

Response to Jared Olar from Robert Sungenis regarding his article at:

<http://www.pekintimes.com/opinions/columnists/x1916546987/Setting-the-record-crooked-on-Galileo>

"Setting the record crooked on Galileo"

By Jared Olar

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Mr. Olar writes:

PEKIN, Ill. — Coming soon to a state near your own: a day-long record-straightening conference of the most impressive record-straighteners you've never heard of, who will render the inestimable service of finally setting the record straight about Renaissance astronomer Galileo Galilei and his two run-ins with the Holy Office of the Roman Inquisition!

Yessiree! Just pay a measly registration fee of \$50 and take a little road trip on Nov. 6 to South Bend, Ind., and you can attend "Galileo Was Wrong: The Church Was Right," which is being billed as the "First Annual Catholic Conference on Geocentrism."

No, really. As Dave Barry says, I am not making this up. The conference organizers have a flier on the Internet and everything, right here:

www.galileowaswrong.com/galileowaswrong. Amazing.

R. Sungenis: Yes, it is "amazing." It is amazing to witness people like Mr. Olar (someone we've "never heard of") who has never even broached the subject of the scientific study of geocentric cosmology, much less studied it to any appreciable degree to afford himself the room to make an intelligent assessment about it, resort to displays of childish sarcasm, ridicule and character assassination to get across his biased and uninformed opinion to the captive Pekin audience. It would have been better if Mr. Olar investigated the scientific research of the conference speakers, perhaps read their books or articles or listened to their recorded lectures before he accidentally put his foot into his mouth. At least that is what an honest reporter would do prior to writing an article on a subject with which he has very little knowledge. Manya Brachear of the *Chicago Tribune* and Holger Dambeck of *Spiegel Online* (with whom I gave interviews last week) are two shining examples of the right approach to scientific journalism. They were very cordial and took the time to ask for the scientific and historical reasons we would venture into this rather sacrosanct area of cosmology. (You can read these interviews at the Q&A section of our website www.galileowaswrong.com). Perhaps that's why Mr. Olar hasn't advanced any further in his career than the Pekin Times (a newspaper we've "never heard of"). Those who advance have discovered that you get more with honey than you do with vinegar. But since Mr. Olar has thrown me his vinegar, I'm going to throw it right back at him in this rebuttal, and perhaps add a little Tabasco for spice.

Mr. Olar: Another amazing thing you can find on the Internet is a video of time lapse images taken by the aptly-named Galileo spacecraft in 1990, showing the rotation of the earth: www.philvaz.com/apologetics/p92.htm.

R. Sungenis: As Abraham Lincoln once said, "It is better to remain silent and be thought a fool than to open one's mouth and remove all doubt." Apparently, Mr. Olar is of the fallacious opinion that a spacecraft taking time-lapse photography of the earth proves that the earth rotates. No it doesn't. This is one of the more common elementary mistakes made by people on a geocentric witch hunt who don't know the physics behind what they are saying. Perhaps no one ever told Mr. Olar that there is no absolute reference frame in space upon which the spacecraft can take its pictures. The whole basis of geocentrism is that there is no physical difference between a rotating earth in fixed universe and a fixed earth in rotating universe. All the kinematic and dynamic elements are identical. As far as Mr. Olar knows, the space in which the craft is set could be rotating around the earth. Taking time-lapse photography of the earth would then make it appear as if the earth were rotating. That's why even Albert Einstein said the following: "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" (*The Evolution of Physics: From Early Concepts to Relativity and Quanta*, Albert Einstein and Leopold Infeld, 1938, 1966, p. 212), or perhaps this one from Einstein's contemporary, Arthur Eddington: "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), or perhaps this one from Templeton prize winner, physicist, and editor of the science magazine *Nature*, Paul C. W. Davies, when he was confronted in the late 1970s with the new model of cosmology proposed by the well-known physicist George F. R. Ellis (a cosmology that proposed the Earth was in a central position in the universe), and was forced to reply: "His new theory seems quite consistent with our astronomical observations, even though it clashes with the thought that we are godless and making it on our own" (P. C. W. Davies, "Cosmic Heresy?" *Nature*, 273:336, 1978). In the same article Davies admits this astounding fact: "...as we see only redshifts whichever direction we look in the sky, the only way in which this could be consistent with a gravitational explanation is if the Earth is situated at the center of an inhomogeneous Universe." Obviously, Mr. Olar doesn't know any of this information because he hasn't first moved himself beyond the prejudice of his own ignorance to search it out. He could have asked me, and I would have obliged, as I do with every sincere query.

Mr. Olar: If you decide to take that road trip, you'll be treated to presentations with titles such as "Scientific Evidence: Earth in the Center of the Universe," "Scientific Experiments Showing Earth Motionless in Space," "Answering Common Objections to Geocentrism," "Galileo and the Church: What Really Happened," and "Carbon 14 & Radiometric Dating Show Young Earth."

In case you're confused by the title of that last presentation, it will not provide scientific evidence of what the earth was like when it was young. Rather, it will attempt to prove that

the earth is just a few thousand years old ("young earth") rather than some four billion years old as the scientific evidence indicates ("old earth").

Now, one can believe that the earth is young without believing that it is also the unmoving center of the entire universe, but it's not all that surprising to find geocentrism and young earthism cohabiting within the same mind — both ideas are based on a strictly literal interpretation of the Bible. Even so, one would think organizers of a conference dedicated to geocentrism might have thought to leave room on the bill for a seminar on Flat Earthism or fairies, or phrenology or phlogiston.

R. Sungenis: Here we have the usual canard that ignorant critics flash before their respective audiences in order to heighten the demagoguery — the time-honored show-stopper called the "Flat Earth." The audience to whom Mr. Olar speaks is equally as ignorant about cosmology and thus the epithet usually works very well. We understand. Attacks like these are common fare. It's like a child who is frightened in the dark. He is too immature to reason that the darkness won't hurt him so his nerves force him to imagine all kinds of bogeymen lurking in the shadows. The question now for Mr. Olar is, will he put away these childish fears and begin an honest investigation of the issues before he writes his next article?

Mr. Olar: The conference's main organizer is a Catholic apologist named Robert Sungenis, co-author of a two-volume work with the same title as the conference. To get an idea of the quality of the scholarship undergirding Sungenis' "Galileo Was Wrong" book and conference, one need only scan the title of the conference's keynote address, to be delivered by Sungenis himself: "Geocentrism: They Know It But They're Hiding It."

That's right. The past four centuries of scientific advances in physics and astronomy — and the space program too — are all a vast, diabolical conspiracy. Sungenis, unsurprisingly, professes to be agnostic about whether or not man has really walked on the moon.

R. Sungenis: While Mr. Olar is talking about my apparent lack of "quality scholarship," all I can say is that he has just given us a perfect example of his lack of journalistic scholarship. What journalist would judge an 1100-page scientific and historical treatise that contains over 2000 detailed footnotes and 100 pages of bibliography by merely extracting the title of the author's lecture and making some snide comment about it? What journalist, if he has any sense of honesty and decency, would be so dogmatic about his prejudice without even reading even one paragraph of why the author might pick such a provocative title? The answer, of course, is that Mr. Olar appears to be neither a qualified journalist nor is he interested in finding out the truth. He's a man with built-in prejudices who can't control his passions and thus has decided to go on a smear campaign in an effort to justify his ignorance and thereby deter anyone from doing an honest investigation of the issue.

Be that as it may, we certainly anticipated immature objections like those of Mr. Olar's. That is why we set aside a whole chapter of our book (chapter 2) and filled it with quotes from famous astrophysicists who admit that they have an agenda to hide the fact that the scientific evidence shows earth in the center of the universe. For example, here's one from Edwin Hubble (from whom the Hubble Space Telescope is named) when he saw through his own telescope that earth was in the center of the universe (the same as Paul C. W. Davies

admitted above): "...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" (*The Observational Approach to Cosmology*, 1937, pp. 50, 51, 58-59).

We also have several chapters which show that modern science discovered through a series of experiments from 1818 to 1887 that the earth was motionless in this center, but did their best to figure out some alternate explanation to avoid the obvious evidence. That is why, after the last of these experiments were performed, Albert Einstein's biographer admitted: "The problem which now faced science was considerable. For there seemed to be only three alternatives. The first was that the Earth was standing still, which meant scuttling the whole Copernican theory and was unthinkable" (*Einstein: The Life and Times*, pp 109-110). Do you see the word "unthinkable"? Well, that translates into this: 'we know that a fixed earth would answer the experimental data but we can't accept that answer, so we will have to think up another answer that saves face for the pride of modern science.' On and on it goes. We have reams of such quotations from modern scientists. So Mr. Olar can conjure up all the bogeymen he wants. That's all he has. We have the scientific evidence on our side, right from the mouths of those whom Mr. Olar takes such pride as consorts of his own ignorance.

As for my right to be an agnostic about the moon landings, I'm certainly not the first and won't be the last. Any intelligent person who has studied the issue is going to have doubts as to whether the United States had the capability to put a man on the moon in 1969 when, for example, the processing power of a 1969 computer was less than one-tenth of that in a typical cell phone of today, especially when the U.S. was at the height of the Cold War and was still stinging from the Russian launch of Sputnik in 1957, and especially when the ability to fake a moon landing in a hidden studio was well within the talents of Hollywood technicians. My suspicions are only heightened when I see Neil Armstrong holding an American flag on the moon and suddenly a gust of wind forces the lower part of the flag to move up to the upper part of the flag. Any fool knows there is no wind on the moon. You can see this video on the Internet and in the documentaries made of the moon landings. Yes, and I might as well tell you so I can beat Mr. Olar to the punch: I also believe 9-11 was an inside job and that the Muslims had nothing to do with it, and I maintain this belief along with several thousand other intelligent scientists, engineers, military personnel, airline pilots, firemen and the like who, from their expertise in this area, are thoroughly convinced that we have been sold a bill of goods by our government.

Mr. Olar: When he's not weaving nutty conspiracy theories about scientists trying to keep us from finding out that the earth is the only thing in the universe that doesn't move, Sungenis is weaving ugly and paranoid conspiracy theories about (you guessed it) the Jews. No doubt he'll reveal during his keynote address that it's the Jews who are also behind the anti-geocentrism conspiracy.

R. Sungenis: It doesn't surprise me that Mr. Olar would venture into this area. Notice, being the impeccable journalist he has exemplified throughout this article, Mr. Olar decides it is now the proper time to play the "anti-semitic" card and further his acute character assassination of me. Although I've never said a word about heliocentrism being a Jewish plot, Mr. Olar simply can't resist the temptation to plant that canard into his audience's mind. It works well for him, I admit, at least until people begin to see from the evidence that it is people like Mr. Olar who are attempting to pull the wool over our eyes, not me.

Mr. Olar: Should we be concerned about a gathering of lunatic fringe pseudoscientists? Maybe not. Most of us can safely ignore their ravings, or at most hold them up for a little much-deserved mockery. But as a Catholic, I have a personal stake in this. Sungenis and his colleagues can make fools of themselves if they like, but I wish they'd stop making Christianity and Catholicism look foolish too.

R. Sungenis: Foolish? I'm glad Mr. Olar brought this up. Who of us is "making Christianity and Catholicism look foolish"? Let's look at the evidence. As I explained recently to another one of my "Catholic" critics, Mark Shea, does the embarrassment really come from a Catholic apologist, such as myself, who shows the world the plethora of scientific evidence supporting geocentrism and uses it to defend the decisions of the medieval Church against Galileo, and who has also discovered that the scientists who refuse to accept the geocentric evidence do so, by their own admission, because they have a prior philosophical commitment to viewing the earth as merely a speck of dust in the remote recesses of space that found itself there all by chance? Or should the embarrassment come from an obnoxious Catholic journalist who feels not the slightest guilt for ridiculing and rejecting the numerous official decisions of the Catholic magisterium of the 17th and 18th centuries that condemned heliocentrism as "formally heretical"; who has no guilt for ignoring the absolute consensus of Church Fathers who rejected the heliocentrism of the Greeks; and who has no guilt in disregarding the exegetical patrimony of his own Church that was not afraid to take Scripture at face value (e.g., "this is my body"; "whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood")? If we, as Catholics, can believe that a wafer is no longer a wafer but is really God, then how is it that we can't trust that same Church when it tells us the earth doesn't move? I find it quite odd how Catholics like Mr. Olar can embrace something as mysterious as transubstantiation and yet totally reject geocentrism, especially when science outrightly rejects former but has given us an amazing amount of evidence for the latter.

No, if we look at this honestly, the embarrassment comes from the Catholic who makes the 17th and 18th century popes and cardinals look like a bunch of bumbling idiots who didn't have the common sense to stay out of the cosmos, much less give a fallacious assessment of its motions. It is precisely Mr. Olar's "forget-the-tradition" apologetic that has encouraged unbelievers to conjure up every excuse for their sins and rejection of the Catholic Church by using the excuse: "Well, if the Church got it wrong on such a simple thing as whether Scripture teaches that the earth moves, why in the world should I trust it with my soul and any other interpretations of Scripture?" "If they were so blind when dealing with Galileo, why should I trust it when it tells me not to practice contraception or homosexuality or remarriage after divorce?" Yes, indeed, Galileo has become their perfect alibi and they have been using him for nearly 500 years. Unfortunately, few Catholics, if any, ever considered that maybe, just maybe, the Church was actually led by the Holy Spirit to condemn

heliocentrism, just as it was led by the same Spirit to condemn every other heresy that came its way. That's an apologetic I can be proud of; an apologetic that takes away all the "embarrassment" when we face the world and its excuses for sin.

The embarrassment comes when I hear people like Mr. Olar implicitly teach that somehow the Holy Spirit was on vacation in the 17th and 18th centuries, and who prefers to have the Church corrected by such immoral characters as Galileo (who fathered three children out of wedlock, and deserted two of them); by Newton (who was an Arian and believed the Catholic Church was the whore of Babylon and said that the world would end in 2060 because we should add the 1260 years of Rev. 12 to 800 AD when the Catholic Church reached its apostate peak), and Einstein (who committed adultery on his first wife; abandoned her three children; committed multiple adulteries on his second wife and was thinking of marrying her 20 year old daughter, and finally divorced the wife and abandoned the daughter). Ironically enough, the science of both Newton and Einstein, if applied correctly, supports geocentrism, not denies it, but since Mr. Olar has no education in physics, telling him these things is like dealing with a child.

Mr. Olar: They also need to stop ignoring some basic principles of biblical interpretation that come from the two greatest Doctors of the Catholic Church, St. Augustine and St. Thomas Aquinas.

"One does not read in the Gospel that the Lord said, 'I will send to you the Paraclete who will teach you about the course of the sun and moon.' For He willed to make them Christians, not mathematicians," wrote St. Augustine. Elsewhere, he wrote, "One could ask which shape and form of heaven must be accepted by faith on the authority of Holy Scripture. Many dispute about these things which the sacred writers passed by in silence, because they are without importance for attaining eternal life."

Aquinas also advised, "First, hold the truth of Scripture without wavering. Second, since Holy Scripture can be explained in a multiplicity of senses, one should adhere to a particular explanation only in such measure as to be ready to abandon it if it be proved with certainty to be false — lest Holy Scripture be exposed to the ridicule of unbelievers, and obstacles be placed to their believing."

R. Sungenis: Mr. Olar's appeal to Augustine and Aquinas might have some bite, that is, until we realize that both these saints were dyed-in-the-wool geocentrists, and who chose this cosmological stance in the face of the Greeks of the former's day who were touting heliocentrism and the Indians of the latter's day who were touting the same. Here's a few quotes from Augustine to prove the point: "the whole earth is suspended on nothing. For perhaps the world keeps its central place by the same law that attracts to its center all heavy bodies" (*City of God*, Bk XIII, Ch 18). "Who else save Joshua the son of Nun divided the stream of the Jordan for the people to pass over, and by the utterance of a prayer to God bridled and stopped the revolving sun? (*Tractates*, XCI, Ch XV, 24-25, 2). "...the day is finished by the motion of the sun, and by his circuit from east to east....as the sun is accustomed to accomplish his whole course in from morning to morning....because, when at the prayer of one the sun stood still in order that he might achieve his victorious battle, the sun stood still, but time went on (*Confessions*, Bk XI, Ch XXIII, 30). Here's a quote from

Aquinas to prove the same: "The Earth stands in relation to the heaven as the center of a circle to its circumference. But as one center may have many circumferences, so, though there is but one Earth, there may be many heavens" (*Summa Theologica*, "Treatise on the Work of the Six Days," Question 68, Article 4).

Moreover, liberal Catholics and other such sycophants who have swallowed the biased conclusions of popular science are quite fond of using Augustine's quote but they invariably do so out of context and without realizing that right in his very quote Augustine admits that the sun has a "course" in the sky, and thus his only purpose is to tell us that the Holy Spirit did not teach the technical aspects of that course, not that the Holy Spirit did not teach that the sun had a course. Anyone with even a cursory knowledge of Scripture, inspired by the Holy Spirit, knows it is replete with passages that say the sun moves around the earth, and just as many that say the earth doesn't move.

In light of the new information I am giving Mr. Olar about Augustine's authentic views, perhaps the next time he quotes from the great saint he should use this one, since Augustine speaks directly to "weak brethren" like Mr. Olar:

"But more dangerous is the error of certain weak brethren who faint away when they hear these irreligious critics learnedly and eloquently discoursing on the theories of astronomy or on any of the questions relating to the elements of this universe. With a sigh, they esteem these teachers as superior to themselves, looking upon them as great men; and they return with disdain to the books which were written for the good of their souls; and, although they ought to drink from these books with relish, they can scarcely bear to take them up" (St. Augustine, *The Literal Meaning of Genesis*, Book 1, Chapter 20, Para. 41, Ancient Christian Writers, *ibid.*, p. 44.)

Mr. Olar: Even St. Robert Bellarmine, who played a central role in the ill-advised condemnation of Galileo, cautioned that if scientific proof were obtained that the earth orbits the sun rather than the other way around, the Church's authorities would have to admit they misunderstood the Bible. The condemnation of Galileo came with an escape clause.

R. Sungenis: This is mere wishful thinking for people like Mr. Olar who have abandoned their tradition for the latest ideas from popular science. The qualified historians who write about Bellarmine's stance (e.g., McMullin, Finnochiarro, Coyne, *et al*) whole-heartedly disagree with Mr. Olar for the simple reason that there can be no "escape clause" when the Church put the full weight of her magisterium behind the condemnation of Galileo and heliocentrism as "formally heretical." Likewise, Bellarmine would never have pursued Galileo with the ferocity he did if he believed the Church could ever be proved wrong. Let's look at one of them. Here's the analysis from Fr. Coyne, a Vatican astronomer:

...Bellarmine, should remain, but always subject to reinterpretation. Is this a correct presentation of Bellarmine's position? The final report interprets Bellarmine as saying: "As long as there are no proofs for the movement of the Earth about the Sun, it is necessary to be cautious in interpreting Scripture." What Bellarmine actually says is: "Should proofs be had, then we must go back and reinterpret

Scripture.” The difference is: Bellarmine did not say: “Theologians should be cautious now in interpreting Scripture in expectation that proofs for Copernicanism might appear” but rather: “If a proof were to appear, then on that day in the future theologians would have to be cautious in interpreting Scripture.”

This interpretation of Bellarmine’s position, in both the final report and in the Papal address, is based on a partial and selective reading of the *Letter to Foscarini*. In the passage immediately preceding the one just cited, Bellarmine had taken a very restrictive position by stating that:

Nor can one answer that this [geocentrism] is not a matter of faith, since if it is not a matter of faith ‘as regards the topic,’ it is a matter of faith ‘as regards the speaker’; and so it would be heretical to say that Abraham did not have two children and Jacob twelve, as well as to say that Christ was not born of a virgin, because both are said by the Holy Spirit through the mouth of the prophets and the apostles.

Clearly if geocentrism is a matter of faith “as regards the speaker,” then openness to scientific results and circumspection in interpreting Scripture are simply ploys. They lead nowhere. Furthermore, Bellarmine cites Scripture itself in the person of Solomon to show that proofs for Copernicanism are very unlikely. And still more, at the end of the *Letter to Foscarini* Bellarmine appears to exclude any possibility of a proof by stating that our senses clearly show us that the sun moves and that the earth stands still, just as someone on a ship “sees clearly” that it is the ship that is moving and not the shoreline. Both discourses [Poupard’s and the Pope’s] cite Bellarmine’s statement:

I say that if there were a true demonstration [of Copernicanism] then one would have to proceed with great care in explaining the Scriptures that appear contrary and say rather that we do not understand them, rather than that what is demonstrated is false.

What they do not cite is the next sentence of Bellarmine: “But I will not believe that there is such a demonstration until it is shown to me.” From the concluding sentences of the letter it is clear that Bellarmine was convinced that there could be no such demonstration. A further indication of this conviction on Bellarmine’s part is that he supported the Decree of the Congregation of the Index which was aimed at excluding any reconciliation of Copernicanism with Scripture.... And why did he agree to deliver the injunction to Galileo in 1616? This injunction prohibited Galileo from pursuing his research as regards Copernicanism. Galileo was forbidden to seek precisely those scientific demonstrations which, according to Bellarmine, would have driven theologians back to reinterpret Scripture. (“The Church’s Most Recent Attempt to Dispell the Galileo Myth,” in *The Church and Galileo*, pp. 345-346).

Clearly, Mr. Olar needs to do more homework before he once again distorts the historical record in his favor.

Mr. Olar: We may grant to Sungenis that "Galileo was wrong" about some things, and some of his claims and arguments were bad science. Given the state of science and religion in the 1600s, the scientific mistakes that Galileo made and the harsh reaction of the Catholic Church are understandable (if no less wrong). But scientists and the Church have learned much since then. Sungenis and his friends should listen to Augustine, Aquinas and Bellarmine, and try to think more like Catholics.

R. Sungenis: Well, the real truth is, we have proven in this short rebuttal that we should listen less to Mr. Olar's biased distortions of what Augustine, Aquinas and Bellarmine said, and instead take the time to do the research of what they actually said and meant. We've done that very thing in over 1100 pages of scientific and historical research in *Galileo Was Wrong: The Church Was Right*, but I can tell that Mr. Olar did practically no research before he wrote his scathing hit piece against me and geocentrism. He, like most uninformed people who delve into this topic, merely speak from an elementary school level of science knowledge, mixed with a lot of emotion and prejudice in an effort to protect what they believe the *status quo* should be.

Mr. Olar: Community editor Jared Olar may be reached at 346-1111, ext. 660, or at jolar@pekintimes.com. The views expressed in this column are not necessarily those of the Pekin Daily Times.

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Mr. Olar: More about Sungenis 'credentials' here

[http://sungenisandthejews.blogspot.com/search/label/fake doctorate](http://sungenisandthejews.blogspot.com/search/label/fake%20doctorate)

Sungenis has no official capacity in the Catholic Church and was forced by his bishop to take the name 'Catholic' off of his organization. Thank you.

R. Sungenis: Gee, what a surprise to see Mr. Olar continue his attack by relying on unresearched information, biased opinions, character assassination, innuendo, and demagoguery. It's a pity he wasn't as thorough in his research of geocentrism. We might not have had this tussle. In any case, let me give the full and truthful story.

First of all, the above mentioned "blogspot" is run by former disgruntled employees of mine who, after they climbed the Catholic apologetics social ladder on my name for a few years, left and started their own websites, mainly to attack me. For the most part, they didn't take kindly to me rubbing against their Zionist vision for the world. I have nothing to hide in that regard. I believe Zionism and the Jews who promote it are a political blight on the world; a religious heresy of the worst kind, and an ideological poison that holds the rest of the world hostage to its trigger finger. In fact, the person who wrote the hit piece attacking my degree (Jacob Michael) admits in the first paragraph that his main motivation is that people not listen to my views on the Jewish Zionists! I couldn't have said it better myself. Incidentally, after working with me at CAI for a couple years and making a name for himself, Mr. Michael left and started his own website. It ran for about a year and then folded since few people were, in his own words, "listening to him." I found it interesting how Mr.

Michael made such a big deal over the origin of my Ph.D. and tried to discredit my writings because of it, yet he wrote books and articles for his patrons and all without even a BA or MA degree, much less a Ph.D. Mr. Michael couldn't attack my BA and MA, since they come from some of the best US accredited academic institutions (namely, George Washington University and Westminster Theological Seminary). But he and his compatriots sensed a weak spot in my Ph.D., and there they set their crosshairs in an effort to bring me down.

The truth is, I received my Ph.D. from Calamus International University. Despite the title of the above "blogspot," it is not a "fake" degree. No one at Calamus was paid to write a fake diploma for me, as is the case with all "diploma mills" scattered throughout the world. Over the course of two years, I wrote a 700-page dissertation for Calamus under the supervision of two academic advisors, and did all the other requirements stipulated by Calamus for the degree. I was given an "excellent" grade in nine out of nine academic and writing categories, the highest distinction that Calamus can give. It is like graduating magna cum laude.

As for Calamus' accreditation status, what Mr. Michael doesn't say in his hit piece is that Calamus is not a university of the United Kingdom and therefore cannot have UK accreditation or recognition by the UK government. Likewise, Calamus is not a United States university and so it cannot come within the official US regional accreditation system. Calamus is also not a European Union university and can thus receive no accreditation from the EU. Calamus is an international private distance-learning university and there is no government-approved accreditation system for such universities. There is, however, private accreditation available for independent academic institutions such as Calamus. As such, Calamus is fully accredited by the International Association for Distance Learning, and its website is located at www.iadl.org.uk

That being said, I should add that, the motivation for me to go to Calamus was precipitated by some issues that arose in my Ph.D. studies in 2003 at Maryvale Institute in Birmingham, England, a fully-accredited Catholic institution, at that time under the academic umbrella of The Open University of Europe. I had asked the Institute if I could change my dissertation topic to Geocentrism, but the supervisor would not permit it. I then found out that Calamus would allow me to do so. So I had to make a decision. Should I stay at the EU accredited Maryvale or follow my heart's desire and write a dissertation for Calamus that did not have EU accreditation? I chose the latter, but with the express intention of going back to Maryvale once I completed my Ph.D. with Calamus. That is where I stand presently. I am reenrolled in the EU accredited Ph.D. program at Maryvale Institute (which now comes under the accreditation of Liverpool Hope University) and the topic of my dissertation, interestingly enough, is a critique of Catholic Zionism.

As for Mr. Olar's comment that "Sungenis has no official capacity in the Catholic Church," this is at best a half truth, and as such, totally distorts the real picture.

As a point in fact, no Catholic apologist today, whether it be Scott Hahn, Karl Keating, Patrick Madrid, Jeff Cavins, or any of the now dozens of Catholic laypeople who have entered the apologetics field, have an "official capacity in the Catholic Church." The only ones with an "official" capacity are those who are ordained as a deacon, priest or bishop,

and perhaps those who work immediately under the bishop at the chancery office (e.g., the chancellor). Each lay Catholic, however, has what we may call an “official” lay capacity to express his views to both the bishops and fellow Catholics. This prerogative is expressly stated in the 1983 Catholic Code of Canon Law, stating in Canon 212, paras. 2 & 3:

“The Christian faithful...according to the knowledge, competence, and prestige which they possess, they have the right and even at times the duty to manifest to the sacred pastors their opinion on matters which pertain to the good of the Church and to make their opinion known to the rest of the Christian faithful...”

Hence, not only is it my option to hold this conference about what the Fathers and the medieval Church decreed concerning Galileo, Canon 212 says it is my “duty” to do so, and it tells me to reveal this information to both “pastors” and “the Christian faithful.”

As for Mr. Olar’s last comment that I “was forced by the bishop to take the name ‘Catholic’ off of his organization,” this is another half-truth, and it is actually more egregious than the previous half truth. The bishop referred to is Kevin C. Rhoades who, at the time of the incident, was the bishop of Harrisburg, PA, of which diocese my organization, CAI, was domiciled. In 2007, the individuals who wrote the above “blogspot” started a letter writing campaign against me and had flooded Bishop Rhoades’ office with accusations about my writings against the Jews and Zionism. Bishop Rhoades, who was already sympathetic to Zionism evidenced by his long history (following his mentor William Cardinal Keeler who installed him as bishop) of appeasement and ecumenical dialogue with the Jews, sided with the bloggers. Rhoades then invited me to come to his office to speak with his vicar general, Fr. William King, about the controversy. During the meeting with Fr. King, I discovered that both he and Bishop Rhoades held to the heresy of antisupersessionism – the view that the Jews still retained legal possession of the Mosaic covenant. This came as little surprise to me, since William Cardinal Keeler had held to the same heresy in his 2002 document *Reflections on Covenant and Missions* that he wrote with several Jewish rabbis. As of 2009, the USCCB (United States Conference of Catholic Bishops) repudiated the heresies contained in the *Reflections* document. But the heresy had also found its way into the 2006 *United States Catholic Catechism for Adults*, for on page 131 it stated: “Thus the covenant that God made with the Jewish people through Moses remains eternally valid for them.” Whereas in 2002 I had written a detailed and comprehensive critique of Keeler’s *Reflections* document, I then wrote another critique of the US Catechism’s heresy (which was published in the January 2008 issue of *Culture Wars*) and I sent it to the Vatican and the USCCB. By June 2008 the bishops of the United States voted 231 to 14 to eliminate the heretical sentence about the Mosaic covenant from the US catechism that I, and only I, had pointed out to them and the rest of the world. After that, Rhoades’ campaign against me dwindled, but not before he forced me to take the name “Catholic” from my website because I dared disagree with his heretical doctrine. Later, I was given written proof that both Fr. King and Bishop Rhoades were peddling the heresy about the Mosaic covenant when a friend of mine had intercepted an email that Fr. King wrote to all the priests of the dioceses of Harrisburg, which stated that I was teaching “supersessionism” [sic] and that this was “not a teaching of the Catholic Church,” even though it was. [For documentation, I photocopied Fr. King’s letter and it is now part of my new book: *Catholic/Jewish Dialogue: Controversies and Corrections*, p. 705. But once the USCCB’s vote of 231 to 14 exposed Rhoades and King’s

view, their campaign against me came to an abrupt halt, and I was vindicated. About a year later, the Vatican shipped Rhoades off to South Bend and put another bishop in Harrisburg this past year.

I don't think I need to say anything else.

Robert Sungenis, Ph.D.

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