout history should have slowed the earth's rotation considerably, but they never have. But the geocentric universe has no such problem. No earthquake or tsunami could ever decrease the rotation of the universe since its inertia is so large.

**Claim:** Considering the difficulties encountered explaining even simple observations like parallax or precession in the geocentric model, I'd say you are the one who is really funny. Indeed, if you did not know about parallax or precession, Geocentrism would never lead to their prediction.

**R. Sungenis:** There are no difficulties. Parallax is explained very easily by aligning the stars with the sun. Precession is always the result of a rotating object unless that object starts from a perfectly vertical position or undisturbed motion.

**Claim:** Indeed, unlike most scientific theories, Geocentrism must be from its first principles be adapted to observation after the fact. A simple geocentric model would not even predict the planetary motions as observed in the sky - hence you modified Tycho-brahe model.

**R. Sungenis:** No one "predicts" planetary motions with perfect accuracy. No one has figured out the perturbations of more than three moving bodies at a time. We observe the motions of the planets and seek a model that best explains those motions. But even elliptical orbits of the planets assigned by Kepler are still not completely accurate. Fourier analysis shows that there is no perfect solution to the movement of the planets.

**Claim:** All one needs to understand the majority of planetary observed motions in the standard model is to understand the above equation and the fact that planetary orbits are ellipses, not circles. "<http://www.theologyweb.com/campus/showthread.php?129749-Geocentrism-Discussion-II&p=2852292#post2852292>

**R. Sungenis:** No, because Tycho's model works just as efficiently with elliptical orbits as Kepler's model.

**Palm:** thepalmhq said... Catholics are simply following the teaching of Pope Leo XIII, who enshrined the teaching of the Doctors Augustine and Thomas by stating that, "the Holy Ghost 'Who spoke by them, did not intend to teach men these things (that is to say, the essential nature of the things of the visible universe), things in no way profitable unto salvation.' Hence they did not seek to penetrate the secrets of nature, but rather described and dealt with things in more or less figurative language, or in terms which were commonly used at the time, and which in many instances are in daily use at this day, even by the most eminent men of science" (Providentissimus Deus 18).

This teaching was repeated by Pope Pius XII in *Divino Afflante Spiritu* 3. Pope John Paul II taught that, "the Bible does not concern itself with the details of the physical world, the understanding of which is the competence of human experience and reasoning."

**R. Sungenis:** Yes, the Bible does not concern itself with the "details of the physical world" (e.g, atoms, forces, etc.) but it does concern itself with whether the Earth moves or not. It even uses the Earth's non-movement as an analogy to understand God's immutability (Psalm 93:1-2). Moreover, Leo XIII did not mention the earth or the sun in his encyclical, since both Augustine and Thomas were geocentrists. Moreover, Mr. Palm is suggesting that Leo XIII is making a subtle indictment of his papal predecessors without Leo providing any proof they were wrong.

Additionally, geocentrists also use figurative language regarding the sun's movements just as heliocentrists do (e.g., "the sun rose this morning"), so the argument cannot be based on the idea that the Fathers used different language than us. We all use the same figurative language. But when it came to deciding what body revolved, the Fathers were unanimous, with crystal clear and non-figurative language, that it was the sun that went around the earth, not vice-versa.

**Palm:** These are principles, which means that they apply broadly, unlike canonical penalties which the Church applies very narrowly. No Catholic today holds a belief that would fall under the seventeenth century discipline restricting Copernicanism (which of course has been removed regardless), but the principles laid out by Leo XIII, Pius XII, and John Paul II do illuminate what Catholics are bound to hold.

**R. Sungenis:** We are not suggesting that Catholics should be given "canonical penalties" for not believing in geocentrism. We are merely saying that the Church should review her previous and current position based on the new scientific evidence available to us, and the fact that it would be very abnormal for the Holy Spirit to have led her clerical leaders and laypeople of the past to specifically deny heliocentrism (or acentrism) for 1800+ years if, in fact, it weren't true. The purpose of our movement is for education, not judgment. Geocentrism was taught and upheld by our highest authorities, and it has never been officially and formally negated. People need to know this, and they also need to know that science has not proven heliocentrism (or acentrism), and, in fact, the evidence leans heavily toward geocentrism.

**Palm:** Leo XIII also taught that it is "in things of faith and morals, belonging to the building up of Christian doctrine" (PD 14) that an alleged consensus of the Father binds. But as we saw above, no such details of the physical universe were revealed by the Holy Spirit. So please stop insinuating that Catholics are anything less than faithful if they reject geocentrism in favor of more modern cosmological views.

**R. Sungenis:** The Church, through the Fathers, the medievals, the Tridentine Catechism, several popes and cardinals, a canonical trial of Galileo, Indexes and such, show that the preponderant evidence says that the Holy Spirit did, indeed, reveal that the Earth was motionless. Other details of the physical universe, however, were not revealed. It is high time that we, as a Church, reexamined this issue, even as John Paul II suggested: "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” (Speech to the Pontifical Academy of Science, 1992).

**Palm:** thepalmhq said... FWIW there a response to the matter of the CMB by Dr. Ethan Siegel may be found here:

[http://scienceblogs.com/startswithabang/2011/01/so\\_the\\_earth\\_is\\_6001\\_years\\_old.php](http://scienceblogs.com/startswithabang/2011/01/so_the_earth_is_6001_years_old.php)

IMO the problem with the neo-geocentrists is that they fixate upon (and twist) these sorts of new cosmological measurements while at the same time ignoring the much better established evidence that turns geocentrism into a massive exercise in special pleading.

**R. Sungenis:** We have dealt with Mr. Siegel previously on the phases of Venus. His analysis was faulty in many respects. The link is:

<http://galileowaswrong.com/galileowaswrong/features/Response%20to%20Ethan%20Seigel%20on%20Venus%27%20Phases.pdf>

Second, regarding the CMB, Mr. Siegel is at odds with the rest of the scientific community who have already admitted that the CMB dipole, quadrupole and octupole are aligned with our ecliptic and equinoxes. For example, Lawrence Krauss, one of the leading cosmologists today, states:

“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 imply 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.” (Lawrence Krauss, “The Energy of Empty Space Isn't Zero,” July 2006).

Dragan Huterer of the Univ. of Michigan sees the same:

“We have discovered unexpected patterns in the CMB. Not only are the quadrupole and octopole planar, but their planes are nearly perpendicular to the ecliptic. Moreover, we found that that ecliptic plane lies precisely between the warmest and coolest lobes of the combined quadrupole plus octopole map. The likelihood of these alignments happening by chance is less than 0.1 percent...Why CMB patterns are oriented to the solar system is not at all understood at this time.” (Dragan Huterer, “Why is the solar system cosmically aligned?” *Astronomy*, Dec. 2007, p. 42).

Frederico Urban agrees:

"First of all, there is a statistically very unlikely planarity between quadrupole and octupole, which is seen in different releases of the data as well as in different statistical analyses [36–40], and the octupole is unexpectedly planar by itself. Similarly, one can employ different vectorial and tensorial decompositions of the multipoles to see that there is a very easily identifiable preferred axis, the cosmological dipole once again; that is, the normal vectors to the planes determined by the quadrupole and the octupole (there are four of them) point all in the same direction, that of the ecliptic or equinox." (Frederico Urban, July 2011, <http://arxiv.org/pdf/1011.2425v2>)

The following is a recent exchange between Rick Delano and Ethan Siegel. Notice how out-of-date Ethan's supposed refutation is:

**Rick:** Very well, Ethan, we will address your points one by one here on your blog- but remember, please, that your offer was accepted and mine wasn't. The first citation is from 2004, and is utterly out of date. Its foundational assertions are effectively refuted here:

[http://www-personal.umich.edu/~huterer/Papers/cmb\\_review.pdf](http://www-personal.umich.edu/~huterer/Papers/cmb_review.pdf)

Excerpt:

"While not all of these alignments are statistically independent, their combined statistical significance is certainly greater than their individual significances; for example, given their mutual alignments, the conditional probability of the four normals lying so close to the ecliptic is less than 2%; the combined probability of the four normals being both so aligned with each other and so close to the ecliptic is less than  $0.4\% \times 2\% = 0.008\%$ . These are therefore clearly surprising, highly statistically significant anomalies—unexpected in the standard inflationary theory and the accepted cosmological model.

Particularly puzzling are the alignments with solar system features. CMB anisotropy should clearly not be correlated with our local habitat. While the observed correlations seem to hint that there is contamination by a foreground or perhaps by the scanning strategy of the telescope, closer inspection reveals that there is no obvious way to explain the observed correlations. Moreover, if their explanation is that they are a foreground, then that will likely exacerbate other anomalies that we will discuss in Section 4.2."

With regard to your second link, it is even older (2003), and is explicitly rebutted in the same paper, here:

"Another approach advocated by Efstathiou et al. [35] is to reconstruct the full-sky  $C(\theta)$  from the partial sky and compare the reconstructed full-sky  $C(\theta)$  (using, say  $S_{1/2}$ ) to the predictions of the model. ....As we have shown, the pixel-based two-point correlation function on the region of the sky outside a conservative galactic mask \*is inconsistent

with the predictions of the standard  $\Lambda$ CDM model for the identical pixel-based two-point correlation function on the identically masked sky\*."

You admit you have not reviewed your friend's paper, the significance of which is to point out a polarization of quasars along the same CMB, Earth-oriented Axis. Very well. When you have done so you will see that there exists a preferred axis across the visible universe, oriented with earth's ecliptic and equinoxes, in direct contradiction to the predictions of Relativity and of the Copernican principle itself. George Ellis and many others, including Clifton at Oxford, are pursuing similar theoretical frameworks involving the discarding of the Copernican principle in peer reviewed journals.

**Ethan:** "There are a number of very good reasons to not only disfavor but to completely discard geocentrism"

**Rick:** Oh? What, exactly? In fact Einstein has already told you that Relativity cannot prove a moving Earth. He says no absolute axis, direction, frame, or motion can be observationally established. I have now told you that the predictions of Einstein are refuted by the observed anisotropy in the CMB, in quasar polarization, and in the preferred periodic Earth-centered z-values in galaxy distributions out to a billion light years reported here:

<http://arxiv.org/pdf/0711.4885v3>

**Ethan:** until I can be certain that you are honest in your scientific assessment of and approach to such phenomena, you must understand that I cannot commit to a meeting.

**Rick:** The offer has been made. The ball is entirely in your court. If I do not hear from you, then you will certainly hear from me, in a forum that will prove, I expect, to be one you will perhaps regret having rejected. Are you prepared to step up here, or not. Ethan?

Posted by: Rick DeLano | September 5, 2011 3:22 AM

**Palm:** Thepalmhg: First, the decree of 1633 was not a "Papal Sentence". It issued from the Congregation of the Holy Office and never received the Pope's signature. This is an ongoing neo-geocentrist exaggeration.

**R. Sungenis:** There was no need for the pope's signature. There is no Catholic dogmatic statement that says the pope's signature is required to make a doctrine. If the pope's intent and will is to promulgate a specific teaching, he can do so either verbally or in writing, or both. The fact is, Pope Urban VIII was the initiator of Galileo's trial and the one who approved the Congregation's conclusion. Previous to the Galileo trial, Urban VIII was in protracted discussions with the Duke of Tuscany concerning the dangers and heresy that Galileo was seeking to proliferate. In other words, the pope was behind the condemnation of Galileo and heliocentrism from start to finish.

**Palm:** Second, the Catholic Church has taught from time immemorial that canonical penalties must always be read \*strictly\*, that is, as narrowly and affecting as few people as possible. Reading this

decree strictly, we find that the two statements above were \*cited\* in the 1633 decree, but they were never explicitly \*adopted\* in that decree. Thus the modern neo-geocentrists unfortunately continue to assert "that Copernicanism had been declared heretical", as Prof. Finocchiaro states, "which was to become one of the most persistent myths in the subsequent controversy" (Retrying Galileo, p. 32).

**R. Sungeis:** Not only were they adopted, they were spread all through Europe under the vigilance of Pope Urban VIII, which fact Finocchiaro himself admits on pages 26 and 65. What we must realize about Finocchiaro is that throughout his books he is trying to find some way to exonerate the Church for having rejected Galileo. As a result he invariably tries to soften the Church's decision against Galileo.

But on page 47 Finocchiaro admits that Galileo was found "vehemently suspected of heresy" by the Inquisition in 1633. Since that is the case, then what heresy was Galileo suspected of holding? Finocchiaro doesn't tell us. But there was only one heresy in view – saying that the sun did not revolve around the earth.

Second, contrary to Mr. Palm, this was precisely what the Inquisition \*adopted\* in 1633, since the first condemnation stated thus: "Che il sole sia centro del mondo et immobile di moto locale, è propositione assurda e falsa in filosofia, e formalmente heretica, per essere espressamente contraria alla Sacra Scrittura" ("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"), as cited in Galileo E L'Inquisizione, Antonio Favaro, 1907, p. 143; and Le Opere di Galileo Galilei, Antonio Favaro, p. 403."

There is no "myth." Finocchiaro needs to explain how Galileo could be condemned as "vehemently suspect of heresy" if, indeed, the decree that spelled out the identity of the heresy was never officially adopted. Perhaps Finocchiaro is trying to suggest that if the heresy was not officially adopted, then Galileo could only be "suspect" of heresy as opposed to being an official heretic. But this is only speculation. It has been commonly understood by Galileo historians that Galileo was "suspect" of heresy rather than formally charged with heresy because the Inquisition had grace upon him, for it did not know for certain whether Galileo truly believed in the doctrine he was promulgating. After all, he had claimed to make his *Dialogo* "hypothetical." Or perhaps Finocchiaro is suggesting that the 1633 Holy Office had no right to include the words "formally heretical" because the 1616 Inquisition did not include the words. But this is also speculation. The 1633 Holy Office can make its own conclusion, and apparently did, since the words "formally heretical" are included in the decree, according to Antonio Favaro's two accountings of the proceedings from the original Italian. Finocchiaro's only recourse is to prove that the words "formally heretical" were added by a later redactor or somehow forged into the original 1633 decree, but he shows no evidence or even a case for such an event.

The issue of a distinction between what the cardinals recommended in 1616 and what was finally adopted was only true in 1616, and I make mention of that fact in GWW: "Paul V assembled eleven cardinals who condemned the Copernicanism of Fr. Foscarini in 1615 as being "formally heretical" (Galileo Was Wrong, p. 145); and, "Here we see that even though Pope Paul V's 1616 injunction against Galileo did not use the word "heresy" that was recommended by the eleven cardinals who formed the



papal investigatory commission, the term is here resurrected and applied in 1633, only this time it is increased to the level of being “formally” heretical, as opposed to, we assume, being materially heretical” (GWW, p. 212).

The 1633 Holy Office itself recognized that “formally heretical” was not included in the final statement in 1616: “a decree was issued by the Holy Congregation of the Index [in 1616] prohibiting the books which treat of this doctrine and declaring the doctrine itself to be false and wholly contrary to the sacred and divine Scripture” (GWW, p. 214).

Be that as it may, even if the words “formally heretical” were not in the one paragraph of the 1633 decree, the word “heresy” was used quite frequently in the rest of the Sentence. Note these words throughout the Sentence: “false doctrine,” “contrary to Scripture,” “pernicious,” “prejudice of Catholic truth,” “false and wholly contrary,” “grievous error,” “errors and heresies”:

\*\* “the **false doctrine** taught by some that the sun is the center of the world and immovable and that the Earth moves, and also with diurnal motion” ((Galileo E L’Inquizizione, Favaro, p. 143).)

\*\* “following the position of Copernicus, which are **contrary to the true sense** and authority of Holy Scripture”(ibid)

\*\* “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” (ibid)

\*\* “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” (ibid)

\*\* “And, in order that a doctrine **so pernicious** might be wholly rooted out and not insinuate itself further to the grave **prejudice of Catholic truth**” (ibid)

\*\* “the doctrine itself to be **false and wholly contrary** to the sacred and divine Scripture” (ibid)

\*\* “the **false opinion** of the motion of the Earth and the stability of the sun” (ibid)

\*\* “a most **grievous error**, as an opinion can in no wise be probable which has been declared and **defined to be contrary** to divine Scripture” (ibid)

\*\* “the declaration made by His Holiness and published by the Holy Congregation of the Index had been announced to you, wherein it is declared that the doctrine of the motion of the Earth and the stability of the sun is **contrary** to the Holy Scriptures and therefore **cannot be defended or held**” (ibid)

\*\* We say, pronounce, sentence, and declare that you, the said Galileo, by reason of the matters adduced 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 to be contrary to the Holy Scripture**; and that consequently you have incurred all the censures and penalties imposed and promulgated in the sacred canons and other constitutions, general and particular, against such delinquents. From which we are content that you be absolved, provided that, first, with a sincere heart and unfeigned faith, you abjure, curse, and detest before us **the aforesaid 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.” (ibid)

Even Galileo’s abjuration, written by the Congregation, included “heresy”:

“I must altogether abandon the false opinion that the sun is the center of the world and immovable and **that the Earth is not the center of the world and moves** and that I must not hold, defend, or teach in any way whatsoever, verbally or in writing, the said **false doctrine**, and after it had been notified to me that the said doctrine was **contrary to Holy Scripture** – I wrote and printed a book in which I discuss this new doctrine already condemned and adduce arguments of great cogency in its favor without presenting any solution of these, I have been pronounced by the Holy Office to be **vehemently suspected of heresy, that is to say, of having held and believed that the sun is the center of the world and immovable and that the earth is not the center and moves**: Therefore, desiring to remove from the minds of your Eminences, and of all faithful Christians, this vehement suspicion justly conceived against me, with sincere heart and unfeigned faith I abjure, curse, and detest the **aforesaid errors and heresies and generally every other error, heresy**, and sect whatsoever contrary to the Holy Church, and I swear that in future I will never again say or assert, verbally or in writing, anything that might furnish occasion for a similar suspicion regarding me.” (ibid 337-338).

As regards the 1616 decree, I think the words of Ernan McMullin, another Galileo historian, are appropriate: “And let there be no mistake, the judgment of the qualifiers in 1616 and the language of the decree supported by it were couched in definitive terms; it was not proposed as something “reformable,” to use a term favored by some recent theologians. The decree did not say that in the absence of a demonstration, maintaining the Copernican theses would be risky (“temerarious”). It described the theses as “contrary to Scripture,” period, just as the qualifiers had “qualified” the heliocentric claim as “formally heretical” (“The Church’s Ban on Copernicanism,” in *The Church and Galileo*, p. 159).

**Palm:** This is not simply my opinion but was put forward to the cardinals of the Holy Office by the Commissary General of the Holy Office in 1820. He said:

"The censure adopted by the Sacred Congregation is merely that of 'false and contrary to Sacred Scripture,' as it is clear from the decrees and from the sentence against Galileo; in it he is attributed the crime of having defended, or at least having represented as probable, an opinion 'after it had been declared and defined contrary to Sacred Scripture.' All the rest is folly." (cited in *Retrying Galileo*, p. 206).

**R. Sungenis:** Unfortunately, the 1820 Sacred Congregation didn't have the Galileo trial records to consult, since Napoleon had taken them all back to France when he invaded the Vatican in 1809 and sent Pius VII into exile for five years. The records weren't returned until 1845. The absence of these records was one of the very reasons that Maurizio Olivieri was able to persuade Pius VII to give Settele an imprimatur for his book on heliocentrism, since Pius VII had no records of the condemnations to consult. Be that as it may, Mr. Palm, through Finocchiaro, makes it sound as if the censure of "opposed to Scripture" is just some mild slap on the wrist. It wasn't. If something was "opposed to Scripture" the common understanding was that it was also heretical, as is clear by the amount of times the Sentence against Galileo uses the word "heresy" in conjunction with "opposed to Scripture."

Or if Mr. Palm wants to argue that the Church was justified in saying that heliocentrism was "opposed to Scripture" but not heretical, he then consigns all subsequent generations to the fact that the Catholic Church has decreed, in 1616, 1633 and 1820 that heliocentrism was "opposed to Scripture" and that anyone who believes in heliocentrism is in opposition to Scripture.

**Palm:** The ground on which it was declared false and contrary to Sacred Scripture is that the doctrine put forth by Galileo was "absurd and false in philosophy", meaning natural philosophy (the 1633 decree says nothing about the Fathers.) It was so at that time. It no longer is so. And indeed, to assert that Scripture teaches something "absurd and false in philosophy" *is* to assert something contrary to Scripture.

**R. Sungenis:** But the fact is, the Church has never officially decreed that "it no longer is so"? There is not one official statement saying so.

**Palm:** Again, canonical penalties are to be interpreted *strictly*. Galileo held that the sun was the center of the universe and that the sun is immobile, which are key tenets of "the doctrine" which is mentioned by the 1633 decree. Neither of these are held by anyone anymore. So again the Commissary General of the Holy Office:

"One error must be immediately noted in the text of the full title of his [Anfossi's] 'Motives' (Sum., p. 98): 'One must not allow Settele to teach as a thesis . . . the stability of the sun at the center of the world.' Along with modern astronomers, Settele does not teach that the sun is at the center of the world" (Retrying, 205).

At the very least, the Magisterium sees that this 1633 disciplinary decree against Galileo does not apply to anybody anymore, since nobody even holds the view for he was condemned.

**R. Sungenis:** Mr. Palm is trying to make it sound as if the only thing the 1633 decree was concerned about was whether the sun was at the center of the world, but such is certainly not the case. The Congregation added that it was wrong to say the sun did not move, since Scripture taught explicitly that it did move. More importantly, Mr. Palm ignores the fact that both the 1633 Holy Office, as well as the Scriptures and the Fathers, held that the movement of the sun referred to its orbit around the earth, not some undefined movement in space independent of the earth.

We thus need to reiterate that this debate is not about whether the sun moves but about whether the sun moves around a stationary earth. Along those lines, let's recap the numerous times the 1633 Sentence against Galileo states that any cosmology that claims "the Earth moves" is heretical, false, contrary to Scripture, etc:

\*\* "the false doctrine taught by some that...**the Earth moves**, and also with diurnal motion"

\*\* "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..."

\*\* "the false opinion of **the motion of the Earth**..."

\*\* "doctrine of the **motion of the Earth**...is contrary to the Holy Scriptures and therefore cannot be defended or held"

\*\* "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 to be contrary to the Holy Scripture."

\*\* I [Galileo] must altogether abandon the false opinion that the sun is the center of the world and immovable and that **the Earth is not the center of the world and moves**."

**Palm:** And Leo XIII and Pius XII have laid out the principles, first championed by Sts. Augustine and Thomas, that sacred Scripture cannot be said to err if it uses figurative language or the language of appearances and is not, therefore, asserting anything about the physical nature of the universe.

**R. Sungenis:** Leo XIII and Pius XII laid out no such principle in regards to the 1633 decree because neither Leo or Pius mention either the earth/sun passages in Scripture; the Church's decisions on heliocentrism, or anything remotely related to cosmology. Mr. Palm also ignores the fact that both Augustine and Thomas were geocentrists, and thus what they said about "figurative language" cannot be used to say that the earth revolves around the sun.

**Palm:** thepalmhq said... Rick, [This formal and binding act of the ordinary magisterium has certainly been abandoned in practice, but has never been reversed by any similarly authoritative act of the magisterium]. Rick, we've been over this. Can you cite any other example of a doctrine that has (allegedly) been declared formally heretical and then "abandoned" by the Magisterium (I mean literally not taught at all) for over three centuries? Every single example that you and others have proposed has proven to be false.

The Magisterium does not abandon parts of the deposit of Faith for centuries, while at the same time allowing (and more, even encouraging) contrary views to flourish and spread. That is not compatible with the Church's indefectibility. The fact that geocentrism is your single, utterly isolated alleged example really does suggest that you fellows have read the ecclesiastical evidence wrong.

**R. Sungenis:** Mr. Palm has been given examples previously. In a previous dialogue, he was given the example of full biblical inerrancy – a doctrine which the Church has taught throughout her tradition but

which has been abandoned in practice by both hierarchy and laypeople in the past 100 years or so. Mr. Palm has already admitted that he could only find three Catholic institutions in the US that teach full biblical inerrancy. So obviously, the practice of the vast majority in the Catholic Church today, including the last two popes (by their own admission), is to reject full biblical inerrancy, yet the Catholic Church, by Mr. Palm's own admission, taught full biblical inerrancy and held any contrary opinion as heretical. We might also make a case regarding evolution. The traditional Church never taught evolution; was opposed to the Greeks and their beliefs in evolution; issued an infallible decree at Lateran Council IV that said God created all things out of nothing and reiterated it at Vatican I (making the contrary view heretical), yet today we can hardly find a Catholic today who has not embraced evolution, including Mr. Palm. I believe this allows us to make the following supposition: the reason we have such issues today is, ever since the Enlightenment there has been a battle between secular science and religion, and many Catholics have sided with secular science and abandoned the teachings of the traditional Church. The same can be said of biblical inerrancy. The reason that many Catholics have abandoned it is because the "science of historical criticism" has supposedly refuted full biblical inerrancy.

**Palm:** This is an exaggerated reading of that decree. Reading strictly, that decree speaks of "the doctrine" (note, singular) that includes the proposition "that the Sun is the center of the world [universe] and does not move from east to west". But nobody believes that the sun is the immobile center of the universe.

**R. Sungenis:** Mr. Palm is making it sound as if the 1633 and 1822 Church were merely concerned with the general movement of the sun. That is erroneous. The phrase "moves from east to west" was used to refer to the fact that the Church believed the sun revolves around the earth. So, any person who claimed the sun did not move from east to west was saying the sun did not revolve around the earth. As noted above by the many references in the Sentence against Galileo concerning the Church's belief that the Earth did not move, it was this specific fact the Church was promulgating, not the sun's general or undefined movement through space.

**Palm:** On this basis, among others, the Holy Office ruled in 1822 that at the very least modern cosmological views do not fall under this disciplinary decree and issued permission for non-geocentric views to be disseminated in the Church.

**R. Sungenis:** "Modern cosmological views" were not the concern in 1822. That period was only concerned with the Copernican model, and the Copernican model was a primitive heliocentrism model copied from the Greek Aristarchus. In 1820, Olivieri claimed that the original Copernican model was "defective" because it didn't include Kepler's ellipses and said the sun was the center of the world. So on the basis of the primitiveness of the Copernican model, Olivieri claimed the 1633 Church did not really condemn the idea that the earth revolved around the sun, but only that Copernicus' model was defective. But this reasoning is totally false, for from the Fathers through the middle ages the Church held not that Aristarchus' model was "defective," but that it was totally wrong because it made the earth move and the sun to be the center of revolution.

**Palm:** What is established is that Catholics are free to hold to non-geocentric views on the motions of celestial bodies. That is all I have ever sought to demonstrate and I have done so.

**R. Sungenis:** I would agree that a Catholic today, from merely the confusion and ignorance we've had in the past hundred years or so, not only from science but also from the hierarchy, is not to be held accountable if he rejects geocentrism. The purpose of our campaign is to educate people to both the ecclesiastical history and scientific data concerning geocentrism, not to be the judge of anyone. Only the Church can be the judge. In our efforts to educate, we hope that many Catholics will be persuaded by the evidence and join us in bringing this evidence to those in authority. Many times in history the Church has been moved to action by laypeople bringing issues to her attention.

On a more dogmatic level, a Catholic would not be required to hold geocentrism as a dogma of the faith unless the Church made it a *de fide* teaching in a formal and official sense, and made it clear she was doing so. Before something is made infallible, a Catholic can have a certain degree of doubt or hesitation. For example, in the 1500s, Cardinal Cajetan was free to hold that the canon passed down from history was wrong, at least until Trent said he could no longer do so by its infallible decree in 1563. What is important to realize, however, is that Cajetan lost because the whole tide of tradition was against him. The very reason Trent made the canon infallible was because the Tradition specified to the fathers of Trent the contents of the canon, and Trent was not going to go against that Tradition. We have a similar situation with geocentrism. The Tradition says geocentrism is correct and heliocentrism is wrong.

Rick Delano said: Where the Bible touches upon matters pertaining to science, it is exactly as infallible as it is when it addresses any other area. It need not provide the "details" in order for us to hold its assertions as necessarily true, since they have God for their Author.

**Palm:** But if it uses the language of appearances and the author of sacred Scripture does not *\*intend\** to pass on physical details, then it is erroneous both to accuse the author of Scripture of an error (neo-modernist) or to insist that Scripture teaches dogmatically some particulars of celestial motion (neo-geocentrist). Just what example better fits Leo XIII's statement about "more or less figurative language...which in many instances are in daily use at this day, even by the most eminent men of science" than the language of "sun rise", which nobody takes to be erroneous language?

**R. Sungenis:** Let's say for the sake of argument that Leo XIII was referring to celestial motion. If so, this doesn't help Mr. Palm, since the geocentrist also says the sun rises and sets. He does so knowing that the sun moves as such only with respect to the earth's horizon. So, the use of "figurative language" doesn't prove anything for anybody. The Fathers knew this as well, as did the 1616, 1633 decrees. But the Fathers and the Church had ANOTHER level of analysis above and beyond "figurative language." That is why, for example, they all, without exception said, when we come to a passage like Joshua 10:10-14 that speaks about the sun and the moon ceasing their motion in the sky, this is not figurative language; rather, it is literal language. The main reason is that Joshua also says the moon stopped, and everyone agrees that the moon was in motion before it was stopped. Hence, the passage is talking about motion, both of the moon and the sun.

Rick Delano said: The magisterium has not, as of this moment, acted to overturn the papal sentence of 1633, but has given many indications that the question has been undergoing a period of development and discernment.

**Palm:** Nonsense. In 1757 the general prohibition against books teaching Copernicanism was removed from the Index.

**R. Sungenis:** The 1757 decree made no provision for books that treated Copernicanism as a thesis, only a hypothesis. This was the very reason that Settele's case in 1820 became such an issue, since he was the first to treat heliocentrism as a thesis. This is also why the 1757 decree left Galileo, Zuniga, Kepler, Copernicus and Foscarini on the Index of Forbidden Books, since they treated heliocentrism as a thesis. It certainly would have been contradictory to allow books that treated heliocentrism as a thesis if the Church was still condemning Galileo, Zuniga, Kepler, Copernicus and Foscarini for treating heliocentrism as a thesis.

**Palm:** In 1822 the Congregation of the Holy Office (the same Congregation that issued the 1633 decree), with the approval of the Pope, issued a general permission for works espousing non-geocentric views to be disseminated in the Church.

**R. Sungenis:** The appeal to "the approval of the Pope" is inconsequential since Pius VII didn't sign any statement to that effect. It also contradicts Mr. Palm previous assertion that the 1633 decree against Galileo didn't have papal authority since he claims Urban VIII "didn't sign" the decree. Be that as it may, we've already seen that the 1822 Church didn't have the Galileo records in order to make an intelligent and legitimate decision; and they were influenced by the invention of Olivieri that the 1633 Church condemned Copernicanism because it was defective, not wrong.

**Palm:** In 1835 in the next edition of the Index the works of Galileo and Copernicus were removed.

**R. Sungenis:** Mysteriously, it was done without Gregory XVI giving a reason as to why it was removed. But I believe we can figure it out. Gregory XVI was previously Cardinal Capellari who served on the commission to give Settele an imprimatur in 1820, which, as we saw, was under false reasoning, for it had given the imprimatur on the supposition that Copernicus model was merely defective, not wrong. So it seems reasonable to conclude that Capellari, when he became Gregory XVI, allowed the same reasoning to prevail. Moreover, we don't even know it was Gregory XVI who took Galileo off the Index. It may have been done by one of his underlings.

**Palm:** In 1893 Leo XIII issued the papal encyclical *Providentissimum Deus* which, as Prof. Finocchiaro says, "on the relationship between Scripture and physical science, the encyclical could be seen to advance Galilean views....It is not surprising that Leo's encyclical has been widely perceived as the Church's belated endorsement of the second fundamental belief for which Galileo had originally been condemned, namely that Scripture is not an authority in astronomy. As we shall see in a later chapter, this interpretation was also endorsed by Pope John Paul II in 1979–1992" (Retrying Galileo, pp. 265f.)

**R. Sungenis:** The indisputable fact remains: Leo XIII didn't mention the Galileo affair, at all. Even then, Leo's teaching can apply to geocentrism as well as heliocentrism, so an appeal to him proves nothing.

**Palm:** In 1921 Pope Benedict XV put forth in a papal encyclical that it makes no difference to our Catholic faith if geocentrism has been proven false (a statement that would itself be formally heretical if non-geocentric views had been declared formally heretical by the Magisterium.)

**R. Sungenis:** Benedict XV merely made some off-hand remark ("the earth may not be in the center") in an encyclical that had nothing to do with geocentrism. He was not officially teaching anything on cosmology. And even if we saw Benedict XV's statement as directly impinging on geocentrism, his statement is conditional (since he said "may") and it was said without geocentrism being infallible doctrine, and therefore not condemnable.

**Palm:** In 1943 Pope Pius XII in *Divino Afflante Spiritu* reaffirmed the principles laid out by Leo XIII. This, of course, is after numerous Catholic works had applied Leo XIII's teaching to the topic of geocentrism.

**R. Sungenis:** But obviously they were all wrong in doing so, since neither Leo XIII nor Pius XII mention anything about cosmology. I could just as easily say that the Holy Spirit prohibited Leo from mentioning cosmology, since He didn't want Leo to go against the Church's tradition and magisterium.

**Palm:** Popes Pius XII, John Paul II, and Benedict XVI have praised Galileo, with John Paul II stating publicly that his condemnation rested upon an "error". What are these "many indications" of which you speak?

**R. Sungenis:** No, the only time the word "error" appears in the encyclical is when the pope says that "the error of the theologians was due to their failure to recognize the distinction between Sacred Scripture and its interpretation," not in regards to geocentrism specifically. Be that as it may, the assessment itself is problematic. First, it wasn't merely "theologians" who were involved, but the whole Catholic magisterium, including two of its finest popes. There were eleven cardinals on the 1616 commission approved by Bellarmine and Paul V. Then in 1633 Pope Urban VIII initiated Galileo's trial and promulgated its results throughout Europe. The attempt to push the responsibility off on mere "theologians" is simply not accurate. Moreover, even if the popes and cardinals of 1616 and 1633 were included by John Paul II, the assertion is still wrong. As Fr. Coyne states:

"This cannot be correct. Since the time of Augustine, this distinction was well established and it was taught in all the schools of exegesis at the time of Galileo. In fact, in 1616 the qualifiers/consultors of the Holy Office knew this distinction and made use of it in formulating their philosophical-theological opinion on Copernicanism" (*"The Church's Most Recent Attempt to Dispell the Galileo Myth,"* p. 344.)

**Palm:** You fellows sound so much like the churchman chided by the Commissary General of the Holy Office in 1820, not realizing that you all but rush headlong into a heresy yourself: "with your alleged omission of publication, especially in a situation when it was supremely necessary to bring it about, namely on the occasion of the renewal of the Index and the collection of decrees of prohibition, you



come along and tell us that “for reasons known to them” they have neglected to acknowledge the truth of the faith. But, Most Rev. Father, this smells a little of the doctrine that some truths are being obscured in the Church, especially on the part of the Holy Apostolic See; and this doctrine is indeed heretical and was condemned as such in the bull *Auctorem Fidei*, in the first proposition, if I am not mistaken. You know that, for you have defended this bull. So you are in the position of judging yourself by your own principles" (Retrying Galileo, p. 215).

**R. Sungenis:** Mr. Palm is quoting from Maurizio Olivieri writing to Fr. Anfossi. Olivieri was the very person who pushed through a false reason why the 1616 and 1633 condemned Copernicanism. Olivieri claimed the 1616 and 1633 condemned Copernicanism simply because it was a defective model, not a completely wrong model. No, the Church condemned Copernicanism because it made the earth revolve and the sun to be the center of that revolution. It didn't matter to the Church how science claimed the earth moved. If science said the earth moved then science was wrong. Obviously, then, there were certain people in the “Apostolic See” who were fudging the issue, just like there are certain people in the “Apostolic See” today who are fudging on the matter of full biblical inerrancy.

**Palm:** Here's Bob Sungenis from the article cited in the original posting: "'Heliocentrism becomes dangerous if it is being propped up as the true system when, in fact, it is a false system,' said Robert Sungenis, leader of a budding movement to get scientists to reconsider. 'False information leads to false ideas, and false ideas lead to illicit and immoral actions — thus the state of the world today.'"

**R. Sungenis:** I merely said that if heliocentrism is false it is dangerous. That is a true statement.

**Palm:** And here is the proposition condemned in *Auctorem Fidei* is as follows:

And yet the Magisterium has allowed and even encouraged the spread of non-geocentric views.

"1. The proposition, which asserts "that in these later 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,"—heretical."

Only a strict canonical interpretation will save these neo-geos from falling under that formal condemnation, the very strict interpretation that they deny to others with respect to the decree of 1633.

**R. Sungenis:** Granted, but Mr. Palm won't be able to find the magisterium of the Church ever overturning the canonical decrees against both Galileo and heliocentrism, so in that sense the doctrine has not been “obscured.” The Holy Spirit has disallowed the Church from going against the Tradition that taught geocentrism. On the other hand, there are people like Olivieri still around today in the hierarchy who try to change the rules, even though the Church hasn't officially changed them. That is why, for example, Mr. Palm can only find three Catholic institutions in the US who teach full biblical inerrancy when, in fact, the Church has never changed her official teaching on full biblical inerrancy.

**Palm:** Again, this is not merely my private view. It was put forth to the Holy Office by that congregation's Commissary General:

"Please reflect that if philosophical absurdity (that is, falsity or absurdity recognized as such by the light of reason) is attributed to the words of Sacred Scripture, it becomes an interpretation which ecclesiastical authority can very well define as 'contrary to Sacred Scripture'; and this is precisely our case" (Retrying Galileo, p. 208).

**R. Sungenis:** Again, Mr. Palm is quoting Olivieri – the man who perpetrated a false reason why the 1616 and 1633 magisterium condemned Galileo and heliocentrism. Fr. Anfossi was adhering to the tradition, especially since there was no scientific proof to support Olivieri. But Olivieri tried to make it look as if Fr. Anfossi was indicting the magisterium. Instead of Olivieri admitting that he himself was departing from the 1800 year tradition of the Church, he makes it appear as if Fr. Anfossi is standing in the way of the Church changing its mind on the tradition!

Olivieri continues:

“...and this is precisely our case. Galileo had been unable to free the motions of the axial rotation and orbital revolution which they ascribed to the earth; such devastating motion was certainly contrary to Sacred Scripture.”

And then we see this page 209. Olivieri argues:

“I hope the Most Rev. Father can quietly accept that that system was not declared ‘heretical’ or ‘erroneous in the Faith’; that dues to their ignorance Copernicus and Galileo were unable to remove the ‘serious difficulties’ affecting our globe, and so their system was infected with a devastating mobility; that therefore the condemnation was based on the philosophical absurdities on account of which the system had consequences implying that the doctrine...could be called contrary to Sacred Scripture; and that all this does not harm in the least the respect due to the decrees of the Sacred Congregation.”

Olivieri is claiming that Galileo and Copernicus were wrong and thus condemned not because they made the earth move and the sun the center of the revolution but because they couldn’t get their particular versions of heliocentrism to work right. But the 1616 and 1633 magisteriums did not say anything at all about heliocentrism being condemned because the model was defective. It was condemned because it made the earth move around the sun.

Olivieri further claims that the Sacred Congregation

“pronounced the doctrine false before calling it contrary to Sacred Scripture; by doing so they warned us to fix our attention on the philosophical falsity, and thus not to go astray in thinking of contrariety to Sacred Scripture, for mobility and immobility are not things which God has chosen to reveal to us; rather he has inspired the Sacred Writer to express to us what our sense perceive in the way they perceive it.”

So according to Olivieri, all the Fathers were wrong in seeing in Scripture the fact that the earth did not move; and Bellarmine and Paul V were wrong in using such scriptural passages and the consensus of the

Fathers to prove Galileo wrong. And until Olivieri came along, the Church was wrong in using Joshua 10 to argue that the sun and moon went around the earth. Not very likely.

Additionally, Olivieri brings another novel argument to the table. He claims that “false philosophically” is put first so that we are directed to put more emphasis on it than “opposed to Scripture,” but this is erroneous. To say it is “false philosophically” refers to the fact that the Pythagorean school of philosophy had adopted heliocentrism in opposition to the philosophical school of Aristotle. In medieval times, “philosophy” was a much more general term than its usage today. In the 1616 decree, for example, the Pythagorean doctrine was mentioned since Foscarini had relied on him:

“And whereas it has also come to the knowledge of the said Congregation that the Pythagorean doctrine – which is false and altogether opposed to Holy Scripture – of the motion of the Earth and the immobility of the Sun, which is also taught by Nicolaus Copernicus in *De revolutionibus orbium coelestium...*” (GWW, p. 201).

The study of Benedict XIV in 1742 also made reference to Pythagoras as the seed for the erroneous belief in heliocentrism:

On the *Revolutions of the Heavenly Spheres* by Nicolaus Copernicus...and a work by Diego de Zúñiga ...supported the ancient opinion of Pythagoras, who taught that the Sun was the motionless center of the world and that the terraqueous globe of the Earth turned around it with perpetuated motion. The Carmelite Father Paolo Antonio Foscarini adopted such a system and defended it against the censure of theologians, who judged it false and contrary to Sacred Scripture. This system, which is commonly called Copernican for having been reawakened by Copernicus from the ashes of the ancient philosophy of Pythagoras, was denounced to the Sacred Congregation of the Index. On March 5, 1616, this Congregation published a decree prohibiting the system as a false Pythagorean doctrine contrary to Sacred Scripture and prejudicial to Catholic truth. But there was this difference: that Father Foscarini’s Letter was prohibited absolutely, whereas Copernicus’ book and Diego de Zúñiga Commentaries on Job were merely suspended, until corrected.

The proposition was also called “absurd” because of the simple logic involved. If the sun moves around the Earth, then logically the Earth cannot move around the sun. It is a simple matter of choosing the right system. If A is right, it would be “absurd” to adopt B. (See page 213 of *Galileo Was Wrong*).

We might also add that ecclesiastical censures will be issued at three distinct levels of severity: (a) heresy; (b) erroneous in faith; (c) rashness. The difference between (a) and (b) in the case of Galileo is that there was some doubt about whether Galileo actually held, at least in the absolute sense, to the concepts that he put in his *Dialogo* since he sometimes gave the impression they were hypothetical. As such, Galileo is convicted for being “vehemently suspected of heresy” (see below) as opposed to being in actual heresy. This allows the sentence to maintain, on the one hand, that sun-fixed or that earth-moving cosmologies are, de facto, “formally heretical,” and, on the other hand, allow room for judging whether the penitent really knew and believed what he was saying. Coinciding with this principle is the phrase “vehemently” in the statement “vehemently suspect of heresy,” indicating the bare minimum of

conviction that is assigned to Galileo and implying he is only a hair's breadth from being in the category of formal heresy. In any case, since Galileo was only suspected of heresy, he is then required to write a formal abjuration of his views, whereas if he were convicted of either "heresy" or "rashness" no abjuration would have been required.

**Palm:** I believe, addresses Rick's point about the "doctrinal authority by which it is imposed". The bottom line is that the 1633 decree does \*not\* adopt the theological qualification of the consultants in 1616.

**R. Sungenis:** We saw that the 1633 decree did, indeed, adopt it. The burden of proof is on Finocchiaro to show that "formally heretical" was dropped in light of all the other times the Sentence refers to "heresy"; in addition to showing how Galileo could be "suspect of heresy" if a heresy had not been formally stated to exist. You cannot suspect someone of a heresy unless the heresy has been formally stated. As we noted, Galileo himself admitted in his abjuration, written for him by the Church, that his cosmology was "heretical."

**Palm:** Even Cardinal Bellarmine acknowledged that these things could be presented as hypothetical without harm to the faith and, if proven scientifically, one would have to modify one's understanding of sacred Scripture (yes, I grant that he personally did not think that would happen.) But this is impossible to reconcile with the view that they are per se heretical. Can one imagine Cardinal Bellarmine or any orthodox Catholic saying that it is permitted to present as a hypothesis that the bread and wine in the Mass do not become the Body and Blood of Christ and if that hypothesis could be proven scientifically then all we would have to do is modify our understanding of Scripture? I think this gives solid support to the view that "false and absurd" from a scientific standpoint really was foundational and formed the basis for the rejection as "contrary to Scripture".

**R. Sungenis:** No, it's not "impossible to reconcile." The issues of the Eucharist and geocentrism are totally separate. The Eucharist was defined dogmatically by the 1215 Lateran Council and became *de fide* in the most formal sense. Geocentrism has yet to enjoy that privilege. Hence, Bellarmine had leeway with geocentrism that neither he nor anyone else had with the Eucharist. Bellarmine was just being kind to his opponents (and you can read more about this issue in *Galileo Was Wrong*, pages 170-178). Besides, those particular statements from Bellarmine were made concerning the Foscarini case, not the Galileo case. By the time Bellarmine got to Galileo he had a different approach to the issue. There was no longer a concession.

The connection between the Eucharist and geocentrism that Mr. Palm should see, however, is that both show the traditional Catholic hermeneutic of taking Scripture literally. Since Scripture said the bread became the body of Christ, the Church had no quibble. She believed it because Scripture said so. The same was true with geocentrism. Since Scripture said the earth didn't move and the sun did, the Church believed it, and it has never overturned it.

**Palm:** And even if Rick doesn't find the above argument convincing, the key point is that cardinal prefects of the Holy Office and the Pope \*did\* find it convincing and issued permission for books reflecting modern cosmological views to be disseminated in the Church.

**R. Sungenis:** The indisputable point in fact is that Olivieri proposed a line of reasoning that was false. The issue before the Church was not whether Copernicanism made the Earth move with a defective and “devastating mobility,” but that the 1616 and 1633 Church said the Earth did not move, AT ALL. Let’s look at the Sentence once again:

\*\* “the false doctrine taught by some that...**the Earth moves**, and also with diurnal motion”

\*\* “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...”

\*\* ““the false opinion of **the motion of the Earth**...”

\*\* “doctrine of the **motion of the Earth**...is contrary to the Holy Scriptures and therefore cannot be defended or held”

\*\* “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 to be contrary to the Holy Scripture.”

\*\* I [Galileo] must altogether abandon the false opinion that the sun is the center of the world and immovable and that **the Earth is not the center of the world and moves**.”

**Palm:** The imprimatur for Settele's work was issued in 1820. But in 1822 a separate decree was issued by the Holy Office (same congregation that issued the 1633 decree against Galileo) that gave broad permission for works espousing modern cosmological views to be disseminated.

**R. Sungenis:** And it was all based on a fabrication, as we note above. Olivieri claimed the 1616 and 1633 Church was concerned only with the defective way Copernicus and Galileo made the Earth move. That was a fabrication. As noted above, the 1616 and 1633 Church said the Earth did not move, period.

Rick Delano said: The imprimatur granted in 1822 does not constitute a reversal of the Holy Inquisition’s decree of 1633, first because it does not represent an action of comparable magisterial authority, and second, because, as Father Coyne notes in his “Galileo and the Church”, the imprimatur was granted on false grounds: it was argued that since Copernicus’ system contained epicycles, that was the basis of the condemnation. It wasn’t. The condemnation makes no mention of epicycles anywhere.

**Palm:** Unfortunately you have fallen into the same error that Sungenis did with respect to Fr. Olivieri, the Commissary General of the Holy Office. Both Sungenis and Fr. Coyne have grossly misrepresented Fr. Olivieri by boiling the whole thing down to "elliptical orbits" and "epicycles". See here for more details:

<http://thepalmhq.blogspot.com/2011/08/neo-geos-come-unravalled.html>

Rick notes correctly that, "The condemnation makes no mention of epicycles anywhere". True. But note well that Fr. Olivieri doesn't either! So Fr. Coyne has misrepresented Fr. Olivieri, albeit at least without the string of insults and epithets deployed against the latter priest by Sungenis.

**R. Sungenis:** Finocchiaro, himself, admits that Kepler's epicycles were an issue. Note this paragraph on page 251 of his book, *Retrying Galileo*:

"Along with modern astronomers, Settele does not teach that the sun is at the center of the world: for it is not the center of the fixed stars; it is not the center of heavy bodies, which fall toward the center of our world, namely of the earth; nor is it the center of the planetary system because it does not lie in the middle, or center, **but to one side at one of the foci of the elliptical orbits that all planets trace**. Still less does he teach that the sun is motionless; on the contrary, it has a rotational motion around itself and also a translational motion which it performs while carrying along the outfit of all its planets."

Now, note where this is from: **Olivieri's November 1820 Summation**, titled, "Ristretto di Ragione, e di Fatto," ¶30, as cited by Finocchiaro in *Retrying Galileo*, p. 205.)

And now notice what Finocchiaro (and now David Palm) try to convince us of. Finocchiaro states:

"That is, the Church had been right in condemning the latter from a scientific point of view, because Galileo had also upheld heliocentrism in **its unsatisfactory Copernican form**..." (*Retrying Galileo*, p. 520).

In other words, Finocchiaro is adopting the same fabrication that Olivieri used against Pius VII, namely, that the 1616 and 1633 Church condemned Galileo merely because he used an "unsatisfactory Copernican form"! But again, no such stipulation was made in either 1616 or 1633, or even afterwards.

**Palm:** Now, your rhetoric about millions falling from the Faith does not really address your core problem. We're talking about the response of the \*Magisterium\* in the face of what you claim was clearly and formally declared a "formal heresy". If your view of things is true then the popes and bishops in communion with them have defected from the Faith and have utterly failed, over the course of centuries, to protect the faithful from heresy and, indeed, have encouraged them to believe heretical views.

**R. Sungenis:** At this point we will go back to the example of full biblical inerrancy. Perhaps Mr. Palm can shed some light on why only three Catholic institutions in the US teach full biblical inerrancy and the rest of the thousands of Catholic institutions go against the consistent teaching of Catholic tradition, and are encouraged to do so by the present hierarchy. The way out of the dilemma is not by adopting Olivieri's fabrication and believe we have saved the Church from defecting. We can pose the same question to Mr. Palm about Pope Honorius. Did the Church "defect" under his leadership when he said Christ had one will (see Denzinger, *Sources of Catholic Dogma*, para. 251). If I know him well enough, Mr. Palm will say no, because Honorius did not do so from the position of infallibility. So why can't that be the case for Pius VII who allowed an imprimatur for Settele or Gregory XVI on the 1835 Index, especially since they were under high pressure from Napoleon; had no records of the Galileo trial before them; and were presented with a novel but enticing argument from Olivieri? Now Mr. Palm may retort that Paul V and Urban VIII could also have made the Church "defect" when, as he believes, they "incorrectly" supported geocentrism, but the fact is that Paul V and Urban VIII had 1600 years of Church tradition behind them, so obviously they were not defecting, they were upholding the tradition whereas Pius VII and Gregory XVI were not. One group of these popes MUST be wrong. They cannot both be right. Since Paul V and

Urban VIII came before Pius VII and Gregory XVI; and since they only were following the patristic and medieval tradition of geocentrism, then only they can be right. Finocchiaro's attempt to make all the popes right by assuming Olivieri's invention only ends up making the situation worse.

Be that as it may, imprimaturs hardly mean anything on the scale of ecclesiastical authority. Galileo was given an imprimatur in 1631, and it was taken away by Urban VIII in 1632.

**Palm:** If on the other hand one sees, as I think I have demonstrated here, that there was no such declaration of heresy in the seventeenth century and that the grounds on which the seventeenth century decree was made in the first place have been removed, then the behavior of the Magisterium for the past three centuries is perfectly reasonable and explicable.

**R. Sungenis:** First of all, it isn't "300 years." If so, we would be back to 1711. Nothing happened then. If it was 350 years, that would bring us back to 1664 when Alexander VII put Galileo, Kepler and Copernicus on the Index. In 1741 and 1758, Benedict XIV kept Galileo, Kepler and Copernicus on the Index, and only allowed books on heliocentrism that were hypothetical. The next important dates were 1822 and 1835, which were 189 years and 176 years, respectively, from 2011, not 300 years.

But even then there exists a discrepancy, since in 1833 Newton's Principia still carried a Catholic disclaimer against his heliocentrism, and in 1850 Mario Marini was assigned by the Church to write a defense of the Church's decision against Galileo. So Mr. Palm's claim that the Church "defected from the faith for 300 years" is not very accurate, especially since geocentrism was not made an infallible dogma in order for the Church to "defect from the faith."

Again, the purpose of our campaign is to enlighten the Catholic to the ecclesiastical history and scientific data concerning geocentrism. Practically the whole world has been taught and has believed that the Catholic Church was wrong in censoring Galileo. They also believe that there exists no scientific support for geocentrism and that heliocentrism has been proven beyond dispute. But these beliefs are erroneous. When we add up all the history, the Church's stand for geocentrism is very clear, up to and including the highest levels of the magisterium. Likewise, modern science, within the last 100 years or so, has shown quite convincing evidence that the earth is in the center of the universe and does not move. There are still some wrinkles to work out in the geocentric universe, but the basic rudiments of the system are plainly evident for all to see. From both this ecclesiastical and scientific evidence, the Catholic cleric and layperson should at least be open to investigating the issue and allowing the tenets of geocentrism to be taught freely and openly, giving the Church and the Holy Spirit the position of being the final judges on the matter.

Robert Sungenis

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