

## Real Catholic TV on the Galileo Issue

Reviewed by Robert Sungenis



Let me say upfront that my critique of Michael Voris' treatment of Galileo is in no way to be interpreted as a disapproval or disavowal of anything else he does in regard to restoring the Catholic Church. I admire every episode of his *Real Catholic TV* and have even featured some of them on *The Bellarmine Report* website. My critique is for the sole purpose of correcting what I believe are the errors in his treatment, mainly because they are the same errors that are regularly disseminated by many Catholics who have not studied the Galileo issue in depth and who have been intellectually intimidated by the claims of today's popular science. As a result, I must subject Michael's thesis to "the vortex where lies and falsehoods are trapped and exposed," but in many other areas, Michael Voris is one of the best defenders of the Catholic faith that I am privileged to know.

### **The Review:**

For the last few decades, Catholic apologetics on the Galileo issue has been flopping helplessly like the proverbial fish on a dry beach. Totally convinced that modern science has disproven the traditional teaching that the Earth is motionless in the center of the universe, these apologists have placed a huge burden on themselves. They must try to explain how the Church, which they believe is guided by the Holy Spirit and which is based on the Tradition that was disseminated and upheld century after century, could suddenly fall into such abject error as to condemn what they believe is a proven scientific fact about the Earth's position and motion. Every year a new book appears trying to solve this intractable riddle. As we would expect, the apologetic advanced by these Catholic researchers is limited to trying to find some reason the Church, although sincere, made a grievous mistake in not being open to the advances of science and/or trying to find some reason why the Holy Spirit did not protect the Church from error in this instance as He had protected her from error in all other issues of faith, morals and Scriptural interpretation for the previous 1600 years.

The usual course these apologists follow is to invent a plausible excuse for why the Church and the Holy Spirit suddenly had a break in their relationship. The difficulty in this approach, of course, is that if the Church and the Holy Spirit had a break on the Galileo issue, why couldn't they have had a break on other issues? If we face the logical implications of this frightening scenario, we are suddenly faced with a Church that might be guided by the Holy Spirit but, then again, might not be guided. For example, if the Church was wrong about the literal interpretation of Scripture's revelation that the Earth does not move, could the Church have been wrong to literally interpret Matthew 26:26 ("This is my body") and teach transubstantiation and the sacrament of the Eucharist, especially since most of the rest of Christendom interprets it figuratively? Interestingly enough, these denominations interpret Matthew 26:26 figuratively because they can't fathom that God would take the place of a thin wafer of bread anymore than most Catholics today can't fathom that God could make the whole universe revolve around a motionless Earth.

Catholic apologists will try to escape these dire implications by claiming that the Galileo affair did not involve papal infallibility and thus they conclude they are on safe ground in separating out the Galileo affair. But that reasoning does not dismiss the conundrum. It only brings the matter to a different level of discussion for the simple fact that the Church puts as much reliance on its Tradition and its continuity in the Ordinary Magisterium as it does in the intermittent exercise of its Extraordinary Magisterium. In fact, the Ordinary Magisterium is so powerful an authority that the Church puts it on par with the Extraordinary. This is taught for example in *Lumen Gentium* 12 which says the following:

"The holy People of God shares also in Christ's prophetic office: it spreads abroad a living witness to him, especially by a life of faith and love and by offering to God a sacrifice of praise, the fruit of lips praising his name (cf. Heb. 13:15). The whole body of the faithful who have an anointing that comes from the holy one (cf. 1 Jn. 2:20 and 27) cannot err in matters of belief. This characteristic is shown in the supernatural appreciation of the faith (*sensus fidei*) of the whole people, when, "from the bishops to the last of the faithful" they manifest a universal consent in matters of faith and morals. By this appreciation of the faith, aroused and sustained by the Spirit of truth, the People of God, guided by the sacred teaching authority (magisterium), and obeying it, receives not the mere word of men, but truly the word of God (cf. 1 Th 2:13), the faith once for all delivered to the saints (cf. Jude 3). The people unfailingly adheres to this faith, penetrates it more deeply with right judgment, and applies it more fully in daily life."

Now let's apply this to the Galileo affair. Since it is a fact that the "People of God," which includes "the bishops to the last of the faithful," believed unanimously, firmly and without equivocation in the doctrine of geocentrism from the beginning of the Catholic Church and throughout the Galileo affair in the 1600s; and who were "guided by the sacred teaching authority" to do so, the belief in geocentrism necessarily fulfills the criteria of *Lumen Gentium* 12 that these same People of God "cannot err." It is an undeniable fact that all the Fathers, all the medievals, all the bishops, priests, saints, doctors, theologians and the remaining Christian faithful of every nation believed in the doctrine of geocentrism. In fact, it was the Church's argument in 1616 (led by Pope Paul V) and 1633 (led by Pope Urban

VIII) against Galileo that since the Fathers were in consensus on geocentrism, the Church could not depart from that doctrine, since a consensus of the Fathers was understood to be doctrine passed down from the Apostles.

Not surprisingly, some Catholic apologists have thus asserted that because most Catholics in the twentieth century had abandoned the traditional teaching of geocentrism, this means the Holy Spirit is now teaching the “People of God” that heliocentrism has been correct all along. But that notion, of course, is impossible, since the “People of God” could not have been “aroused and sustained by the Spirit of truth” into believing that geocentrism was correct for almost two millennia to then have the Spirit suddenly change His mind to teach them the opposite. It would make the Holy Spirit a liar, which is certainly impossible. The reality is, if the “People of God” were led to believe that geocentrism was the truth, and which was, according to the stipulations of *Lumen Gentium* 12, “guided by the magisterium” [Popes Paul V and Urban VIII] to confirm their consensus, then there is simply no possibility that a change in their belief could be understood as a movement of the Holy Spirit. In fact, we may consider the fact that the slide away from the Church’s traditional teaching on cosmology into modern Big Bangism, evolution, heliocentrism and relativity is just another sign of apostasy.

Unfortunately, not very many Catholic apologists see or understand the conundrum they are in. As a result, they invariably abandon two-millennia of Catholic tradition for the mess of pottage that atheistic science feeds them, and they do so without ever investigating the actual claims of science. Since most of them are not educated in science (and those who are educated often refuse to consider the scientific data against heliocentrism), they accept the claims of popular cosmology as if chained to a post. They would rather live with a dichotomy between the Church and the Holy Spirit than ask whether the claims of popular science for heliocentrism are true and trustworthy. Consequently, to continue the analogy, they end up like the above fish flopping from side to side and never moving anywhere in the debate, except to wait for the next apologist to arrive on the scene and propose a new reason for why there appears to be a rupture between the Church and the Holy Spirit in the Galileo affair. In the end, the “new” perspective merely manufactures the same old futile arguments wrapped with brighter paper and prettier bows. Hence, instead of preserving the Tradition; instead of taking Scripture at face value; instead of exonerating the Popes and cardinals who fought Galileo; instead of critically investigating the claims of modern science, we are given a series of excuses that ridicule the Tradition; twists the words of Scripture; faults the Popes with personality disorders; and bows at the feet at whatever popular science shoves down our throat without so much as a question of its methodology.

We are told that we must accept the “apologetic” that all the Fathers, even though they were in absolute consensus, were misguided; that the medieval theologians were also misled as was the cap of Catholic theology, the 1566 Tridentine catechism under Pius V which taught geocentrism in four passages. We are told we must believe that Pope Paul V in 1616, who accepted his commission of cardinals’ finding that heliocentrism was “formally heretical,” didn’t understand either his proper role or his limitations as the vicar of Christ, Galileo or science; that Pope Urban VIII in 1633, who also approved the outcome of the canonical trial against Galileo and his Congregation of the Index’s judgment that

heliocentrism was “formally heretical,” was just an irascible old codger who let his ego get the best of him. On and on the excuses and rationalizations are made by Catholic apologists today who, as is apparent by their lectures, know very little of the history or the science to be making such judgments.

**Michael Voris:** So ... let’s examine the Galileo myth ... and uncover further what really happened. As with all CIA shows we start with a thesis statement. And that thesis is ... The true reason Galileo was tried for heresy is two-fold ...first ... for his theological ideas ... such as the meaning of scripture ... and second ... for his scientific findings ... such as heliocentrism. So ... in order to understand Galileo better let us begin with Galileo’s early life and then later transition into the topics of science and the Catholic Church.

Life of Galileo. Galileo Galilay was born in 1564 ... his first interest was the priesthood ... but later decided to study mathematics. In 1589 ... with his education ... he was appointed chair of Mathematics at the university of Pisa. A short time later ... in 1592 ... when he was a young man ... he got a job teaching math and science at the University of Padua until 1610 ... where he taught for the next 18 years.

The focus of his life then turned fully to science. Through his observations ... discoveries ... and quarrel with the Church ... Galileo eventually became one of the most famous scientists who ever lived. The world and the scientific community ... see Galileo in many different lights. Galileo is seen as one of the originators of scientific inquiry – at least in the early days. Today is he known as a champion of forbidden intellectual truths ... and thinking in a radical way. He is characterized as the first scientist to run the risk of complete ruin in the face of what he believed. Even some of the most influential and well-known scientists today have commented on the role Galileo has played in making of modern science.

Stephen Hawking ... a well-known English theoretical physicist and cosmologist ... said ... Galileo probably bears more of the responsibility for the birth of modern science than anybody else. And then there is Albert Einstein ... a theoretical physicist and the originator of the famous theory of relativity ... who called him the father of modern science. So ... the champions of modern day science obviously hold Galileo in high regard. But ... why is this? Well ... his scientific career was quite successful ... for example ... he was able to improve drastically upon the telescope. These improvements made waves in the scientific community. As a cosmologist ... Galileo broke new ground in the study of the universe. For instance ...he was the first person to see sunspots ... the moons of Jupiter ... the phases of Venus ... surface features on the moon ... the rings of Saturn ... and faint stars in the Milky Way galaxy.

With these accumulating discoveries ... the current standard of Aristotelian cosmology was soon to be challenged ... regarding the earth as the center. Initially ... many astronomers and philosophers refused to believe that anything was wrong with Aristotle's ideas. After all ... Galileo was running headlong into unknown territory and trying to break a two millennial old tradition ... this didn't sit well with people.

**R. Sungenis:** Actually, the first one to break the Aristotelian cosmology of crystalline spheres was Tycho Brahe, not Galileo. Brahe discovered a super nova in 1572 and a comet in 1577 which, if Aristotle's crystalline spheres existed, would have broken through them. So, Aristotle was already on his way out, but not his geocentrism, since Brahe was a geocentrist who did not use Aristotle.

**Michael Voris:** Around this time ... the Church got involved because Galileo began encroaching upon matters of faith and the Church didn't like this. Not because they were out to rule the world ... but because they wanted to ensure the faithful were only being fed genuine truth. This marks the first very public episode between the "clash" of science and religion in relation to the Catholic Church.

**R. Sungenis:** Actually, the first "public" episode was about 75 years prior when Copernicus and Rheticus published their respective books on heliocentrism. After a battle of five years, both books were banned and eventually put on the Index. The importance of this is that right from the get-go the Church said that heliocentrism would not be tolerated.

**Michael Voris:** So ... let us shift our attention to the actual case of Galileo ... as it took place ... step by step. The Case of Galileo. Well ... what you have to understand ... Galileo wasn't the most humble scientist or Catholic ... he was impressed with his discoveries ... which led to an arrogance regarding Church teaching and eventually arguing with the Church about the meaning of the Bible. The Galileo case really begins with how Galileo reacted to his critics. The Galileo "problem" can be seen when you remove the lens that he was somehow an innocent victim ... who stood up for truth ... and view him more as a stiff-neck person ... who had a theory and nothing more. Galileo simply refused to be intellectually honest. He refused to admit that ... as far as he or anyone else could see ... literally ... for the time being ... his theory was un-provable ... even though he came very close to proving it.

**R. Sungenis:** Galileo didn't come close to proving heliocentrism, and to this day there is no proof. All the alleged proofs (e.g., stellar aberration, stellar parallax, Newton's laws of gravity, the seasons, Foucault pendulum, etc.) have shown to provide no scientific proof for heliocentrism, since they all can be explained in a geocentric universe.

**Michael Voris:** Galileo was an activist intent on getting his way ... who repeatedly rejected offers of compromise.

**R. Sungenis:** No, the Church did not offer Galileo a compromise. There was some talk of allowing Catholics to treat heliocentrism as hypothetical, but no such compromise was offered to Galileo. He was given an injunction in 1616 not to address the subject of heliocentrism for the rest of his life.

**Michael Voris:** His personality wasn't the only issue he faced ... he just so happened to be alive during a time when the Church was more sensitive to challenges than before. They were tumultuous times. The protestant revolt was in full ascent ... actively tearing the church and nations apart across Europe. These two issues of Galileo's headstrong personality and political/religious turmoil ... combined to create a perfect storm. The world

was changing ... and the Church wanted to make sure Galileo's theory wasn't going down the wrong path. This "storm" caught up with Galileo around 1610 ... when he published a book called the "Starry Messenger." This marks the beginning of the Galileo Case. It described many new discoveries Galileo had made. The book also raised a new interest in the theory of heliocentrism. Heliocentrism is the astronomical theory that the earth and other planets revolve around the stationary sun ... which is at the center of the universe. However at the time most people including the Church believed in Geocentrism ... which is the idea of having the earth as being the center of the universe. The big shift in public thought came when Galileo's telescopic observations were made known about Venus. Many educated people switched to a geo-heliocentric model of the universe during this time. Heliocentrism wasn't a new idea ... having first been proposed as early as the third century BC by Aristarchus of Samos. Eighteen hundred years later ... during the renaissance ... around the year 1540 ... Copernicus continued to develop the idea of heliocentrism and was published in 1543 ... but ultimately still could NOT prove that heliocentrism was true.

About the same time Galileo was creating his telescope ... a fellow scientist the astronomer Johannes Kepler was trying to refine the heliocentric model. He did this by trying to prove it with calculations but again ... Kepler wasn't able to achieve precision. Because neither Copernicus nor Kepler could prove heliocentrism completely via geometry or another mathematical method ... the science world turned to Galileo and his vast improvements on the telescope. It is important to remember that heliocentrism was rejected by many of the leading scientist of that day. Many scientists attacked Galileo's discoveries because it disagreed with Aristotle's model of the universe ... as well as several passages of scripture.

**R. Sungenis:** Aristotle was only indirectly impinging on the heliocentric/geocentric debate. As noted, Brahe rejected Aristotle but was a geocentrist. Copernicus accepted Aristotle's crystalline spheres and perfect circles, but was a heliocentrist. There was a lot of mixing and matching in this era of cosmology.

**Michael Voris:** Galileo disputed with many people ... scientists and religious alike. His first dispute was with Christoph Scheiner ... a prominent Jesuit priest ... over the discovery of sunspots ...which became a lifelong feud. As we can see ... he wasn't shy when talking about his peers or the prevailing ideas of the time. He called Johannes Kepler's idea ... the moon causes the tides ... as "useless fiction". It is important to point out that even though he happened to be correct about heliocentrism ...

**R. Sungenis:** One doesn't "happen to be correct about heliocentrism." There is no scientific proof for heliocentrism, then or today.

**Michael Voris:** there were other things ... such as Kepler's idea about the moon and tide relationship ... that he was dead wrong about ... nothing was a given back in Galileo's day ... even though it may appear obvious to modern man in present times. Galileo also refused to accept Kepler's elliptical orbits of the planets ... believing instead the perfect shape of an orbit is a circle.

**R. Sungenis:** Ironically, the one who didn't accept perfect circles for the planets' orbits was not Copernicus but Ptolemy. Ptolemy knew that Aristarchus' heliocentric model (which used the perfect circles of Aristotle) didn't work correctly, so although Ptolemy adhered to Aristotle's central earth, he departed from Aristotle and used an equivalent of Kepler's elliptical orbits for the planets' orbit 1500 years before Kepler. It was called the Equant. The Equant varied the orbit so that it was not a perfect circle. As a result, Ptolemy's system was very accurate. He used less epicycles than Copernicus' heliocentric model.

**Michael Voris:** It is of the utmost importance to note that ... the Catholic Church never officially rejected the idea of heliocentrism. They were actually neutral on physical matters in which little or no evidence existed.

**R. Sungenis:** No, as noted, both Copernicus and Rheticus's books on heliocentrism were banned and put on the Index. Bartolomeo Spina, the Master of the Sacred Palace from 1542 until his death in 1547, sought to have Copernicus' book banned, which was eventually carried out by his Dominican colleague Giovanimaria Tolosani, who died two years later in 1549. Tolosani wrote a detailed geocentric treatise in 1546, which he dedicated to Paul III and which included an endorsement from Spina. In it Tolosani vehemently rejected Copernicus' universe and declared it an extreme danger to the faith precisely because of its attempt to deliteralize Sacred Scripture. Rheticus' works, including the earlier pro-Copernican work, *Narratio prima*, were all placed on the Index of Forbidden Books published between 1559-1593, with a subsequent suppression of *Narratio* ordered by the Inquisition in 1598. Fr. Foscarini's book on heliocentrism was banned and placed on the Index in 1615. In 1616, the Paul V's commission of 11 cardinals stated that heliocentrism was "formally heretical," and their judgment was approved by Paul V. In 1633, a canonical trial of Galileo resulted in the Congregation of the Index issuing two condemnations against heliocentrism, all approved by Pope Urban VIII who was heavily involved in the process and sent letters to Catholic authorities all over Europe informing him of the Church's decision against Galileo. In 1664, Kepler's book on heliocentrism was placed on the Index, along with Copernicus and Galileo.

Now, if by "officially rejected" Mr. Voris means infallible dogma, he is correct, since the Church has not issued a statement in the extraordinary form, but during the 1500-1600s there was no extraordinary form (i.e., papal infallibility) for the Pope to use.<sup>1</sup> What Mr. Voris needs to grapple with is that the Church, to this very day, has issued no "official rejection" of geocentrism and no formal acceptance of heliocentrism, since the 1616 and

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<sup>1</sup> The Church can certainly look back into history and determine if a Pope's decree fulfills the definition of papal infallibility decreed during Vatican Council I in 1870, but the Church has given no authorized list of which papal decrees before 1870 are infallible, and no such decision regarding whether Pope Paul V and Urban VIII's decisions against Galileo and heliocentrism are infallible. As the Vatican astronomer Fr. George Coyne has stated: "So far as we can conclude from the circumstances of the condemnation, Pope Urban VIII and the cardinals of the Holy Office certainly did not themselves think it to be 'reformable.' Furthermore, if it was reformable, why has the condemnation of 1633 or, for that matter, the Decree of the Congregation of the Index in 1616 never explicitly been 'reformed'" (*The Church and Galileo*, 2005, p. 354). Coyne adds: "In the Galileo case the historical facts are that further research into the Copernican system was forbidden by the decree of 1616 and then condemned in 1633 by official organs of the Church with the approbation of the reigning pontiffs" (ibid).

1633 decrees have never been rescinded or abrogated by an official Church teaching, including John Paul II (which we will address later since Mr. Voris mistakenly believes his 1992 speech was an “official” teaching for heliocentrism).

**Michael Voris:** And yet ... Galileo was aware of this ... he has been quoted as saying ... “I would say here something that was heard from an ecclesiastic of the most eminent degree; ‘That the intention of the Holy Ghost is to teach us how one goes to heaven, not how the heavens go.’ That’s a nice summation of how the church treats scientific theories ... right from the mouth of Galileo himself.

**R. Sungenis:** Actually, the Church never treated scientific issues with Cardinal Baronius’ rather shallow statement (“the intention of the Holy Ghost is to teach us how one goes to heaven, not how the heavens go”). From the Church Fathers, to the medievals, to the 1566 Tridentine catechism, to the trial of Galileo, the Church always maintained that the Holy Spirit did, indeed, teach us how the heavens go, since at every opportunity He had the Church declare that the Earth does not move and that the sun revolves around the Earth. Cardinal Bellarmine told Galileo that to say that the sun does not revolve around the earth would be like saying that Jacob did not have twelve sons. Both contradict the Holy Spirit’s literal words in Scripture.

**Michael Voris:** Heliocentrism was freely discussed and often accepted in some Catholic circles.

**R. Sungenis:** Until the 1800s the “Catholic circles” who accepted heliocentrism were rather small. As late as the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century many in the Church had not conceded the Galileo issue. The Pontifical Academy of Science commissioned Pio Paschini, a priest and professor of ecclesiastical history in Rome, to write a biography of Galileo for the third centenary of his death, 1942. After completing the work three years later, Paschini submitted it to the Pontifical Academy of Science but it was rejected by both the Academy and the Holy Office, mainly because it was judged to be too favorable to Galileo. In his book Paschini refers to a letter to Deputy Secretary Montini (who would later be elected Paul VI in 1963) which reveals that his opponents at the Vatican were voicing with one accord the same historical facts that the president of the Pontifical Academy of Sciences, Agostino Gemelli, had stated in 1941, namely, “...although Galileo did not provide a decisive demonstration of Copernicanism, neither did Newton, Bradley, or Foucault” (Finocchiaro, *Retrying Galileo*, p. 278.)

**Michael Voris:** But ... when it came to the trial of Galileo ... the Catholic judges upheld the scientific method and said Galileo’s theory had to be proven before he called it fact ... however ... Galileo continued to insist that his theory was fact ...without the necessary proof to convince the scientific community and the Church. Galileo’s position roiled many ... both in the Church and in the scientific community. We must remember ... Aristotle had rejected heliocentricity. Aristotelian thought was mostly the standard during Galileo's time. Back in that day ... it was actually quite difficult to prove astronomical theories because technology hadn't advanced far enough. The highest charge against Galileo was the fact that he couldn't completely prove heliocentricity. He also failed to counter the very argument



that had been made by Aristotle two thousand years earlier. The argument being that if heliocentrism was true ... we would be able to observe it by obvious shifts in the positions of the stars as the earth moved around the sun ... also known as the stellar parallax. The stellar parallax wouldn't be confirmed until the nineteenth century with astronomer Friedrich Bessel's observations.

**R. Sungenis:** Stellar parallax doesn't prove heliocentrism, since it can also be demonstrated in the geocentric system. Only heliocentric propaganda made it appear as if stellar parallax was the final lynchpin to prove heliocentrism. Catholic apologists need to come up to speed with current science on this issue. Here is an admission from a college physics course:

It is often said that Tycho's model implies the absence of parallax, and that Copernicus' requires parallax. However, it would not be a major conceptual change to have the stars orbit the sun (like the planets) for Tycho, which would give the same yearly shifts in their apparent positions as parallax gives. Thus if parallax were observed, a flexible Tychoean could adjust the theory to account for it, without undue complexity. What if parallax were not observed? For Copernicus, one only requires that the stars be far enough away for the parallax to be unmeasurable. Therefore the presence or absence of parallax doesn't force the choice of one type of model over the other. If different stars were to show different amounts of parallax, that would rule out the possibility of them all being on one sphere, but still not really decide between Tycho and Copernicus.

In fact, if we don't worry about the distant stars, these two models describe identical relative motions of all the objects in the solar system. So the role of observation is not as direct as you might have guessed. There is no bare observation that can distinguish whether Tycho (taken broadly) or Copernicus (taken broadly) is right. (University of Illinois, Physics 319, Spring 2004, Lecture 03, p. 8.)

**Michael Voris:** A short time later ...William Herschel would confirm that the sun is not the center of the universe .. and by the 1920s Edwin Hubble had shown that the solar system was part of a galaxy that was only one of many billions. Galileo ... living in the seventeenth century ... was a few centuries away from having the confirmation he needed.

**R. Sungenis:** Neither Herschel's or Hubble's discoveries would prove heliocentrism. In fact, Hubble's discovery of red shift in galaxies gave the first astronomical evidence that the Earth was in the center of the universe, which is why Hubble said this in his 1937 book, *The Observational Approach to Cosmology*:

...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.

**Michael Voris:** It should be pointed out that believing the earth was motionless in the seventeenth century was not absurd. The problem for Galileo was the development of technology ... even with his personal advancements of the telescope.

**R. Sungenis:** Galileo's problem was not "technology," and it is not "absurd" in the twenty-first century to believe the Earth is motionless since no scientific experiment has ever shown the Earth to be moving. Here are a few quotes to that effect by famous 20<sup>th</sup> century scientists:

**Albert Einstein:** "I have come to believe that the motion of the Earth cannot be detected by any optical experiment."<sup>2</sup>

**Henrick Lorentz:** "Briefly, everything occurs as if the Earth were at rest..."<sup>3</sup>

**Arthur Eddington:** "There was just one alternative; the earth's true velocity through space might happen to have been nil."<sup>4</sup>

**Wolfgang Pauli:** "The failure of the many attempts to measure terrestrially any effects of the earth's motion..."<sup>5</sup>

**Henri Poincaré:** "A great deal of research has been carried out concerning the influence of the Earth's movement...the results always negative."<sup>6</sup>

**Albert Michelson:** "This conclusion directly contradicts the explanation...which presupposes that the Earth moves."<sup>7</sup>

**Bernard Jaffe:** "The data were almost unbelievable... There was only one other possible conclusion to draw — that the Earth was at rest."<sup>8</sup>

**Lincoln Barnett:** "...nor has any physical experiment ever proved that the Earth actually is in motion."<sup>9</sup>

**Max Tegmark:** "Our entire observable universe is inside this sphere of radius 13.3 billion light-years, with us at the center."<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Speech titled: "How I Created the Theory of Relativity," delivered at Kyoto University, Japan, Dec. 14, 1922, as cited in *Physics Today*, August, 1982.

<sup>3</sup> Lorentz's 1886 paper, "On the Influence of the Earth's Motion on Luminiferous Phenomena," in Arthur Miller's *Albert Einstein's Special Theory of Relativity*, p. 20.

<sup>4</sup> Arthur Eddington, *The Nature of the Physical World*, 1929, pp. 11, 8, in sequence.

<sup>5</sup> Wolfgang Pauli, *The Theory of Relativity*, 1958, p. 4.

<sup>6</sup> From Poincaré's report *La science et l'hypothèse* ("Science and Hypothesis") published in 1901, now published in Paris, Flammarion, 1968, p. 182, Ludwik Kostro's, *Einstein and the Ether*, 2000, p. 30.

<sup>7</sup> Albert A. Michelson, "The Relative Motion of the Earth and the Luminiferous Ether," *American Journal of Science*, Vol. 22, August 1881, p. 125, said after his first interferometer experiment could not detect the movement of ether against the Earth.

<sup>8</sup> Bernard Jaffe, *Michelson and the Speed of Light*, 1960, p. 76. Jaffe adds this conclusion to the above sentence: "This, of course, was preposterous."

<sup>9</sup> Lincoln Barnett, *The Universe and Dr. Einstein*, 2<sup>nd</sup> rev. edition, 1957, p. 73.

**Y. P. Varshni** : “the redshift in the spectra of quasars leads to yet another paradoxical result: namely, that the Earth is the center of the universe.”<sup>11</sup>

**Stephen Hawking**: “...if we observe all other galaxies to be moving away from us, then we must be at the center of the universe.”<sup>12</sup>

**Edwin Hubble**: “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.”<sup>13</sup>

**New Scientist** magazine: “Oxford theorists are proposing an even more outrageous alternative. They point out that it’s possible that we simply live in a very special place in the universe.”<sup>14</sup>

**S. E. Woolsey**: “The observational data show conclusively that the Earth is situated at or very near the center of the gamma-ray burst universe.”<sup>15</sup>

**Halton Arp**: “...we are at the center of a series of explosions. This is an anti-Copernican embarrassment.”<sup>16</sup>

**Timothy Clifton**: “...the apparent acceleration does not invoke any exotic substances, extra dimensions, or modifications to gravity – but it does require a rejection of the Copernican Principle.”<sup>17</sup>

**George F. R. Ellis**: “I can construct a spherically symmetrical universe with Earth at its center, and you cannot disprove it based on observations. You can only exclude it on philosophical grounds.”<sup>18</sup>

**Albert Einstein**: “The struggle, so violent in the early days of science, between the views of Ptolemy and Copernicus would then be quite meaningless. Either...could be used with equal justification.”<sup>19</sup>

**Willem de Sitter**: “The difference between the system of Ptolemy and of Copernicus is a purely formal one, a difference of interpretation only.”<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> (www.hep.upenn.edu/max/wmap3.html).

<sup>11</sup> “The Red Shift Hypothesis for Quasars: Is the Earth the Center of the Universe?” *Astrophysics and Space Science*, 43: (1), (1976), pp. 3,8.

<sup>12</sup> *A Brief History of Time*, 1988, p. 42. Hawking says the same on page 47: “This could mean that we are at the center of a great region in the universe...”

<sup>13</sup> *The Observational Approach to Cosmology*, 1937, pp. 50, 51, 58-59.

<sup>14</sup> “Dark Energy: Is it Merely an Illusion?” *ScienceDaily*, Sept. 29, 2008, citing the article by Timothy Clifton, Pedro G. Gerreira, and Kate Land, “Living in a Void: Testing the Copernican Principle with Distant Supernovae,” *Physical Review Letters*, 101, 131302 (2008) DOI: 10.1103/PhysRevLett.101.131302.

<sup>15</sup> “Gamma-Ray Bursts: What Are They?” in *Seventeenth Texas Symposium on Relativistic Astrophysics and Cosmology*, 1995, p. 446.

<sup>16</sup> *Seeing Red: Redshifts, Cosmology and Academic Science*, p. 195.

<sup>17</sup> “Living in a Void: Testing the Copernican Principle with Distant Supernovae,” *Physical Review Letters*, 101, 131302 (2008) DOI: 10.1103/PhysRevLett.101.131302.

<sup>18</sup> “Profile: George F. R. Ellis,” W. Wayt Gibbs, *Scientific American*, October 1995, Vol. 273, No. 4, p. 55.

<sup>19</sup> *The Evolution of Physics: From Early Concepts to Relativity and Quanta*, Albert Einstein and Leopold Infeld, 1938, 1966, p. 212.

<sup>20</sup> Willem de Sitter, *Kosmos*, 1932, p. 17.

**George F. R. Ellis:** “I think we should start questioning the Copernican principle...Whatever our theoretical predilections, they will in the end have to give way to the observational evidence.”<sup>21</sup>

**I. Bernard Cohen:** “There is no planetary observation by which we on Earth can prove the Earth is moving in an orbit around the sun. Thus all Galileo’s discoveries...can be accommodated to the system [in which] the daily rotation of the heavens is communicated to the sun and planets, so that the Earth itself neither rotates nor revolves in an orbit.”<sup>22</sup>

**Thomas Le Seur & François Jacquier:** “Newton in his third book assumes the hypothesis of the earth’s movement...But we profess obedience to the decrees made by the Supreme Pontiffs against the movement of the earth.”<sup>23</sup>

**Michael Voris:** To validate his stance ...he needed to show that the shift existed ... the stellar parallax ... but he was unable ... even with Geometry.

**R. Sungenis:** Once again, stellar parallax would have proved nothing for Galileo just as it proves nothing today.

**Michael Voris:** He came close to proving his theory of heliocentrism through his telescopic confirmation of the phases of Venus. While he ultimately couldn’t prove it ... Galileo's discovery of the phases of Venus was his most influential contribution to the two-stage transition from full geocentrism to full heliocentrism via a combined theory known as geoheliocentrism.

**R. Sungenis:** Not quite. Ptolemy simply didn’t know how far away the celestial bodies were, and because of that unsolvable problem, he left six variables in his model, one of which allowed his deferents to increase in size once mankind came to know the exact celestial distances. These variables would have accommodated the extended orbit of Venus. Moreover, Ptolemy did not intend his model to be a mirror image of the celestial motions but only a computing device to estimate their movements. His model worked very well. One reason for this was his invention of the Equant, which was, in fact, the same thing as Kepler’s elliptical orbits of the planets. As for epicycles, every system has “epicycles,” but they often go by different names in modern science (e.g., Fourier analysis, Dark Matter, Perturbations, Precession, Nutation, Lense-Thirring effect, etc.) but they are all doing the same thing – accounting for anomalies from perfect orbits.

**Michael Voris:** At this point ... he should have admitted “defeat” and moved on but he did not ... he went on to say that heliocentrism was true without question. The Catholic Church ... in this light ... was correct to disagree with Galileo. Canadian author and TV show host ... Michael Coren ... in his new book ... “Why Catholics are Right” ... had this to say about the Church's position on science: “The science of Galileo's time was very limited and the most

<sup>21</sup> Marcus Chown, “Is the Earth at the Heart of a Giant Cosmic Void? *New Scientist*, Nov. 12, 2008, pp. 32-35.

<sup>22</sup> I. Bernard Cohen, *Birth of a New Physics*, revised and updated, 1985, p. 78.

<sup>23</sup> *Philosophiæ Naturalis Principia Mathematica*, Isacco Newtono, PP. Thomæ Le Seur & Francisci Jacquier, from Geneva 1739 edition to Glasgow 1833 edition.

reasonable view ... was that the earth and the stars were not moving at all ...because essentially no high power telescopes existed. But that the sun ... moon ... and stars were ...and at best the geo-heliocentric model was the only provable theory.”

**R. Sungenis:** First, as I will show in more detail later, the issue had nothing to do with “high power telescopes” since Galileo could easily see the moons of Jupiter and the phases of Venus with his small telescope (and which he then used to assume heliocentrism was correct). Second, Galileo historians agree that Bellarmine and the Church did not believe there would ever be proof for heliocentrism (*e.g.*, Coyne, Finnochiarro, Fantoli, Mullin, *et al*), which is the very reason the Church went on to declare it as “formally heretical.” They argue that if the Church had thought at any time in the future there would be scientific proof for heliocentrism, She would have never condemned it in 1616 and 1633. She had every right to do so because, in Her understanding, it would be a contradiction (not to mention an affront against Her tradition), to declare that Scripture must be interpreted literally only to be forced to change that stance in the future.

**Michael Voris:** The reason heliocentrism was so controversial at the time was because it effectively repropounded man's place in the universe. Man ... during Galileo's time ... was thought to be extremely special ... so much so that the entire universe was physically ordered around him. To challenge this notion was almost unheard of because it meant man was a mere nothing in the eyes of the universe. This didn't sit well with people ... in fact ... it shook their worldview. Although ... what the people of that time failed to realize is ... it doesn't take a physical “place” in the universe to be deemed “special.” It simply takes recognition of the mind that any “place” God so puts you is His will ... and is “special” in its own respect.

**R. Sungenis:** If that premise is true, then why does God transubstantiate himself in place of a wafer and have us eat him? Why doesn't he just rely on spiritual ideas of His presence? Moreover, the physical world reflects the spiritual. The Psalms, for example, teach us that God is immutable but it does so by comparing God to the motionless position of the Earth in space. How could the analogy work unless the Earth were actually motionless and in the center? It is precisely the atheist's goal to remove Earth from the center of the universe since if it is in the center there would be no escape from the fact that Someone put it there, since it couldn't happen by chance. THAT is why modern science, which is mostly atheistic, fights tooth and nail to preserve the Copernican principle, since they know what the dire spiritual implications are if it does not hold up.

**Michael Voris:** No doubt ... Galileo was an extraordinary individual ... but he was treading on areas that challenge the relationship between science and religion and man's place in the universe ...which caused the Church to get involved. We need to realize that for the most part ... Galileo was alone in his fight for heliocentrism.

**R. Sungenis:** Not really. There were a few in the 1500s and early 1600s who, after Copernicus' book, began the challenge. Galileo merely picked up their ideas and tried to find scientific proof for them.

**Michael Voris:** Galileo ... a man of high intelligence ... as it seems ... could not prove it ... although ... he did begin to move popular thought away from geocentrism.

**R. Sungenis:** If anything, Galileo's confrontation with the Church solidified the Church's position even more, since in 1633 Pope Urban VIII sent letters to all the papal nuncios and universities of Europe declaring what the Church had decided and that no one could deviate from the decision. This held sway even in the early 1800s when *Newton's Principia* was in full bloom but was censored by Catholic editors for teaching heliocentrism.<sup>24</sup> It was only when subterfuge was used against Pius VII in 1822 that the first allowance to teach heliocentrism existed. (See my book *Galileo Was Wrong: The Church Was Right*, Volume 2, for the full story).

**Michael Voris:** It is important to note that some of his colleagues even thought he failed in his endeavor. Galileo took this hard and alienated his fellow scientists by his insisting that his observations were true ... that they were fact ... that they were established ... and that any alternative was not only totally wrong ... but the product of weak thinking and incompetent analysis. Galileo ... as it seems ... wanted everyone to accept his theory immediately with no questions asked. The way he approached the entire situation turned many people off. To add to his problems ... when the Church got involved ... he attacked those who were really trying to assist him in his pursuit of knowledge. In Michael Coren's recent book ... here's what he said about the Galileo affair: "As the Galileo issue got bigger ... various people within and outside the Church responded to his comments. Some of the clergy ... for example ... argued from the position of the Bible. They said ... Psalm 93:1 ... 96:10 ... and 1 Chronicles 16:30 ... include the words ... "the world is firmly established ... it cannot be moved." Also ... Psalm 104:5 says ... "the Lord set the earth on its foundations ... it can never be moved." There is a problem ... however ... with taking a literal interpretation of the Bible."

**R. Sungenis:** Why does Mr. Coren have an aversion to interpreting the Bible literally? Literal interpretation is what the Catholic Church has been doing for 2000 years. Literal interpretation of the Bible is precisely why Catholics have the sacraments, since we interpret very literally the Bible passages that teach them, unlike the rest of the world (e.g., Mt 26:26 – "this is my body"; John 3:5 – "unless a man is born of water"; John 20:23 – "whosever sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven, " etc). The only reason some Catholics today shy away from interpreting Scripture literally is because they think science has proven heliocentrism, but it hasn't.

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<sup>24</sup> "Newton in his third book assumes the hypothesis of the earth's movement. The author's [Newton's] propositions could not be explained except on the same hypothesis. Hence we have been obliged to put on a character not our own. But we profess obedience to the decrees made by the Supreme Pontiffs against the movement of the earth" (*Philosophiæ Naturalis Principia Mathematica*, Isacco Newtono, PP. Thomæ Le Seur & Francisci Jacquier, Genevæ, MDCCXXXIX [1739]. Original Latin: "DECLARATIO: Newtonus in hoc tertio Libro Telluris motæ hypothesim assumit. Autoris Propositiones aliter explicari non poterant, nisi eâdem quoquæ factâ hypothesi. Hinc alienam coacti sumus gerere personam. Cæterum latis a summis Pontificibus contra Telluris motum Decretis nos obsequi profitemur."). The same disclaimer was put in the Geneva edition of 1760, Prague in 1780-85, and finally in Glasgow in 1822 and 1833.

**Michael Voris:** To explain this further ... to a Catholic the Bible is a central part of the faith and requires interpretation and is part but not all the beliefs a Catholic holds.

**R. Sungenis:** Yes, the Catholic is also supposed to depend on Tradition, and in that case, geocentrism is all the more formidable. The Church Fathers were in absolute consensus on geocentrism, which is the very fact that Bellarmine told to Galileo to deny his thesis ("Consider now, with your sense of prudence, whether the Church can tolerate giving Scripture a meaning contrary to the Holy Fathers and to all the Greek and Latin commentators"). The Council of Trent stated that when the Fathers are in consensus we are bound to their interpretation. In fact, there is no consensus in the Fathers stronger than geocentrism, and it is certainly greater than the Immaculate Conception and the Assumption of Mary. Moreover, the medievals also held geocentrism in consensus. The 1566 Tridentine catechism taught geocentrism in four places. So the Tradition is on the side of geocentrism, not heliocentrism.

Trent's stipulation about the authority of the Fathers' consensus was stated as follows:

"Furthermore, in order to restrain petulant spirits, It decrees, that no one, relying on his own skill, shall, in matters of faith, and of morals pertaining to the edification of Christian doctrine, wresting the sacred Scripture to his own senses, presume to interpret the said sacred Scripture contrary to that sense which holy mother Church, whose it is to judge of the true sense and interpretation of the holy Scriptures, hath held and doth hold; or even contrary to the unanimous consent of the Fathers."

Vatican I said the same: "no one is permitted to interpret Sacred Scripture itself contrary to this sense, or even contrary to the unanimous agreement of the Fathers."

Pope Leo XIII's *Providentissimus Deus* said the same:

"and therefore that it is permitted to no one to interpret Holy Scripture against such sense or also against the unanimous agreement of the Fathers....but from the writings and authority of the ancients, who in their turn, as we know, received the rule of interpretation in direct line from the Apostles....the Holy Fathers, We say, are of supreme authority, whenever they all interpret in one and the same manner any text of the Bible, as pertaining to the doctrine of faith or morals; for their unanimity clearly evinces that such interpretation has come down from the Apostles as a matter of Catholic faith."

**Michael Voris:** A Catholic does not always interpret the Bible in a strict literal sense. To a Catholic ... there are many SENSES of scripture.

**R. Sungenis:** But the literal sense is the first and primary sense. According to the 1994 Catholic Catechism, Para 116: "The literal sense is the meaning conveyed by the words of Scripture and discovered by exegesis, following the rules of sound interpretation: 'All other senses of Sacred Scripture are based on the literal.'" According to Pope Leo XIII's

*Providentissimus Deus*, we are not permitted to interpret other than literally unless there is a valid reason for doing so. He stated:

“...provided he carefully observes the rule so wisely laid down by St. Augustine – not to depart from the literal and obvious sense, except only where reason make it untenable or necessity requires; a rule to which it is the more necessary to adhere strictly in there times, when the thirst for novelty and unrestrained freedom of thought make the danger of error most real and proximate.”

Moreover, according to the Catechism, the other “senses” of Scripture do not supersede the literal; rather, they only add to it (e.g., allegorical, moral, anagogical).

**Michael Voris:** Galileo claimed that heliocentrism was not contrary to scripture. He took Augustine’s position ... not to take every passage literally ... particularly when the scripture in question is a book of poetry and songs ... not a book of instructions or history.

**R. Sungenis:** The true facts are these. Pope Leo XIII’s above teaching comes from St. Augustine, whom he quotes in *Providentissimus Deus*. Augustine taught that we are to interpret literally unless there is good and sufficient reason not to do so. Galileo provided no sufficient reason and neither have today’s scientists, since no one has provided any proof for heliocentrism. In fact, far from distancing the Bible from cosmological questions, Augustine admonished Christians who fail to take Scripture as an authority on such issues:

“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.” (The Literal Meaning of Genesis, Book 1, Chapter 20, Para. 41, Ancient Christian Writers, *ibid.*, p. 44.)

**Michael Voris:** He believed that the writers of the Scripture merely wrote from the perspective of the terrestrial world ... from that vantage point that the sun does raise and set. Galileo claimed that science did not contradict Scripture ... as Scripture was discussing a different kind of "movement" of the earth ... and not rotations.

**R. Sungenis:** But that doesn’t prove anything for Galileo, since geocentrists also say the sun rises and sets even though they know that the sun does not really rise and set; rather, it revolves around the earth which only appears as if it is rising and setting against the backdrop of the horizon. In other words, the ancients used figurative language just as we do today.

**Michael Voris:** Given the state of the world at the time however ... Galileo became a flash point for the Church. The Church ...on February 19, 1616 ... asked a commission of



theologians ... known as qualifiers ... about the propositions of the heliocentric view of the universe. On February 24, 1616 ... the Qualifiers delivered their unanimous report ... condemning heliocentrism ... due to its lack of evidence and hard proof.

**R. Sungenis:** There is a little more to it. The “qualifiers” were eleven cardinals. They not only “condemned” heliocentrism, they concluded it was “formally heretical.” Prior to this judgment, Fr. Foscarini’s book on heliocentrism was also condemned one year earlier. On February 24, 1616 the Holy Office thus concluded:

“All agreed that this proposition is foolish and absurd in philosophy and is formally heretical, because it explicitly contradicts sentences found in many places in Sacred Scripture according to the proper [literal] meaning of the words and according to the common interpretation and understanding of the Holy Fathers and of learned theologians.”

Regarding the second proposition

“All agreed that this proposition receives the same censure in philosophy and in respect to theological truth, it is at least erroneous in faith.”

**Michael Voris:** The following day ... on February 25, 1616 ... Pope Paul the V instructed Cardinal Robert Bellarmine ... a Jesuit ... a friend of science ... an internationally respected theologian ... scholar ... and doctor of the Church ... to meet with Galileo and deliver the results of what the inquisition or commission of theologians decided on. Galileo was subsequently summoned ... on February 26, 1616 ... to Cardinal Bellarmine’s residence and asked to accept the orders of the inquisition ... prohibiting ... condemning ... or suspending various books which advocated the Copernican system ... Galileo agreed to these orders ... but still believed that he was right about heliocentrism. Cardinal Robert Bellarmine ... even tried to reach a compromise with Galileo by issuing a document. The Cardinal told his friend that he could not hold or argue the position but could explore and discuss it.

**R. Sungenis:** Bellarmine did no such thing. The Church and Bellarmine gave Galileo an injunction not to teach, explore or discuss heliocentrism. This is the account:

Friday, the 26th of the same month [February 1616], at the palace, the usual residence of the said Most Illustrious Lord Cardinal Bellarmine, and in the chambers of His Most Illustrious Lordship, and in the presence of the Reverend Father Michelangelo Segizzi of Lodi, O. P., Commissary of the Holy Office, having summoned the above-mentioned Galileo before himself, the same Most Illustrious Lord Cardinal [Bellarmine] warned Galileo that the above-mentioned opinion was erroneous and that he should abandon it; and thereafter, indeed immediately, before me and witnesses, the Most Illustrious Lord Cardinal himself being also present still, the aforesaid Father Commissary, in the name of His Holiness the Pope and the whole Congregation of the Holy Office, ordered and enjoined the said Galileo, who was himself still present, to abandon completely the above-mentioned opinion that the sun stands still at the center of the world and the earth moves, and

henceforth not to hold, teach, or defend it in any way whatever, either orally or in writing; otherwise the Holy Office would start proceedings against him. The same Galileo acquiesced in the injunction and promised to obey (*Le Opere di Galileo Galilei*, Antonio Favaro, vol. 19, pp. 321-322).

On March 5, 1616 the Church made its intentions clear:

“Decree of the Sacred Congregation of the most Illustrious Cardinals of the Holy Roman Church specially delegated by Our Most Holy Lord Pope Paul V and the Holy Apostolic See to publish everywhere throughout the whole of Christendom...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*, and by Diego de Zúñiga [in his book] on Job, is now being spread abroad and accepted by many – as may be seen from a certain letter of a Carmelite Father, entitled Letter of the Rev. Father Paolo Antonio Foscarini, Carmelite, on the Opinion of the Pythagoreans and of Copernicus concerning the Motion of the Earth, and the Stability of the Sun, and the New Pythagorean System of the World, at Naples, Printed by Lazzaro Scorriggio, 1615; wherein the said Father attempts to show that the aforesaid doctrine of the immobility of the Sun in the center of the world, and of the Earth’s motion, is consonant with truth and is not opposed to Holy Scripture. Therefore, in order that this opinion may not insinuate itself any further to the prejudice of the Catholic truth, the Holy Congregation has decreed that the said Nicolaus Copernicus, *De revolutionibus orbium*, and Diego de Zúñiga, *On Job*, be suspended until they be corrected; but that the book of the Carmelite Father, Paolo Antonio Foscarini, be altogether prohibited and condemned, and that all other works likewise, in which the same is taught, be prohibited, as by this present decree, it prohibits, condemns, and suspends them all respectively.

**Michael Voris:** Cardinal Bellarmine was trying to allow Galileo enough wiggle room ... in the form of exploring and discussing heliocentrism ... to continue his work without officially supporting it.

**R. Sungenis:** Mr. Voris cannot assert that Cardinal Bellarmine defied his own pope and Holy Office by telling Galileo he could do something when, in fact, Galileo could not do so.

**Michael Voris:** This clause remained in place until 1623 when Galileo approached the new Pope and an old friend ... Urban the VIII.

**R. Sungenis:** There is no clause that gives Galileo the right to pursue his heliocentric system. The only possible remedial position was that which was given to Copernicus’ book, *De revolutionibus*, since it was allowed to be corrected so as to change all thesis statements concerning heliocentrism into hypothetical statements. Nine such revisions were made and a corrected version was republished in 1620. But Galileo was given no such license. He was told never to address the subject of heliocentrism again.

**Michael Voris:** Urban the VII had always supported the investigation of the arts and scientific investigation. More to the point ... Urban supported Galileo throughout his entire professional life. The Pope wanted to help Galileo further by suggesting that Galileo approach this entire situation carefully and as a scholar ... proposing the for and against arguments of the theory. Galileo took the advice of Urban the 8th and published a book called ... "Dialogue Concerning the Two Chief World Systems". This is where the real feud began.

**R. Sungenis:** Pope Urban VIII was not aware that Galileo had been given an injunction by Paul V because Galileo never told him about the injunction. Had he known, Urban would have never encouraged Galileo.

**Michael Voris:** In writing the book ... Galileo used Urban's position to play a fictional Simpleton ...making the Pope a figure of fun in the eyes of the academic world. The fictional "simpleton" ... was the defender of the Aristotelian Geocentric view ... and was often caught in his own errors and sometimes came across as a fool. Indeed ... although Galileo states in his book that the character is named after a famous Aristotelian philosopher ... Simplicius in Latin and Simplicio in Italian ... the name "Simplicio" in Italian also has the connotation of "simpleton". Thus the book was used to both attack the Pope and to advocate heliocentrism ... which was an attack on Aristotelian geocentrism and a defense of the Copernican theory. The Pope did not take this portrayal lightly ... not to mention he was deeply hurt and felt betrayed by someone he had trusted and loved.

**R. Sungenis:** Mr. Voris cannot argue, on the one hand, that "Urban the VII (sic) had always supported the investigation of the arts and scientific Investigation... More to the point ... Urban supported Galileo throughout his entire professional life," and then, on the other hand, argue that Galileo wanted to "make the Pope a figure of fun in the eyes of the academic world"? Galileo had been writing his *Dialogo* since about 1623 when he was good friends with Urban VIII and therefore had no reason to depict the Pope as a fool.

**Michael Voris:** But Galileo didn't stop with the Pope. He also attacked the Jesuits and their astronomers ... who ... not to mention ... went to great lengths to write and speak in his defense. Galileo not only appeared to seek confrontation with the Pope but all those around him who disagreed. At this time ... Galileo was ordered to stand trial on suspicion of heresy in 1633

**R. Sungenis:** It was a little more than that. Galileo had secretly gained an imprimatur for his *Dialogo* in 1632, without the Pope's knowledge. Cosimo Medici had invited Fr. Ricardi to Florence and he wined and dined him with his niece Katerina playing nice. Galileo was present at the dinner. Cosimo and Galileo then convinced Fr. Ricardi to give an imprimatur to Galileo's book. When Pope Urban found out about it, he then summoned Galileo to stand trial for his defiance.

**Michael Voris:** Galileo was ordered to stand trial on suspicion of heresy in 1633 for holding the following opinions: First ... the Sun lies motionless at the centre of the universe.

Second ... the Earth is not at its centre of the universe and moves. And third ... one may hold and defend an opinion as probable after it has been declared contrary to Holy Scripture. He was required to "abjure, curse and detest" those opinions. Above all ... the Church wanted Galileo to prove heliocentrism was correct but again he could not.

**R. Sungenis:** There is no indication at the 1633 trial that "the Church wanted Galileo to prove heliocentrism was correct but again he could not." The matter had already been decided in 1616 when the Inquisition said that heliocentrism was "formally heretical" and Galileo was given an injunction not to address the subject of heliocentrism for the rest of his life. Galileo was given his chance to prove heliocentrism when he was dealing with Cardinal Bellarmine in 1615, but since Galileo provided no convincing proofs, it was then that the Inquisition put a stop to his boasts. The 1633 trial was not an attempt to give Galileo another chance; rather, its sole purpose was to punish Galileo for ignoring the injunction he was given in 1616. At the same time, the Church, following the 1616 decision, declaring heliocentrism "formally heretical," and Galileo was convicted of being "vehemently suspected" of that heresy. (NB: He was not convicted of "formal heresy" because the Church could not determine whether Galileo actually believed what he wrote in the *Dialogo*, so it was reduced to "vehemently suspected"). The two decrees were:

"The proposition that the sun is the center of the world and does not move from its place is absurd and false philosophically and formally heretical, because it is expressly contrary to the Holy Scripture."

"The proposition that the Earth is not the center of the world and immovable but that it moves, and also with a diurnal motion, is equally absurd and false philosophically and theologically considered at least erroneous in faith."

**Michael Voris:** And so ... this is why the Church banned his book ... the Dialogue ... and put him under house arrest. Remember ... Galileo was bent on trying to prove an un-provable theory ... while arguing with the Church about the meaning of the Bible and theology ... so the Church was forced to act. Galileo later recanted his opinions and ostensibly rejected heliocentrism publicly. There was no real tortured in the case of Galileo ... he wasn't even treated badly. Ambassador Nicolini .. the leading Tuscan diplomat in Rome ... was a close friend of Galileo. Nicolini wrote extensively about the case. If he had a bias ... he was against Rome and not Galileo. Nicolini sent regular reports to the court in relation to the Galileo case ... and reported to his king that "the pope told me ... that he had shown Galileo a favor never accorded to another" and that "he has a servant at every convenience".

**R. Sungenis:** Not quite. Fr. Niccolini was the Vatican ambassador between Pope Urban VIII and Cosimo Medici, the Grand Duke of Tuscany. Although Niccolini was one of those who put pressure on Fr. Riccardi to give Galileo an imprimatur, he had no authority at any level in the matter of Galileo. My book *Galileo Was Wrong*, Vol. 2 has a whole section on the role of Fr. Niccolini. His only official role was to bring messages back and forth between Medici and the Pope. In those messages, the Pope was adamant that Galileo was teaching heresy, and the Pope encouraged Medici to use his power to silence Galileo. Here are some of the thoughts and statements that Niccolini records of Pope Urban's judgments on the matter:

While we were discussing those delicate subjects of the Holy Office, His Holiness exploded in great anger, and suddenly he told me that even our Galilei had dared enter where he should not have, in the most serious and dangerous subjects which could be stirred up at this time. I replied that Mr. Galilei had not published without the approval of his ministers....He answered, with the same outburst of rage, that he had been deceived by Galileo and Ciampoli

He said that he had prohibited works which had his pontifical name in front and were dedicated to himself, and that in such matters, involving great harm to religion (indeed the worst ever conceived), His Highness [the Grand Duke] too should contribute to preventing it, being a Christian prince.

In fact, the Pope believes that the Faith is facing many dangers and that we are not dealing with mathematical subjects here but with Holy Scripture, religion, and Faith.

His Holiness answered that this was another reason why he had gone out of the ordinary in this case and that Mr. Galileo was still his friend, but these opinions were condemned about sixteen years ago and Galileo had gotten himself into a fix which he could have avoided; for these subjects are troublesome and dangerous, this work of his is indeed pernicious, and the matter is more serious than His Highness thinks....Then he added, telling me to report it fully to His Most Serene Highness, that one must be careful not to let Mr. Galilei spread troublesome and dangerous opinions under the pretext of running a certain school for young people.<sup>25</sup>

**Michael Voris:** The torture instruments were not used in Galileo's case ... even though that was standard practice of the time. Furthermore ... *The Director for Inquisitors* of 1595 prevented torture in such circumstances ...and if the rules against torture were broken ... those involved would be severely punished. Galileo's case received attention by the Church because he declared a theory a fact and then argued with the Church about the genuine meaning of the Bible. The Church had no other alternative but to deal with Galileo directly. These dealings caused a sort of "legacy" to be left by Galileo that was skewed against the Church. The legacy that religion tries to suppress science or that religion and science are not compatible. Because of this legacy ... science and the Catholic Church debate insists on more explanation. Science and religion and the relationship thereof have many serious modern implications ... especially in relationship to the Catholic Church. And so ...let us explore this relationship between Science and the Catholic Church ... and answer some questions as to how the Church sought to advance science.

**R. Sungenis:** I think the point is being missed. Above Mr. Voris admits that the Church declared the following propositions as heresy:

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<sup>25</sup> *Le Opere di Galileo Galilei*, vol. 14, pp. 388-389, translated by Finocchiaro in *The Galileo Affair*, pp. 235-236.

“First ... the Sun lies motionless at the centre of the universe. Second ... the Earth is not at its centre of the universe and moves. And third ... one may hold and defend an opinion as probable after it has been declared contrary to Holy Scripture.”

Since that is the case, and since the Church has never officially overturned the results of this trial, then Mr. Voris should make some statement as to the official status of the trial. Is Mr. Voris suggesting that the Church can, in two separate instances (1616 and 1633) declare a position as “formally heretical” and do so in the wake of a unanimous consent of the Fathers and the medievals, yet have no bearing on how we are to view cosmology today? The problem here, as I stated earlier, is: Mr. Voris is in the same position as Galileo – he believes in his heart he has proof of heliocentrism but in reality he has no proof. So, as Galileo did, Mr. Voris will dismiss the Church’s tradition and formal decisions on the matter and instead seek to find some way to hold to his position. As such, the Galileo case is repeated over and over again. Why? Because what is supposed to be learned from the Galileo case is never learned. At least Galileo had one thing in his favor that Mr. Voris and the rest of Catholic apologetics does not. Galileo recanted his position, not only in obedience to the Church in 1633, but also privately in the last year of his life, in 1641. What was his reason? Here is what he said:

“The falsity of the Copernican system should not in any way be called into question, above all, not by Catholics, since we have the unshakeable authority of the Sacred Scripture, interpreted by the most erudite theologians, whose consensus gives us certainty regarding the stability of the Earth, situated in the center, and the motion of the sun around the Earth. The conjectures employed by Copernicus and his followers in maintaining the contrary thesis are all sufficiently rebutted by that most solid argument deriving from the omnipotence of God. He is able to bring about in different ways, indeed, in an infinite number of ways, things that, according to our opinion and observation, appear to happen in one particular way. We should not seek to shorten the hand of God and boldly insist on something beyond the limits of our competence.... D’Arcetri, March 29, 1641. I am writing the enclosed letter to Rev. Fr. Fulgenzio, from whom I have heard no news lately. I entrust it to Your Excellency to kindly make sure he receives it.”

**Michael Voris:** The Catholic Church and the Advancement of Science. The Church has a history of breeding scientific discovery ... from the earliest days all the way up to the present day. The Church could almost be characterized as more interested in science than some scientific agencies. As matter of fact ... it would be difficult to find another religious organization that has done as much as the Catholic Church for science. The earliest biblical prophecies attest to scientific endeavors as illustrated in the journey of the three wise men. From the middle ages ... Augustine and Thomas Aquinas both argued that our ability to reason and to engage in empirical investigation is a gift from our Creator. More recently ... Pope John Paul II issued an encyclical entitled Faith and Reason that reaffirmed the tradition of pursuing scientific investigation. John Paul the II also gave many speeches to groups of scientist praising their work as a fulfillment of the human good. Pope Benedict has also been very outspoken about religion and science. If this wasn’t enough ... the church has produced some amazing discoveries via their members.

**R. Sungenis:** All of this is well and good, but it has nothing to do with the Galileo issue. The issue is whether Mr. Voris is going to accept what the Church and its Fathers have decreed on heliocentrism, or is he going to accept the unproven assertions of popular science (which is mostly atheistic) without even attempting to challenge it on the grounds of its own scientific data? To date I know of very few Catholic apologists who, although they are rather staunch and belligerent in their support of heliocentrism, have even addressed the scientific issues in this debate. Those who have addressed them have admitted, in the end, that there is no proof for heliocentrism and plenty of evidence for geocentrism.

**Michael Voris:** If the Church is so against the advancement of scientific discovery ... then why has the Church via their members produced so many amazing and mind-blowing discoveries? Proof of this fact is abundant ... as we shall now see. Here are a few examples of how Catholics have pushed the boundaries of scientific thought in the world through the use of their God-given intellectual abilities:

- Monsignor Georges Lemaitre ... was a Belgian Priest and professor of physics ... he studied cosmology and astrophysics ... Monsignor Lemaitre proposed what became known as the Big Bang theory.

**R. Sungenis:** But the real truth is, the Big Bang model doesn't work. Modern science itself says so, since it has admitted it is missing 95% of the matter and energy in the universe to make it work. When Lemaitre proposed his theory in the late 1930s he wasn't aware of this problem. Interestingly enough, what does work is the geocentric model, since it doesn't need the missing 95%. This is not me saying so, it is modern science. Here is what physicist Timothy Clifton has shown:

An alternative to admitting the existence of dark energy is to review the postulates that necessitate its introduction. In particular, it has been proposed that the SNe observations could be accounted for without dark energy if our local environment were emptier than the surrounding Universe, i.e., if we were to live in a void. This explanation for the apparent acceleration does not invoke any exotic substances, extra dimensions, or modifications to gravity – but it does require a rejection of the Copernican Principle. We would be required to live near the center of a spherically symmetric under-density, on a scale of the same order of magnitude as the observable Universe. Such a situation would have profound consequences for the interpretation of all cosmological observations, and would ultimately mean that we could not infer the properties of the Universe at large from what we observe locally.

Within the standard inflationary cosmological model the probability of large, deep voids occurring is extremely small. However, it can be argued that the center of a large underdensity is the most likely place for observers to find themselves. In this case, finding ourselves in the center of a giant void would violate the Copernican principle, that we are not in a special place” (“Living in a Void: Testing the

Copernican Principle with Distant Supernovae," *Physical Review Letters*, 101, 131302, 2008).

**Michael Voris:** • The Yugoslavian Fr. Roger Boscovich was the founder of modern atomic theory ... he went by many names such as a theologian ... physicist ... astronomer ... mathematician ... philosopher ... diplomat ... poet ... Jesuit ... and a polymath ... he was a Catholic.

**R. Sungenis:** Yes, a good scientist, but I believe Mr. Voris would be interested to know that Fr. Boscovich (c. 1766) was mistaken when he proposed that stellar parallax could prove heliocentrism. As a result of his miscalculation, Fr. Boscovich led many in the Church on a wild goose chase and made them question the consensus of the Fathers and the Church's decrees in 1616 and 1633. The moral of the story is, just because you are a Catholic scientist doesn't mean you are correct in your interpretations of scientific data.

**Michael Voris:** • Louis Pasteur ... a French chemist and microbiologist is remembered for his remarkable breakthroughs in the causes and preventions of diseases ... he created the first vaccine for rabies and anthrax ... he later invented pasteurization ... and he was a Catholic.

**R. Sungenis:** All well and good, but the same applies in this case. Pasteur's theory has not been proven to be the correct model. The rival theory is from Antoine Bechamp, but Pasteur won the favor of Napoleon and was promoted whereas Bechamp was not. (Incidentally, Bechamp was a Catholic, too). Pasteur promoted the "germ" theory while Bechamp promoted the "sympiotic" and "pleomorphic" theory. Modern science is beginning to discover that Pasteur's theory is inadequate, and may be wrong. There is a big controversy today about vaccines, since it has been documented that they often cause the very diseases they are supposed to prevent. Moreover, pasteurization is certainly not the best way to prepare foods, since it kills the good bacteria and enzymes needed for proper nutrition. Pasteurization is used by manufacturers who don't want the extra expense of keeping their dairy cows and equipment clean.

**Michael Voris:** • Roberto Landell de Moura ... invented the radio ... and developed the concepts of "Unity and Physics Forces" and "Universal Harmony" ... Mr. Moura was the first person to publicly demonstrated a radio broadcast ... he accomplished this task on June 3, 1900 ... he was a priest.

- Alexander Fleming ... was a Scottish biologist and pharmacologist ... he wrote many articles on bacteriology... immunology ... and chemotherapy ... he was best known for his discovery of the enzyme lysozyme and the antibiotic substance penicillin ... he was a Catholic.

- Nicolaus Copernicus ... was a renaissance astronomer ... and famous for repropoing the idea of heliocentrism ... Copernicus was involved in many fields' ... mathematics ... astronomy ... canon law ... medicine ... and economics ... he was a priest.

**R. Sungenis:** More than half the known world was Catholic during the lives of these scientists. Surely we would expect a good portion of them to be involved in science. As with



any scientist, the criterion of judging their work is not whether they were “Catholic” but whether they were right or wrong in their proposals. As such, Copernicus’ cosmological science was condemned as “formally heretical.” Moreover, if we were to judge Copernicus on his Catholic life, it was not much to be desired. Copernicus dabbled in the occult and had a mistress who he refused to give up when his bishop told him to send her away. He had a disproportionate love of the Greeks and a disdain for the Church Fathers.

**Michael Voris:** • Enrico Fermi was an Italian-American physicist ... he was known for his work on the development of the first nuclear reactor ... and for his work on the development of quantum theory ... nuclear and particle physics ... and statistical mechanics ... He was a Catholic.

- The father of modern Egyptology was Fr. Athanasius Kircher ... he published around 40 works ... the most notably being in the areas of oriental studies ... geology ... and medicine ... he has been compared to fellow Jesuit Roger Boscovich and to Leonardo da Vinci for his vast range of interests .. he was a Catholic.

- Marie Curie was known for her work in radioactivity ... Mrs. Curie worked in the physics and chemistry fields ... she is the only person to receive a Nobel Prize in two different sciences ... she was a Catholic.

- Agostino Salumbrino ... a Jesuit brother ... who lived in Lima, Peru ... observed the Quechua using the bark of a local tree ... and subsequently developed the first cure for malaria ... the medicine was then exported back to Europe and Rome ... and became known as Jesuit’s bark. The list goes on and on. The contribution the Catholic Church and her members has made to science is enormous ... an entire series could be written on this very topic.

**R. Sungenis:** Again, we would expect Catholics to be involved in science, but this has little to do with deciding the Galileo issue. It is a diversion away from the real issues.

**Michael Voris:** It is silly ... in light of this evidence ... to think that the Catholic Church is somehow OPPOSED to the advancement of scientific discovery.

**R. Sungenis:** Who is accusing the Catholic Church of being against science? It is those who believe that popular science’s interpretation of the data (Big Bangism, relativity, heliocentrism, evolution) is the only correct interpretation. But their interpretations are metaphysics, not science. All of these interpretations have been shown to be inadequate since they don’t answer all of the scientific data. As noted above, it has been shown that geocentrism is actually a more accurate and sustainable scientific position. Unfortunately, those of Mr. Voris’ mentality either don’t know of this scientific alternative or refuse to investigate it before they do exposés on Galileo and cosmology.

**Michael Voris:** A very strong argument can be made that the Church is the force behind the advancement of science ... at least in the early days. Society owes a large debt of gratitude to the Catholic Church ... because of what its members have accomplished.

**R. Sungenis:** Indeed.

**Michael Voris:** There isn't any doubt that Galileo was on to something revolutionary ... and beyond the beaten path.

**R. Sungenis:** Unfortunately, the only “revolutionary” idea that Galileo was “on to” was revolution. The Church stopped him dead in his tracks, since She wasn't about to throw away 1600 years of solid Tradition on an upstart who didn't have any proof for his theories and who didn't obey the Church to keep quiet about it.

**Michael Voris:** After all ... he effectively re-proposed a new outlook on the existence of man and his place in the universe. Although ... he wasn't the first scientist to propose such a theory.

**R. Sungenis:** So, is Mr. Voris more comfortable with Carl Sagan's “Galileo” universe than he is with the biblical universe, the one in which, as Sagan says, “we live on an insignificant planet of a humdrum star lost in a galaxy tucked away in some forgotten corner of a universe in which there are far more galaxies than people” (Carl Sagan, “On the Significance of Man,” Time, October 20, 1980, p. 61)? Perhaps a little reflection on just what Mr. Voris is proposing is due:

“But among all the discoveries and corrections probably none has resulted in a deeper influence on the human spirit than the doctrine of Copernicus.... Possibly mankind has never been demanded to do more, for considering all that went up in smoke as a result of realizing this change: a second Paradise, a world of innocence, poetry and piety: the witness of the senses, the conviction of a poetical and religious faith. No wonder his contemporaries did not wish to let all this go and offered every possible resistance to a doctrine which in its converts authorized and demanded a freedom of view and greatness of thought so far unknown indeed not even dreamed of.” (Goethe)

**Michael Voris:** He was the first to have *some* tangible proof thanks to his telescopic advancements.

**R. Sungenis:** Mr. Voris needs to decide whether he believes Galileo had proof or not. He cannot say Galileo “refused to admit that ... as far as he or anyone else could see...literally... for the time being...his theory was un-provable...even though he came very close to proving it” and then say “He was the first to have some tangible proof.”

**Michael Voris:** We must remember that anytime the “truth” is challenged ... people are going to have issues with it and resist ... we see this time and time again throughout human history.

**R. Sungenis:** Nowhere is Mr. Voris' statement more true than when someone suggests to Catholic apologists today that Galileo was wrong and the Church was right. I hope that as Mr. Voris is “challenged” with facts contrary to his thesis that he reacts better than Galileo did.

**Michael Voris:** The resistance to this new thinking was largely justified on the Church's part.

**R. Sungenis:** “Justified”? How could Mr. Voris believe it was justified if he believes heliocentrism is correct and geocentrism is wrong? Unfortunately, this is the kind of double-speak that Catholic apologists are forced into when they accept the unproven interpretations of popular science and pretend the Church’s uncompromising decrees against Galileo and heliocentrism don’t mean what they say they mean. Does Mr. Voris want us to believe in a Church that makes decisions based on its best guesses instead of being led infallibly for 1600 years of Tradition in its ordinary magisterium by the Holy Spirit?

**Michael Voris:** In order for a new theory to be accepted ... all arguments against must be dispelled and if research is connected to it ... it must be both reliable and valid. There is great importance in being able find very similar results. The scientific method is how all scientists approach empirical investigation regardless of their religious conviction. If other researchers cannot replicate the findings ... the study is said to be effectively worthless. Confirmation in the scientific world is of the utmost importance.

**R. Sungenis:** Since Mr. Voris believes in the scientific method, I suggest he apply it to today’s interpretations of the cosmological evidence. He will find that not only will it show that Galileo’s hypothesis cannot be replicated, he will find a concerted effort from atheistic modern scientists to suppress the scientific evidence that disagrees with their atheistic theories. Too many people are of the opinion that scientists are impeccable specimens of human honesty and erudition and that it would be beneath them to falsify data and make biased conclusions. That is nothing but a myth. Most “science” today is little more than metaphysics, that is, they have already decided what the result should be, and the data is then squeezed into the model with all kinds of fudge factors to make it fit – yes, like putting a square peg into a round hole.

**Michael Voris:** The Church cares about Science and the advancement thereof.

**R. Sungenis:** And THAT is precisely why they condemned Galileo and heliocentrism, since the Church saw firsthand that there was no scientific proof for it, and the same is true today. If Mr. Voris has some scientific proof for heliocentrism he needs to show it, otherwise his whole script defending Galileo is futile.

**Michael Voris:** The only logical conclusion ...therefore ... is that science and the Catholic Church can and do live in harmony ... for the betterment of both fields.

**R. Sungenis:** No, the Catholic Church cannot live in harmony with “science” that is fame-driven, fortune-driven and atheism-driven; it can only live in harmony with TRUE science that seeks only for truth and does not twist the data to its own agenda. Just as there exists the true Church (the Catholic Church), but also many other “churches” who also believe they are the true Church because they have a “better” interpretation of the Bible, so it is in science today. Along with true science there are many imposters who believe they have a

“better” interpretation of the scientific data, but in the end their interpretation is based on their atheistic philosophical presuppositions, not on unbiased empirical evaluation of the data.

**Michael Voris:** Now that we have seen how the Church has advanced science and continues to do so ... let us move to re-fuse science and religion in a harmonious relationship ... in our final word. The Final Word. The Galileo case and to a further extent ... the “clash” between religion and science ... is a cause of sadness. What the Galileo case reveals is the imperfection of its members and relatively little about science and the Church's attitude towards it.

**R. Sungenis:** As it stands, Mr. Voris wants us to believe that all the Fathers in consensus (who were confirmed by Bellarmine and Paul V as binding due to Trent's teaching that patristic consensus is obligatory); that all the medieval theologians in consensus; that the Tridentine catechism which teaches geocentrism as doctrine; that a canonical trial in 1633 that has never been overturned; that Scripture which, when literally interpreted as the Catholic Church has always done in her Tradition, always says the Earth does not move and always says the sun moves around the Earth (and often does so in passages where it is not discussing the sun rising or setting, which is obviously figurative); and the fact that none of this has been officially overturned, abrogated or rescinded in the entire life of the Catholic Church for 2000 years, is merely the “imperfection of its members” instead of the Holy Spirit guiding the Church to remain faithful to Tradition and Scripture!

All I can say is that popular science has completely intimidated Mr. Voris to the point that he no longer considers Tradition and Scripture his ultimate authorities in this matter. Instead of doing a thorough investigation into the claims of popular science, Mr. Voris casts aside almost two millennia of Catholic tradition and teaching; and for what? To agree with Carl Sagan that we are merely a “an insignificant planet of a humdrum star lost in a galaxy tucked away in some forgotten corner of a universe in which there are far more galaxies than people,” and so that we can be bombarded by an agnostic society that spares no criticism of the Catholic Church because it showed itself to be an erroneous judge in Galileo's case and thus must be an erroneous judge in many other places (e.g., homosexuality, conception, marriage, etc.)?

Mr. Voris simply doesn't realize what a huge price he pays for conceding that the Fathers, popes, cardinals, theologians and councils that prohibited Galileo's thesis from gaining a foothold (not to mention Jesus' promise that the Holy Spirit would lead the Church into all truth), is nothing more than the “imperfection of its members.” In the face of that, he does not provide any scientific proof that these “members” made an “imperfect” decision in the Galileo case. He doesn't want to show us the man behind the curtain, for it is obvious that Mr. Voris has never looked behind the curtain.

**Michael Voris:** If we really want to find evidence of an ideology controlling and oppressing science ... let us look at the great atheistic regimes of the twentieth century. For example ... Stalin told his scientists to lie about their discoveries to the point where they in turn lied to him and as a result enacted government policies based on fraudulent research. The cultist

Hitler had an obsession with using science to pervert truth and his theories on eugenics ... social engineering ... and racial health. President Obama has also twisted science to promote his own agenda ... with his Department of Health and Human Services mandating that all health insurances cover contraception and sterilization ... HHS says that scientific studies show that greater use of contraception within the population produces lower unintended pregnancy and abortion rates nationally ... however ... they only used two studies to back up their new mandate ... one of which was from a very biased source ... numerous studies actually show that increased use of contraception does not lower unintended pregnancy and abortion rates. The list goes on of course ... but we think you get the point.

**R. Sungenis:** We thank Mr. Voris for showing us that men in charge of those who wear the white lab coats often distort the scientific data to their own agenda. In this case, Mr. Voris' "point" also applies to those who were interpreting the "science" that was used to prop up heliocentrism from the time of Galileo to the present. From Galileo's Venus to Bessel's parallax to Newton's gravity to Einstein's relativity, there have been many attempts by science to "prove" that the Earth moves, but they all failed (as one can easily see by the quotes I amassed earlier showing that the scientific evidence points to a non-moving Earth). In fact, one of those quotes comes from Albert Michelson himself who said that his 1887 experiment "directly contradicts the explanation...which presupposes that the Earth moves."<sup>26</sup> For the next two decades after 1887 modern science was befuddled. As Einstein's biographer put it:

"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)

Science didn't know how to get out of the conundrum that empirical science had given it. No one wanted to go back to a non-moving Earth, even though it was the simplest and easiest solution, for that would mean science had to admit the Catholic Church was right all along against Galileo! It would also mean the Catholic Church had the right to rule over their lives because it would be readily apparent that She was guided by the Holy Spirit in all things.

In fact, so convincing was Michelson's experiment that one physicist (who was a non-Christian) said that if it was available during the time of Paul V and Urban VIII it would have been a slam dunk against Copernicus and Galileo:

"It is both amusing and instructive to speculate on what might have happened if such an experiment could have been performed in the sixteenth or seventeenth centuries when men were debating the rival merits of the Copernican and Ptolemaic systems. The result would surely have been interpreted as conclusive

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<sup>26</sup> Albert A. Michelson, "The Relative Motion of the Earth and the Luminiferous Ether," *American Journal of Science*, Vol. 22, August 1881, p. 125, said after his first interferometer experiment could not detect the movement of ether against the Earth.

evidence for the immobility of the Earth, and therefore as a triumphant vindication of the Ptolemaic system and irrefutable falsification of the Copernican hypothesis.” (G. J. Whitrow, *The Structure and Evolution of the Universe*, 1949, 1959, p. 79).

So what did modern science do in this conundrum? It did what it always does when its foundations are about to be exposed. It moves the goal posts. It changes the rules of the game. THIS is why Einstein became famous. He saved modern society from having to admit the Earth was standing still in space and he did so by changing the rules of physics. If the Earth is motionless, we possess an absolute and nothing is relative. We can judge the whole universe by having just one absolute. We would also conclude that a motionless Earth in the center could not happen by chance. But Einstein, whose writings show he despised the Catholic Church, fought against it by making everything relative. He accomplished this by some clever scientific abracadabra. He told us that what we considered stable, such as like time, motion, space and distance, were not stable – they were relative and we had no absolute by which to judge them – the “absolute” that was bequeathed to us by Scripture, the Fathers and held fast by the Church – a non-moving Earth.

So, after two decades of pondering, Einstein came up with an alternative interpretation to the 1887 Michelson-Morley experiment. He proposed that instead having the Earth motionless, we could adjust the very measuring sticks that Michelson used in his experiment, namely, time, distance, space and matter; and in doing so we could keep the Earth moving! Einstein ignored the simpler alternative (the non-moving Earth). Why? Einstein’s biographer already told us – it was “unthinkable.” Some science. Imagine doing a scientific experiment and throwing out one of the easiest and most cogent solutions simply because your philosophical presuppositions won’t allow it due to the theological, cultural and societal implications it would unleash. My guess is that Mr. Voris never heard of these facts.

So we thank Mr. Voris for pointing out how the powers-that-be distort the scientific data for their own agendas. We thank him for admitting that all is not well with those who interpret the empirical evidence. He confirmed what we suspected from the beginning – the raw scientific data is pure; the interpreters are often corrupt.

**Michael Voris:** The argument that Galileo was correct to stand against the church in the name of science is ridiculous and superficial at best. Those who hold that Galileo was correct all around are seriously misled.

**R. Sungenis:** So, does Mr. Voris believe that science at large supports Galileo or denies him? It seems the new apologetic is to play middle-of-the-road (not that this tactic hasn’t been tried before). The claim is that Galileo’s science did not prove heliocentrism but today’s science does, which then allows the proposition that Galileo was wrong to confront the Church with science. As noted earlier, Mr. Voris has not escaped the problem, because in reality he is just like Galileo – he *thinks* he has proof, but he doesn’t.

**Michael Voris:** As we’ve shown ... Galileo was actually at fault for many of his problems and the Church was merely reacting to a potentially bigger problem down the road ...

considering the protestant revolt ... the Church was almost forced to act in some official way.

**R. Sungenis:** Not really. The Church acted because Galileo was teaching error, as judged by the 1600-year Tradition before him. Be that as it may, Mr. Voris categorizes the condemnation of Galileo and heliocentrism as an “act in *some* official way.” Well, what “way” is that? Mr. Voris has studiously avoided mentioning how intimately involved the Popes were on the condemnation. In the 1616 decision, he relegates the matter to the “qualifiers” but doesn’t tell us that Pope Paul V approved the decision of the qualifiers and told Bellarmine to bring an injunction against Galileo never to teach heliocentrism again. In the 1633 decision, Mr. Voris does not mention that Pope Urban VIII was in protracted discussions (by way of Fr. Niccolini) to convince Cosimo Medici to stop Galileo; Voris does not mention that Pope Urban called Galileo to trial; he never mentions that Urban sent letters to all the papal nuncios and universities of Europe enforcing the decision against heliocentrism. It seems that as far as Mr. Voris is concerned, the Popes had little to do with the affair.

Additionally, how does Mr. Voris’ phrase “to act in some official way” square with his earlier statement: “It is of the utmost importance to note that...the Catholic Church never officially rejected the idea of heliocentrism. They were actually neutral on physical matters in which little or no evidence existed”?

**Michael Voris:** Galileo refused to listen to anyone but himself and that was the problem.

**R. Sungenis:** No, that was only part of the problem. The larger part was that Galileo was wrong.

**Michael Voris:** Galileo was seemingly a very wise man but lacked humility when it came to scientific ventures. He also was fighting for an un-provable notion that the earth is not the center of the universe.

**R. Sungenis:** So is Mr. Voris telling us that even today science cannot disprove that the earth is in the center of the universe? If so, then he must admit the Church, having no proof that Scripture is to be interpreted figuratively when it speaks of the cosmos, must adhere to the same literal interpretation that the Fathers, in consensus, taught us about the cosmos and which was upheld in the Tradition and confirmed by two Popes who approved the condemnation of heliocentrism.

**Michael Voris:** Many centuries would go by before the Church would speak in any official way about Galileo. In 1989 ... under Pope John Paul II ... the Church officially cleared the name of Galileo of any wrongdoing.

**R. Sungenis:** No, John Paul II issued no “official” statement either “clearing” Galileo or reversing the 1616-1633 against him or heliocentrism. He merely gave a speech to the Pontifical Academy of Science that has no official or binding force on Catholics. Moreover, the pope’s speech did not fault the Church for acting against Galileo. The 3000-word speech

was merely an ecumenical way of trying to diffuse the issue, and it used the principle of relativity to do so.<sup>27</sup> Neither did John Paul II clear Galileo of “wrongdoing,” especially in light of Paul V’s injunction and Galileo’s surreptitious acquiring of an imprimatur.

**Michael Voris:** The Pope discussed the mistakes the Church had made and apologized for the Church's handling of the case ... but reaffirm the Church was correct for asking Galileo to prove his theory.

**R. Sungenis:** No, the speech did not mention the “mistakes of the Church,” it merely referred to the “errors of the theologians of the day” without mentioning the Church itself.

Moreover, the speech did not say that the “error of the theologians” was their condemning of Galileo and heliocentrism but “The error of the theologians of the time, when they maintained the centrality of the earth, was to think that our understanding of the physical world’s structure was, in some way, imposed by the literal sense of Sacred Scripture.”

Take note. This speech was written for the pope by the well known liberal, Cardinal Paul Poupard, and it was very craftily worded to reflect the modernistic slant of today’s liberal theologians and prelature, but also worded in such a way so as not to indict itself.

Notice that the above underlined sentence does not say that we should interpret Scripture’s cosmological passages non-literally. By the clause, “imposed by the literal sense of Sacred Scripture” it actually admits that the literal interpretation is “imposed” on the reader!

Since that is the case, how can it then conclude that this “imposition” does not require the reader to apply the literal meaning of Scripture to the physical world?

Good question. You may be shocked to know the answer. Today’s theologians, which include Cardinal Poupard, no longer believe Scripture’s passages on cosmology are free from error and therefore there is no obligation to apply them to the physical world. For these theologians, it doesn’t make a difference if you interpret these passages literally or figuratively. They are simply not applicable to the physical world because they contain error.

How can they say this? Because after Vatican II, theologians no longer accepted that such passages were inspired by the Holy Spirit. Like Einstein, they also changed the rules of the game. They now believe these kinds of passages were written by human redactors and not inspired by the Holy Spirit, and therefore they contain errors, myths and fiction.

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<sup>27</sup> “And since the cosmos, as it was then known, was contained within the solar system alone, this reference point could only be situated in the earth or in the sun. Today, after Einstein and within the perspective of contemporary cosmology neither of these two reference points has the importance they once had. This observation, it goes without saying, is not directed against the validity of Galileo's position in the debate; it is only meant to show that often, beyond two partial and contrasting perceptions, there exists a wider perception which includes them and goes beyond both of them.”



The only passages today's Catholic theologians believe are without error are passages dealing strictly with salvation. So, we come to the inevitable conclusion: the real reason they can turn the Galileo affair on its head is because they've already turned Scripture on its head. This very process is stated clearly in the speech itself as it says:

“The upset caused by the Copernican system thus demanded epistemological reflection on the biblical sciences, an effort which later would produce abundant fruit in modern exegetical works and which has found sanction and a new stimulus in the Dogmatic Constitution Dei Verbum of the Second Vatican Council.”

In other words, because they now believe “the Copernican system” has been proven by modern science, this forced them to adopt new theories of biblical transmission and interpretation (e.g., the Wellhausen Documentary hypothesis; historical criticism; redaction criticism, etc.), which then gave a “new stimulus” in how to understand Scripture's cosmological passages. So, their conclusion is: one can interpret them literally all one wants but since we already know they are not authored by God but written by mere humans who lived in primitive cultures, then we are under no obligation to apply them to the physical world.

So when the papal speech speaks of “the errors of the theologians” in Galileo's day, what it means is that those theologians made the error of thinking that Scripture's cosmological passages were inspired by the Holy Spirit and were without error.

That such is the speech's reasoning we know from its citation of “Dogmatic Constitution Dei Verbum,” which comes from paragraph 11 of Dei Verbum at Vatican II, which states:

Since, therefore, all that the inspired authors, or sacred writers, affirm should be regarded as affirmed by the Holy Spirit, we must acknowledge that the books of Scripture, firmly, faithfully and without error, teach that truth which God, for the sake of our salvation, wished to see confided to the sacred Scriptures”<sup>28</sup>

How do the liberals arrive at their position from this seemingly innocuous passage? Take note of the underlined phrase “for the sake of our salvation.” Just one example from the most popular scholarly work on Catholic biblical hermeneutics in the 20<sup>th</sup> century will easily demonstrate how today's modern Catholic theologians interpret the phrase “for the sake of our salvation.”

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<sup>28</sup> Austin Flannery, Vatican Council II, The Conciliar and Post Conciliar Documents, New York, Costello Publishing Co. second printing, 1977, p. 757. The edition of Walter M. Abbot has a slightly different syntax: “Therefore, since everything asserted by the inspired authors or sacred writers must be held to be asserted by the Holy Spirit, it follows that the books of Scripture must be acknowledged as teaching solidly, faithfully and without error that truth which God wanted put into sacred writings for the sake of salvation.” Flannery puts the clause “for the sake of our salvation” immediately after “God,” thus indicating God's motivation for giving us Scripture, i.e., so that we can be saved. In the Abbott edition, “for the sake of our salvation” is put at the end of the sentence and which might suggest that it modifies “truth” rather than “God.” For a thorough analysis and refutation of this thesis please see Fr. Brian Harrison's penetrating critique: “The Truth and Meaning of Scripture According to Dei Verbum 11,” in Living Tradition, No. 59, July 1995 located at the archives of the rcforum.org.

The *New Jerome Biblical Commentary*, edited by the then premier Catholic biblical theologian in the world, Fr. Raymond Brown, who was also placed as the president of the Pontifical Biblical Commission in 1993 by then Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, says on page 1169 of his book: “Scriptural teaching is truth without error to the extent that it conforms to the salvific purpose of God.” What is he saying? He is saying that only when Scripture addresses the areas of salvation is it inerrant. Since Scripture’s cosmological passages don’t qualify as teachings on salvation, then they are not inerrant. For more convincing proof of his view, note what he says in another work when he quotes from *Dei Verbum* 11:

In the last hundred years we have moved from an understanding wherein inspiration guaranteed that the Bible was totally inerrant to an understanding wherein inerrancy is limited to the Bible’s teaching of “that truth which God wanted put into the sacred writing for the sake of our salvation.” In this long journey of thought the concept of inerrancy was not rejected but was seriously modified to fit the evidence of biblical criticism which showed that the Bible was not inerrant in questions of science, of history, and even of time-conditioned religious beliefs. (*The Virginal Conception and Bodily Resurrection of Jesus*, Paulist Press, 1973, pp. 8-9.)<sup>29</sup>

In the end, it is easy for today’s theologians to say, on the one hand, that one is “imposed” with a literal interpretation of Scripture’s cosmological passages, but, on the other hand, not hold themselves bound to apply these passages to the physical world. Of course, they are very wrong. First, how could the literal interpretation of erroneous texts be “imposed” on us in the first place? Second, the Holy Spirit no more changed the rules of biblical inerrancy than He changed whether the Earth was moving through space. The Church of Galileo’s day, and the Church going back 1600 years to the Apostles and Fathers, believed that *all of Scripture* was inspired and inerrant.<sup>30</sup> How could it change at Vatican II? The

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<sup>29</sup> He adds: “Historical and critical studies of doctrine may lead to a similar modification of an over-simplified understanding of the infallibility of Church teaching....While the public admission of historical relativity in doctrinal formulations is a recent phenomenon in official Catholicism....A clear example is the variation in the last 125 years in the presentation of the Church’s teaching about evolution. The Church has infallibly taught the doctrine that God was specially involved in creating man in His image and likeness. For almost 1900 years that theological doctrine was interpreted to include the how of man’s creation, namely, by direct divine action forming man’s body from the earth, and woman’s body from man’s. Today no serious theologian accepts this understanding of the how, because of the scientific evidence favoring evolution; yet the changed understanding of the how has not negated the infallibility of the Church’s teaching for we have learned to distinguish between the theological insight and the physical imagery in which it was clothed” (ibid, p. 9).

<sup>30</sup> **Pius IX**, condemned the following notion: “The prophecies and miracles set forth and recorded in the Sacred Scriptures are the fiction of poets, and the mysteries of the Christian faith the result of philosophical investigations. In the books of the Old and the New Testament there are contained mythical inventions...”; **Pope Leo XIII**: “It is absolutely wrong and forbidden either to narrow inspiration to certain parts only of Sacred Scripture or to admit that the sacred writer has erred.”; **Pope Pius X**, condemned the notion: “Divine inspiration does not extend to all of Sacred Scriptures so that it renders its parts, each and every one, free from every error.”; **Pope Benedict XV**: “...the divine inspiration extends to all parts of Scripture without distinction, and that no error could occur in the inspired text.”; **Pope Pius XII**, repeats Leo XIII decree: “It is absolutely wrong and forbidden either to narrow inspiration to certain parts only of Sacred Scripture or to admit that the sacred writer has erred.”; **Pope Pius XII**, condemns the

simple answer is that it didn't. The only thing that changed is that a great mass of liberal theologians made it appear as if it changed.

Dei Verbum 11 doesn't say what Fr. Brown says above ("that the Bible was not inerrant in questions of science, of history, and even of time-conditioned religious beliefs"). Dei Verbum says: "the books of Scripture, firmly, faithfully and without error, teach that truth which God, for the sake of our salvation." Do you see anything there about Scripture only being inerrant in matters of salvation? Or do you see this: that God made Scripture without error so that we can have surety of our salvation? I submit to you that the latter is the answer, and I also submit that the former is one of the most devious and heretical interpretations ever perpetrated in the Catholic Church.

If you are having any trouble with this question, then observe how the 1994 Catechism handles it in Para. 107 as it quotes from *Dei Verbum* 11:

The inspired books teach the truth. "Since therefore all that the inspired authors or sacred writers affirm should be regarded as affirmed by the Holy Spirit, we must acknowledge that the books of Scripture firmly, faithfully, and without error teach that truth which God, for the sake of our salvation, wished to see confided to the Sacred Scriptures."

Now compare this with how the Catechism handles a similar statement in Para. 95 when it quotes from *Dei Verbum* 10:

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notion: "...immunity from error extends only to those parts of the Bible that treat of God or of moral and religious matters."; **1964 Pontifical Biblical Commission**: "...that the Gospels were written under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, who preserved their authors from every error."; **Pope Leo XIII**: "For the sacred Scripture is not like other books. Dictated by the Holy Spirit, it contains things of the deepest importance, which, in many instances, are most difficult and obscure....For all the books in their entirety...with all their parts, have been written under the dictation of the Holy Spirit."; **Council of Trent**: "...the purity itself of the Gospel is preserved in the Church, which promised before through the Prophets in the Holy Scriptures...and [the Synod] clearly perceiving that this truth and instruction are contained in the written books and in the unwritten traditions, which have been received by the apostles from the mouth of Christ Himself, or from the apostles themselves, at the dictation of the Holy Spirit, have come down even to us, transmitted as it were from hand to hand, [the Synod] following the examples of the orthodox Fathers, receives and holds in veneration with an equal affection of piety and reverence all the books both of the Old and of the New Testament, since one God is the author or both, and also the traditions themselves, those that appertain both to faith and to morals, as having been dictated either by Christ's own word of mouth, or by the Holy Spirit, and preserved in the Catholic Church by a continuous succession"; **Vatican Council I**: "If anyone shall not accept the entire books of Sacred Scripture with all their divisions, just as the sacred Synod of Trent has enumerated them, as canonical and sacred, or denies that they have been inspired by God: let him be anathema."; **1994 Catechism of the Catholic Church**: "Sacred Scripture is the speech of God as it is put down in writing under the breath of the Holy Spirit." .... "God inspired the human authors of the sacred books...it was as true authors that they consigned to writing whatever he wanted written, and no more."; **Pope Leo XIII**: "It is futile to argue that the Holy Spirit took human beings as his instruments in writing, implying that some error could slip in...For by his supernatural power he so stimulated and moved them to write, and so assisted them while they were writing, that they properly conceived in their mind, wished to write down faithfully, and expressed aptly with infallible truth all those things, and only those things, which He himself ordered; otherwise He could not Himself be the author of the whole of Sacred Scripture."; **Code of Canon Law** (1983): "Even after ordination to the priesthood, clerics are to pursue sacred studies and are to strive after that solid doctrine founded in sacred scripture, handed on by their predecessors, and commonly accepted by the Church, as set out especially in the documents of councils and of the Roman Pontiffs. They are to avoid profane novelties and pseudo-science."

“It is clear therefore that, in the supremely wise arrangement of God, sacred Tradition, Sacred Scripture and the Magisterium of the Church are so connected and associated that one of them cannot stand without the others. Working together, each in its own way, under the action of the one Holy Spirit, they all contribute effectively to the salvation of souls.”

So what do we see? We see that the concluding clause about “salvation” is for the express purpose of showing how Tradition and Scripture lead us to salvation. We see nothing about Tradition and Scripture being limited in their inerrancy when they are not addressing salvation.

The upshot is this: we have been sold a bill of goods by the liberals in the Catholic Church who have rewritten the rules of the game to suit their own agenda. It’s about time we took it back.

In the end, Mr. Voris needs to realize the apostasy he decries is going on not only in the moral and cultural areas of the Church, but also in how to interpret traditional Catholic doctrine and Scripture. When the whole understanding of how to interpret the Bible is turned on its head, only then can we understand where all the confusion originates and why today’s Catholic theologians feel not the slightest compunction to interpret Scripture’s history at face value.

**Michael Voris:** Pope John Paul the II went on to say that the province of the Church is theology and revelation ... not science or astronomy.

**R. Sungenis:** Mr. Voris needs to provide the citation. Here is what John Paul II actually said:

“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.”

Keeping “regularly informed of scientific advances” so that theologians can “introduce changes in their teaching” is precisely what Mr. Voris should do. When he realizes there is no scientific proof for heliocentrism and that geocentrism has much more scientific credibility than previously reported, he should, as John Paul II advised, have enough information to “introduce changes in his teaching” as he considers the facts of science in a whole new way, leading, hopefully, to a moratorium on apologizing for the popes and cardinals of the 1600s and, in turn, giving them the respect they are due as stewards of the Gospel. Once an honest, studious and open-minded analysis is made of the scientific evidence, Mr. Voris will be able to see that the Holy Spirit was, indeed, guiding the Church in Galileo’s day to censor Copernicanism and insist that we take Scripture’s propositions at face value. Without scientific proof for heliocentrism, Mr. Voris has no right to entertain Copernicanism as more than a curious hypothesis, and, consequently, he is neither under divine compulsion nor can he claim any justifiable reason to abandon the literal interpretation of Scripture. As St. Augustine once said:

“But if they are able to establish their doctrine with proofs that cannot be denied, we must show that this statement of Scripture...is not opposed to the truth of their conclusions.” (The Literal Interpretation of Genesis Book 2, Chapter 9, paragraph 21).

Suffice it to say, modern science has never provided the world with “proofs that cannot be denied” to back up its steadfast devotion to heliocentrism.

**Michael Voris:** Pope Urban had less understanding of the world during the sixteenth century than we do in the twenty-first century ... and this ... therefore ... caused him to reject the theory of heliocentrism ... which we now know today is correct.

**R. Sungenis:** No, Mr. Voris does not know “the theory of heliocentrism...is correct.” He relies only upon his biased view of popular science. I suggest Mr. Voris begin studying the science instead of accepting the opinions of its atheistic icons without question. What he will find we can sum up for him in the words of Dr. Lawrence Krauss of Arizona State University, who is often featured on *The Science Channel*: “Our entire understanding of the universe has been completely revolutionized in the last decade or so. It’s a strange time in cosmology; it’s an interesting time, because we don’t understand anything.”

By the way, this is the same Lawrence Krauss who stated in 2006 after analyzing the Cosmic Microwave Background Radiation:

“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” (L. Krauss, “The Energy of Empty Space that Isn’t Zero,” 2006).

As for Pope Urban, he was fortunate not to be embroiled in the quagmire of Lawrence Krauss and all other cosmologists today. All he had to know was what the Fathers in consensus told him (since, as the Church teaches, their consensus is information passed down from the Apostles), and what the Tradition of Catholic scripture interpretation told him – we interpret the word of God at face value. Pope Urban would no more deny the face value teaching of Scripture on geocentrism based on the unproven boasts of a few scientists than he would deny transubstantiation because someone in science said it was impossible.

**Michael Voris:** If the Pope knew heliocentrism was true ... he would have agree with Galileo ... but there was no way to prove this.

**R. Sungenis:** And Mr. Voris needs to realize that the reason two Popes approved the condemnation of heliocentrism as “formally heretical” was because they not only were

presented with no proof from Galileo, they knew there never would be proof, otherwise they would have never condemned it.

**Michael Voris:** The Pope was not acting in his capacity of teacher when deciding if Galileo was right or wrong but in the characterization of prudent guardian.

**R. Sungenis:** “Prudent guardian”? That’s certainly a new one.

**Michael Voris:** This means ... that the Pope was in no way violating the doctrine of papal infallibility.

**R. Sungenis:** The Galileo affair has little to do with “papal infallibility,” which wasn’t even defined until 250 years later. The Galileo affair is concerned with the Ordinary Magisterium. It began with the absolute consensus of the Fathers on geocentrism and their rejection of Greek heliocentrism. It continued unabated by the medievals and the Tridentine catechism. The entire Tradition of the Catholic Church was geocentric and led there by the Holy Spirit, as Jesus promised He would do (“I will send the Counselor and He will lead you into all truth”). As such, *Lumen Gentium* 12 tells us that the “whole body of the Church cannot err.” All of the Church held to geocentrism as a matter of faith for the 1600 years before Galileo arrived on the scene with bogus proofs against that Tradition.

**Michael Voris:** Science and religion will always be topics of hot debate because society at large doesn’t understand that the two can live in harmony ... or maybe doesn’t want to understand. Through the use of the Galileo case ... this program aims at showing that they can live in harmony ... ..while showing that the Church was ... indeed ... correct in taking a stance of opposition to Galileo given the scientific technology of the day.

**R. Sungenis:** But that’s not the reason the Church “of the day” gave for its condemnation. It simply stated that the Tradition and the Scripture would not allow a change. The only thing Galileo accomplished was forcing the Church to make an explicit statement as to what the Tradition and Scripture taught.

**Michael Voris:** Science and Religion can and do live in harmony and as we know scientific truths point to God. So now ... let us give you some important take-away points ... we have been dealing with two relational topics ... the Church and Galileo .. and Science and Religion. The Catholic Church was justified in how they dealt with Galileo due to various factors that were apparent during that era. First ... Galileo’s theory ... heliocentrism ... was not provable during that time ... because no high power telescopes existed.

**R. Sungenis:** “High powered telescopes” had little if anything to do with it. Even with his little telescope Galileo saw moons going around Jupiter and from that observation he jumped to the conclusion that the smaller earth had to go around the larger sun. We now know that his conclusion is not true if the Earth is in the center of the universe and is its center of mass, for in that case everything, large and small, can then revolve around it. Likewise, Galileo saw the phases of Venus through his little telescope and jumped to the conclusion that Ptolemy was completely wrong and that the correct model was

heliocentrism. But we now know that Ptolemy simply did not know the distances to the sun and planets, and therefore left six variables in his model to account for the day we would know those distances. Moreover, we also know that Brahe's geocentric model completely accounted for Venus' phases, yet Galileo ignored Brahe. Galileo saw spots on the sun and craters on the moon and jumped to the conclusion that because Aristotle's theory of the incorruptible heavens was wrong then Aristotle's geocentrism was also wrong. It was Galileo who was wrong.

**Michael Voris:** Second ... Galileo was treading on areas of theology and the meaning of scripture ... and not focusing on science ... he was arguing with the Church about how the Bible is interpreted.

**R. Sungenis:** I would too if I were Galileo. If heliocentrism is a fact, then Galileo had every right to question the Church's 1600-year interpretation of the Bible, and the Church should not have condemned heliocentrism as formally heretical if there was the slightest chance that science could prove her wrong. The fact is, the Holy Spirit and the Church knew there would never be any proof for heliocentrism from science because, as relativity has shown, science does not have a platform from which to view the whole universe.

**Michael Voris:** Third ... a concern for the advancement of science really starts and ends with or even flows out of a grace filled life ... the great accomplishments as put forth by Catholic scientists throughout the centuries is a testament to this fact.

**R. Sungenis:** Not really. There were good Catholic scientists and bad Catholic scientists. Copernicus was a Catholic but lived an immoral life. Galileo was Catholic and had three children out of wedlock and abandoned two of them. If anything, these men were lacking the grace of God.

**Michael Voris:** Fourth ... this concern carries on to the present day with encouragement from all the recent popes ... that science is important and necessary because it helps man "contemplate" God through the beauty of his creation.

**R. Sungenis:** There is no better way to "contemplate" God than knowing he put the Earth in the center of the universe as the apple of His eye. Modern science wishes to cast Earth off into the remote recesses of space because it wants people to believe that it got there by nothing more than time and chance, without God.

**Michael Voris:** Fifth ... even today ... the Church uses scientific and empirical investigation to determine the veracity of a miracle.

**R. Sungenis:** All well and good. If the modern prelates would do the same with the science that undermines heliocentrism, the Big Bang, evolution and relativity, we would be in great shape. But today the modern prelates are biased in their use of science (the same thing Mr. Voris discovered with Hitler and Stalin). The Pontifical Academy of Science has about 100 members, but they allow no scientists who do not believe in evolution to enter their doors,

even though these scientists have a plethora of empirical evidence that undercuts the evolutionary theory. THAT is what you call an agenda.

**Michael Voris:** Sixth ... science and religion in no way contradict each other ... they are both concerned with the discovery of truth which leads to God.

**R. Sungenis:** And that is precisely why geocentrism fits the bill, since both science and Scripture teach it.

**Michael Voris:** So ... the next time you find yourself in a conversation that brings up Galileo ... the Catholic Church ... and Science ... you'll have the knowledge to slay the dragons of error and confusion along the way. So now you know ... thanks for watching this edition of Catholic Investigative Agency ... I'm Michael Voris ... let's hit the streets. God love you! I'm Michael Voris.

**R. Sungenis:** God love you, too, Michael. My prayers and good will go with you.

The bottom line in this debate is this: either the Church was right and Galileo was wrong, or, Galileo was right and the Church was wrong. There is no compromise or in-between apologetic that Catholics can mount. The reason is simple: either the Earth is motionless in the center of the universe and around which everything else revolves (a mechanical model that modern science itself says is possible) or the Earth is moving like everything else in the universe and there is no center. It is either A or B, and that is precisely what makes the issue so difficult for Catholic apologists. When the Church condemned heliocentrism it condemned both the diurnal and annual movements of the Earth proposed by Copernicus, Galileo and Newton. Scripture, interpreted literally as the Church has always done with the Holy Spirit's inspired words, says the same. Anachronistic arguments which claim that the Church in Galileo's day 'had the right to be wrong' about the cosmos because She didn't have the science we have today simply will not stand, especially in light of the fact that the Holy Spirit was promised to guide the Church into ALL truth. If we depended on the opinions of modern science to verify whether we could believe in the decisions and actions of the Catholic faith, we would have very little Catholic faith left.