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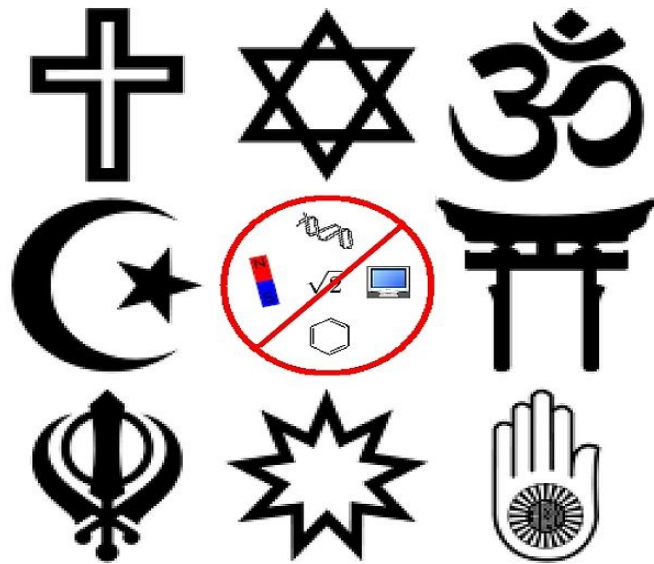
Catholic Physics - Reflections of a Catholic Scientist - Part 6

Where is the Catechism of Science?



- ♦ 1200's
- ♦ Authority on physics, geography, astronomy, mineralogy, chemistry, zoology, and physiology
- ♦ "The aim of natural science is not simply to accept the statements of others, but to investigate the causes that are at work in nature"
- ♦ He understood that the Church is not opposed to study of nature
- ♦ Patron Saint of Scientists

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Science is not a Religion! from [Wikimedia Commons](#)

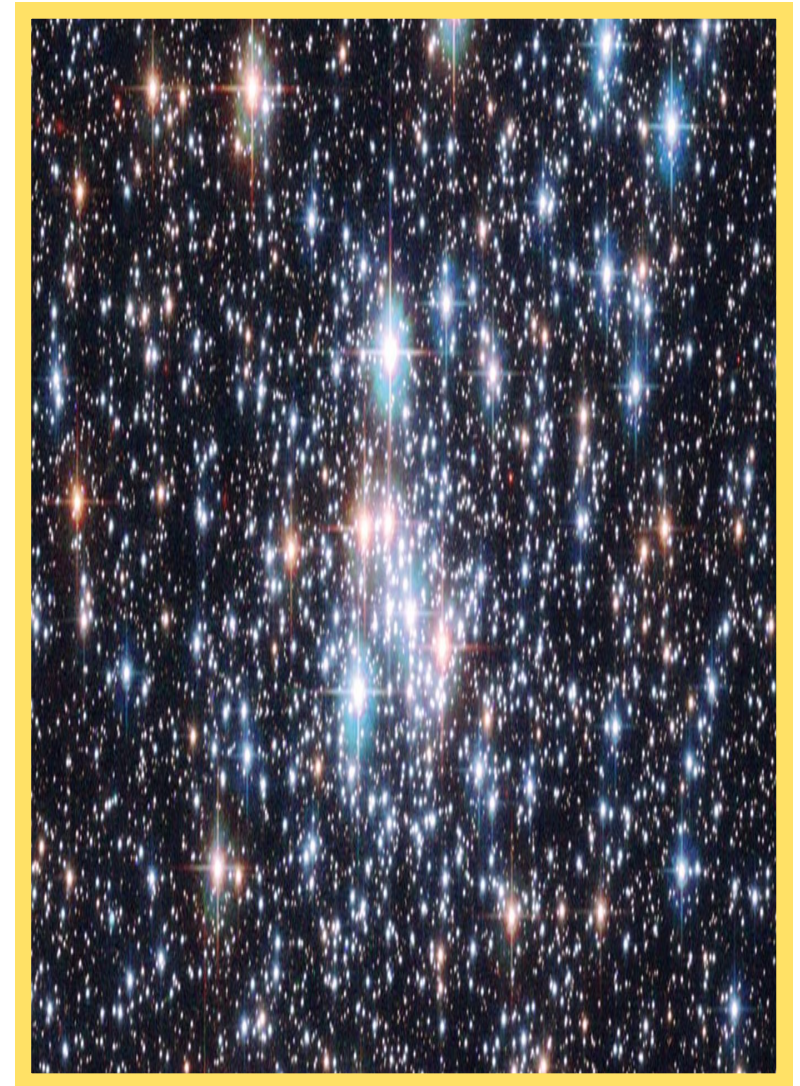
Thoughts on belief, knowledge and faith—rational and irrational; my journey to faith, and on the “Limits of a limitless science” (to paraphrase Fr. Stanley Jaki). A discourse on the consonance of what science tells us about the world, and the dogma/teachings of the Catholic Church; you don’t have to apologize for being Catholic if you’re a scientist.

Where is the Catechism of Science?

“Science can purify religion from error and superstition; religion can purify science from idolatry and false absolutes. Each can draw the other into a wider world, a world in which both can flourish.” Pope St. John Paul II, Letter to Rev. George Coyne, S.J., Director of the Vatican Observatory.

“Christianity possesses the source of its justification within itself and does not expect science to constitute its primary apologetic.” *ibid.*

“It can be said, in fact, that research, by exploring the greatest and the smallest, contributes to the glory of God which is reflected in every part of the universe.” Pope St. John Paul II, Address on the Jubilee of Scientists, 2000





INTRODUCTION

My latest book (department of shameless self-promotion), “Science versus the Church—‘Truth Cannot Contradict Truth,’” is available on Amazon.com and leanpub.com, the latter in a pdf format. I’ve decided to add a final chapter, a summing up, and I thought the best way would be to compare our Catholic Catechism (in its old familiar form, the Baltimore Catechism), with what a similar catechism might be, formed from the opinions of non-believing scientists.

I won’t claim that the answers in the science Catechism are true—indeed, there are contradictory responses—and I don’t know of any of the assertions have been empirically validated. In short, the science catechism fails the ultimate test of any scientific project; it is not and cannot be shown to hold by replicable measurements.

THE BALTIMORE CATECHISM:

1. Who made us? God made us.
“In the beginning, God created heaven and earth.” Genesis 1:1
2. Who is God? God is the Supreme Being, infinitely perfect, who made all things and keeps them in existence.
“In him we live and move and have our being.” Acts 17:28
3. Why did God make us? God made us to show forth His goodness and to share with us His everlasting happiness in heaven.
“Eye has not seen nor ear heard, nor has it entered into the heart of man, what things God has prepared for those who love him.” I Corinthians 2:9
4. What must we do to gain the happiness of heaven? To gain the happiness of heaven we must know, love, and serve God in this world. **Lay not up to yourselves treasures on earth; where the rust and moth consume and where thieves break through and steal. But lay up to yourselves treasures in heaven; where neither the rust nor moth doth consume, and where thieves do not break through nor steal.** Matthew 6:19-20

THE CATECHISM ACCORDING TO SCIENCE:

1. Who made us? Life came about by chance and we evolved from that first life.
“An honest man, armed with all the knowledge available to us now, could only state that in some sense, the origin of life appears at the moment to be almost a miracle, so many are the conditions which would have had to have been satisfied to get it going.” Francis Crick, *Life Itself: Its Origin and Its Nature*

2. What is the entity that made the universe from which this life came?

There are several answers:

“Evolutionary cosmology formulates theories in which a universe is capable of giving rise to and generating future universes out of itself, within black holes or whatever.” Robert Nozick

“As scientists, we track down all promising leads, and there’s reason to suspect that our universe may be one of many - a single bubble in a huge bubble bath of other universes. Brian Greene

” Thus, CCC [Cyclic Conformal Cosmology] proposes that what current cosmology refers to as “the entire history of the universe” (but without any early inflationary phase) is just one aeon of a succession of such aeons, that continues indefinitely in both temporal directions.” Roger Penrose.

"Because there is a law such a gravity, the universe can and will create itself from nothing." Stephen Hawking.

3, Why did the entity that made the universe make us?

Why questions, that is questions involving purpose—teleology—are outside the domain of science.

“Teleology is a lady without whom no biologist can live. Yet he is ashamed to show himself with her in public.” H.A. Krebs (he of the Krebs Cycle)

“It looks as if the offspring have eyes so that they can see well (bad, teleological, backward causation), but that’s an illusion. The offspring have eyes because their parents’ eyes did see well (good, ordinary, forward causation).” Steven Pinker
“The universe that we observe has precisely the properties we should expect if there is, at bottom, no design, no purpose, no evil, no good, nothing but pitiless indifference.” Richard Dawkins

Why’ implicitly suggests purpose, and when we try to understand the solar system in scientific terms, we do not generally ascribe purpose to it.” Lawrence Kraus

4. What must we do to get the happiness of heaven?

There is no heaven.

We should not despair, but should humbly rejoice in making the most of these gifts, and celebrate our brief moment in the sun.” Lawrence Kraus

"I regard the brain as a computer which will stop working when its components fail. There is no heaven or afterlife for broken down computers; that is a fairy story for people afraid of the dark." Stephen Hawking

CONCLUSION

I won’t bother to analyze each of the answers given for the science catechism. They are discussed in previous chapters of my book, Science versus the Church, (for example, “the brain as a computer”, and there is no universal agreement amongst scientists or philosophers. If any of you readers would like to argue for them, I’d be glad to hear your arguments.

Added 20th August, 2016. Several readers of this post have read the above post as my argument that this is what science is all about. That’s far from the case. What I am trying to show, possibly ineptly, is by a literary device called “situational irony” that contrary to the claims of the scientists from whom the quotes are drawn, that science does not explain everything there is to be known about our world and life.

In short, I have tried to expose “scientism” for the fraud it is, but my opinion of science as it should be conducted (which was not the topic for this post) is much different. See, for example, my posts: “Peeling back the onion layers: gravitational waves detected”, “Tipping the Sacred Cow of Science—Confessions of a Science Agnostic”, “God, Symmetry and Beauty in Science: a Personal Perspective.” to see what my idea of science is all about.

From a series of articles written by: Bob Kurland - a Catholic Scientist

