

Francesco Barberini, with the title of San Lorenzo in Damaso; and Marzio Ginetti, with the title of Santa Maria Nuova, of the order of deacons;

By the grace of God, Cardinals of the Holy Roman Church, and especially commissioned by the Holy Apostolic See as Inquisitors-General against heretical depravity in all of Christendom.

Whereas you, Galileo, son of the late Vincenzo Galilei, Florentine, aged seventy years, were denounced to this Holy Office in 1615 for holding as true the false doctrine taught by some that the sun is the center of the world and motionless and the earth moves even with diurnal motion; for having disciples to whom you taught the same doctrine; for being in correspondence with some German mathematicians about it; for having published some letters entitled *On Sunspots*, in which you explained the same doctrine as true; for interpreting Holy Scripture according to your own meaning in response to objections based on Scripture which were sometimes made to you; and whereas later we received a copy of an essay in the form of a letter, which was said to have been written by you to a former disciple of yours and which in accordance with Copernicus's position contains various propositions against the authority and true meaning of Holy Scripture;

And whereas this Holy Tribunal wanted to remedy the disorder and the harm which derived from it and which was growing to the detriment of the Holy Faith, by order of His Holiness and the Most Eminent and Most Reverend Lord Cardinals of this Supreme and Universal Inquisition, the Assessor Theologians assessed the two propositions of the sun's stability and the earth's motion as follows:

That the sun is the center of the world and motionless is a proposition which is philosophically absurd and false, and formally heretical, for being explicitly contrary to Holy Scripture;

That the earth is neither the center of the world nor motionless but moves even with diurnal motion is philosophically equally absurd and false, and theologically at least erroneous in the Faith.

Whereas however we wanted to treat you with benignity at that time, it was decided at the Holy Congregation held in the presence of His Holiness on 25 February 1616 that the Most Eminent Lord Cardinal Bellarmine would order you to abandon this false opinion completely; that if you refused to do this, the Commissary of the Holy Office would give you an injunction to abandon this doctrine, not to teach it to others, not to defend it, and not to treat of it; and that if you did not acquiesce in this injunction, you should be imprisoned. To execute this decision, the following day at the palace of and in the presence of the

above-mentioned Most Eminent Lord Cardinal Bellarmine, after being informed and warned in a friendly way by the same Lord Cardinal, you were given an injunction by the then Father Commissary of the Holy Office (404) in the presence of a notary and witnesses to the effect that you must completely abandon the said false opinion, and that in the future you could neither hold, nor defend, nor teach it in any way whatever, either orally or in writing; having promised to obey, you were dismissed.

Furthermore, in order to completely eliminate such a pernicious doctrine, and not let it creep any further to the great detriment of Catholic truth, the Holy Congregation of the Index issued a decree which prohibited books treating of such a doctrine and declared it false and wholly contrary to the divine and Holy Scripture.

And whereas a book has appeared here lately, printed in Florence last year, whose inscription showed that you were the author, the title being *Dialogue by Galileo Galilei on the two Chief World Systems, Ptolemaic and Copernican*; and whereas the Holy Congregation was informed that with the printing of this book the false opinion of the earth's motion and sun's stability was being disseminated and taking hold more and more every day, the said book was diligently examined and found to violate explicitly the above-mentioned injunction given to you; for in the same book you have defended the said opinion already condemned and so declared to your face, although in the said book you try by means of various subterfuges to give the impression of leaving it undecided and labeled as probable; this is still a very serious error since there is no way an opinion declared and defined contrary to divine Scripture may be probable.

Therefore, by our order you were summoned to this Holy Office, where, examined under oath, you acknowledged the book as written and published by you. You confessed that about ten or twelve years ago, after having been given the injunction mentioned above, you began writing the said book, and that then you asked for permission to print it without explaining to those who gave you such permission that you were under the injunction of not holding, defending, or teaching such a doctrine in any way whatever.

Likewise, you confessed that in several places the exposition of the said book is expressed in such a way that a reader could get the idea that the arguments given for the false side were effective enough to be capable of convincing, rather than being easy to refute. Your excuses for having committed an error, as you said so foreign from your intention, were that you had written in dialogue form, and everyone

feels a natural satisfaction for one's own subtleties and showing oneself sharper than the average man by finding ingenious and apparently probable arguments even in favor of false propositions.

Having been given suitable terms to present your defense, you produced a certificate in the handwriting of the Most Eminent Lord Cardinal Bellarmine, which you said you obtained to defend yourself from the calumnies of your enemies, who were claiming that you had abjured and had been punished by the Holy Office. This (405) certificate says that you had neither abjured nor been punished, but only that you had been notified of the declaration made by His Holiness and published by the Holy Congregation of the Index, whose content is that the doctrine of the earth's motion and sun's stability is contrary to Holy Scripture and so can be neither defended nor held. Because this certificate does not contain the two phrases of the injunction, namely "to teach" and "in any way whatever," one is supposed to believe that in the course of fourteen or sixteen years you had lost any recollection of them, and that for this same reason you had been silent about the injunction when you applied for the license to publish the book. Furthermore, one is supposed to believe that you point out all of this not to excuse the error, but in order to have it attributed to conceited ambition rather than to malice. However, the said certificate you produced in your defense aggravates your case further since, while it says that the said opinion is contrary to Holy Scripture, yet you dared to treat of it, defend it, and show it as probable; nor are you helped by the license you artfully and cunningly extorted since you did not mention the injunction you were under.

Because we did not think you had said the whole truth about your intention, we deemed it necessary to proceed against you by a rigorous examination. Here you answered in a Catholic manner, though without prejudice to the above-mentioned matters confessed by you and deduced against you about your intention.

Therefore, having seen and seriously considered the merits of your case, together with the above-mentioned confessions and excuses and with any other reasonable matter worth seeing and considering, we have come to the final sentence against you given below.

Therefore, invoking the Most Holy name of Our Lord Jesus Christ and his most glorious Mother, ever Virgin Mary; and sitting as a tribunal, with the advice and counsel of the Reverend Masters of Sacred Theology and the Doctors of both laws, our consultants; in this written opinion we pronounce final judgment on the case pending before us between the Magnificent Carlo Sinceri, Doctor of both laws, and Prose-

cuting Attorney of this Holy Office, on one side, and you the above-mentioned Galileo Galilei, the culprit here present, examined, tried, and confessed as above, on the other side:

We say, pronounce, sentence, and declare that you, the above-mentioned Galileo, because of the things deduced in the trial and confessed by you as above, have rendered yourself according to this Holy Office vehemently suspected of heresy,<sup>86</sup> namely of having held and believed a doctrine which is false and contrary to the divine and Holy Scripture: that the sun is the center of the world and does not move from east to west, and the earth moves and is not the center of the world, and that one may hold and defend as probable an opinion after it has been declared and defined contrary to Holy Scripture. Consequently you have incurred all the censures and penalties imposed and promulgated by the sacred canons and all particular and general laws against such delinquents. We are willing to absolve you from them provided that first, with a sincere heart and unfeigned faith, in front of us you abjure, curse, and detest the above-mentioned errors and (406) heresies, and every other error and heresy contrary to the Catholic and Apostolic Church, in the manner and form we will prescribe to you.

Furthermore, so that this serious and pernicious error and transgression of yours does not remain completely unpunished, and so that you will be more cautious in the future and an example for others to abstain from similar crimes, we order that the book *Dialogue* by Galileo Galilei be prohibited by public edict.

We condemn you to formal imprisonment in this Holy Office at our pleasure. As a salutary penance we impose on you to recite the seven penitential Psalms once a week for the next three years. And we reserve the authority to moderate, change, or condone wholly or in part the above-mentioned penalties and penances.

This we say, pronounce, sentence, declare, order, and reserve by this or any other better manner or form that we reasonably can or shall think of.

So we the undersigned<sup>87</sup> Cardinals pronounce:

Felice Cardinal d'Ascoli.  
Guido Cardinal Bentivoglio.  
Fra Desiderio Cardinal di Cremona.  
Fra Antonio Cardinal di Sant'Onofrio.  
Berlinghiero Cardinal Gessi.  
Fabrizio Cardinal Verospi.  
Marzio Cardinal Ginetti.

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*Galileo's Abjuration (22 June 1633)*

I, Galileo, son of the late Vincenzo Galilei of Florence, seventy years of age, arraigned personally for judgment, kneeling before you Most Eminent and Most Reverend Cardinals Inquisitors-General against heretical depravity in all of Christendom, having before my eyes and touching with my hands the Holy Gospels, swear that I have always believed, I believe now, and with God's help I will believe in the future all that the Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church holds, preaches, and teaches. However, whereas, after having been judicially instructed with injunction by the Holy Office to abandon completely the false opinion that the sun is the center of the world and does not move and the earth is not the center of the world and moves, and not to hold, defend, or teach this false doctrine in any way whatever, orally or in writing; and after having been notified that this doctrine is contrary to Holy Scripture; I wrote and published a book in which I treat of this already condemned doctrine and adduce very effective reasons in its favor, without refuting them in any way; therefore, I have been judged vehemently suspected of heresy, namely of having held and believed that the sun is the center of the world and motionless and the earth is not the center and moves.

Therefore, desiring to remove from the minds of Your Eminences and every faithful (407) Christian this vehement suspicion, rightly conceived against me, with a sincere heart and unfeigned faith I abjure, curse, and detest the above-mentioned errors and heresies, and in general each and every other error, heresy, and sect contrary to the Holy Church; and I swear that in the future I will never again say or assert, orally or in writing, anything which might cause a similar suspicion about me; on the contrary, if I should come to know any heretic or anyone suspected of heresy, I will denounce him to this Holy Office, or to the Inquisitor or Ordinary of the place where I happen to be.

Furthermore, I swear and promise to comply with and observe completely all the penances which have been or will be imposed upon me by this Holy Office; and should I fail to keep any of these promises and oaths, which God forbid, I submit myself to all the penalties and punishments imposed and promulgated by the sacred canons and other particular and general laws against similar delinquents. So help me God and these Holy Gospels of His, which I touch with my hands.

I, the above-mentioned Galileo Galilei, have abjured, sworn, promised, and obliged myself as above; and in witness of the truth I have signed with my own hand the present document of abjuration and have recited it word for word in Rome, at the convent of the Minerva, this twenty-second day of June 1633.

I, Galileo Galilei, have abjured as above, by my own hand.