

Pope Urges Church To Exonerate Galileo

Vatican City — (RNS) Pope John Paul II has called for the full, formal exoneration of Galileo Galilei, the 17th century Italian philosopher, inventor, and astronomer who was condemned as a heretic by the Roman Inquisition for teaching that the earth revolved around the sun.

The pope said that Galileo had been "wrongly" condemned by the Church and, as a consequence, had "suffered greatly."

The pontiff's comments came during an address commemorating the 100th anniversary of the birth of Albert Einstein, the German-born American physicist whose theories of relativity revolutionized modern science.

The pope spoke at the Vatican before members of the College of Cardinals, the diplomatic corps, and the Pontifical Academy of Sciences, which sponsored the event.

The pope said: "While Dr. Einstein today is com-

memorated in the Apostolic Palace before the College of Cardinals, Galileo suffered greatly at the hands of the Church. We cannot hide this."

Galileo was first condemned by the Holy Office in 1616. Theologians to the Holy Office found that the Florentine astronomer's defense of the Copernican heliocentric theory was "philosophically foolish and absurd and formally heretical," contradicting the Bible in many places, "according to their literal meaning and according to the common exposition and interpretation of the Holy Fathers and learned theologians."

Galileo's teaching that the earth revolved around the sun was labeled as "at least erroneous in the faith."

At an ecclesiastical trial in 1633, Galileo was condemned as "vehemently suspected of heresy," made to kneel and abjure the Copernican opinions, sentenced to imprisonment, and given a "salutary

penance" to recite. The prison sentence was never imposed, but Galileo remained under house arrest in Florence until his death 11 years later.

The sentence condemning Galileo has never been revoked by the Vatican.

In 1968, however, Pope Paul VI announced that a special Vatican commission would be established to reexamine the Galileo case with a view to exoneration of the astronomer of all heresy charges.

Pope John Paul called for "further development" of the work of this commission to include removing "the conflicts that the case causes, in the matter of fruitful harmony between science and religion."

"Scientific research should be free from the pressures of political and economic power, which should encourage the development of science without interfering in its creativity or restricting its scope," the pontiff declared.



Christmas Bureau

The Christmas Bureau, a clearing house for agencies that do charitable work at Christmas time, held a meeting of its volunteers last week at the Culver Road Armory. Above, Marcia Fedyk, representative from the Catholic Family Center, addresses the group on her organization's operation through the bureau. The program distributes Christmas presents to unfortunate people in the area.

New Nestle Acquisition

Nestle, S.A., the Swiss company under fire from a number of religious groups in the U.S. for marketing practices in the third world, announced last week that it will acquire the Beech-Nut Food Corp., a baby-food manufacturer known for its emphasis on salt-free and

sugar-free products.

According to a report in the New York Times, Beech-Nut supplies between 15 and 17 per cent of the U.S. baby-food market.

Nestle, the subject of a continuing boycott for its

marketing of an infant formula in less-developed nations, is making the acquisition through Nesfood Inc., the U.S. holding company.

Nesfood subsidiaries include Stouffer Corp.; Libby, McNeill, Libby Inc.; and the Nestle Co.

Genesis Indicates Unity of Persons

Following is the text of Pope John Paul II's address at a recent general audience.

The words of the book of Genesis, "It is not good that the man should be alone," are, as it were, a prelude to the narrative of the creation of woman. Together with this narrative, the sense of original solitude becomes part of the meaning of original unity.



the key point of which seems to be precisely the words of Genesis 2:24, to which Christ refers in his talk with the Pharisees: "A man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh." If Christ, referring to the "beginning," quotes these words, it is opportune for us to clarify the meaning of that original unity, which has its roots in the fact of the creation of man as male and female.

The narrative of the first chapter of Genesis does not know the problem of man's original solitude: man, in fact, is "male and female" right from the beginning. The Yahwist text of the second chapter, on the contrary, authorizes us, in a way, to think first only of the man since, by means of the body, he belongs to the visible world, but goes beyond it; then, it makes us think of the same man, but through the dualism of sex.

Corporality and sexuality are not completely identified. Although the human body, in its normal constitution, bears within it the signs of sex and is, by its nature, male or female, the fact, however, that man is a "body" belongs to the structure of the personal subject more deeply than the fact that he is in his somatic constitution also male or female. Therefore the meaning of original solitude, which can be referred simply to "man," is substantially prior to the meaning of original unity. The latter, in fact, is based on masculinity and femininity, as if on two different "incarnations," that is, on two ways of "being a body" of the same human being, created "in the image of God."

Following the Yahwist text, in which the creation of woman was described separately, we must have before our eyes, at the same time, that "image of God" of the first narrative of creation. The second narrative keeps, in language and in style, all the characteristics of the Yahwist text. The way of narrating agrees with the

way of thinking and expressing one-self of the period to which the text belongs.

It can be said, following the contemporary philosophy of religion and that of language, that the language in question is a mythical one. In this case, in fact, the term "myth" does not designate a fabulous content, but merely an archaic way of expressing a deeper content. Without any difficulty, we discover, under the layer of the ancient narrative, that content, which is really marvellous as regards the qualities and the condensation of the truths contained in it.

Let us add that the second narrative of the creation of man keeps, up to a certain point, the form of a dialogue between man and God-Creator, and that is manifested above all in that stage in which man ("adam") is definitively created as male and female ("is'issah"). The creation takes place almost simultaneously in two dimensions: the action of God-Yahweh who creates occurs in correlation with the process of human consciousness.

So, therefore, God-Yahweh says: "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him." At the same time the man confirms his own solitude. Next we read: "So the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and while he slept took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh; and the rib which the Lord God had taken from the man he made into a woman." Taking into consideration the specificity of the language, it must be recognized in the first place that that sleep in the Genesis account in which the man is immersed, thanks to God-Yahweh, in preparation for the new creative act, gives us food for thought.

Against the background of contemporary mentality, accustomed through analysis of the subconscious to connecting sexual contents with the world of dreams, that sleep may bring forth a particular association. However, the Bible narrative seems to go beyond the dimension of man's subconscious. It we admit, moreover, a significant difference of vocabulary, we can conclude that the man ("adam") falls into that "sleep" in order to wake up "male" and "female." In fact, for the first time in Gen 2:23 we come across the distinction "is'issah". Perhaps, therefore, the analogy of sleep indicates here not so much a passing from consciousness to subconsciousness, as a specific return to non-being (sleep contains an element of annihilation of man's conscious existence), that is, to the moment preceding the creation, in order that, through God's

creative initiative, solitary "man" may emerge from it again in his double unity as male and female.

In any case, in the light of the context of Gen 2:18-20, there is no doubt that man falls into that "sleep" with the desire of finding a being like himself. If, by analogy with sleep, we can speak here also of a dream, we must say that that biblical archetype allows us to admit as the content of that dream a "second self," which is also personal and equally referred to the situation of original solitude, that is, to the whole of that process of the stabilization of human identity in relation to living beings (animalia) as a whole, since it is the process of man's "differentiation" from this environment. In this way, the circle of the solitude of the man-person is broken, because the first "man" awakens from his sleep as "male and female."

The woman is made "with the Rib" that God-Yahweh had taken from the man. Considering the archaic, metaphorical and figurative way of expressing the thought, we can establish that it is a question here of homogeneity of the whole being of both. This homogeneity concerns above all the body, the somatic structure, and is confirmed also by the man's first words to the woman who has been created: "This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh." And yet the words quoted refer also to the humanity of the male-man. They must be read in the context of the affirmations made before the creation of the woman, in which, although the "incarnation" of the man does not yet exist, she is defined as "a helper fit for him." In this way, therefore, the woman is created, in a sense, on the basis of the same humanity.

Somatic homogeneity, in spite of the difference in constitution bound up with the sexual difference, is so evident that the man (male), on waking up from the genetic sleep, expresses it at once, when he says: "This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man." In this way the man (male) manifests for the first time joy and even exaltation, for which he had no reason before, owing to the lack of a being like himself. Joy in the other human being, in the second "self," dominates in the words spoken by the man (male) on seeing the woman (female). All that helps to establish the full meaning of original unity. The words here are few, but each one is of great weight. We must therefore take into account — and we will do so also later — the fact that that first woman, "made with the rib...taken from the man (male)," is at once accepted as a fit helper for him.