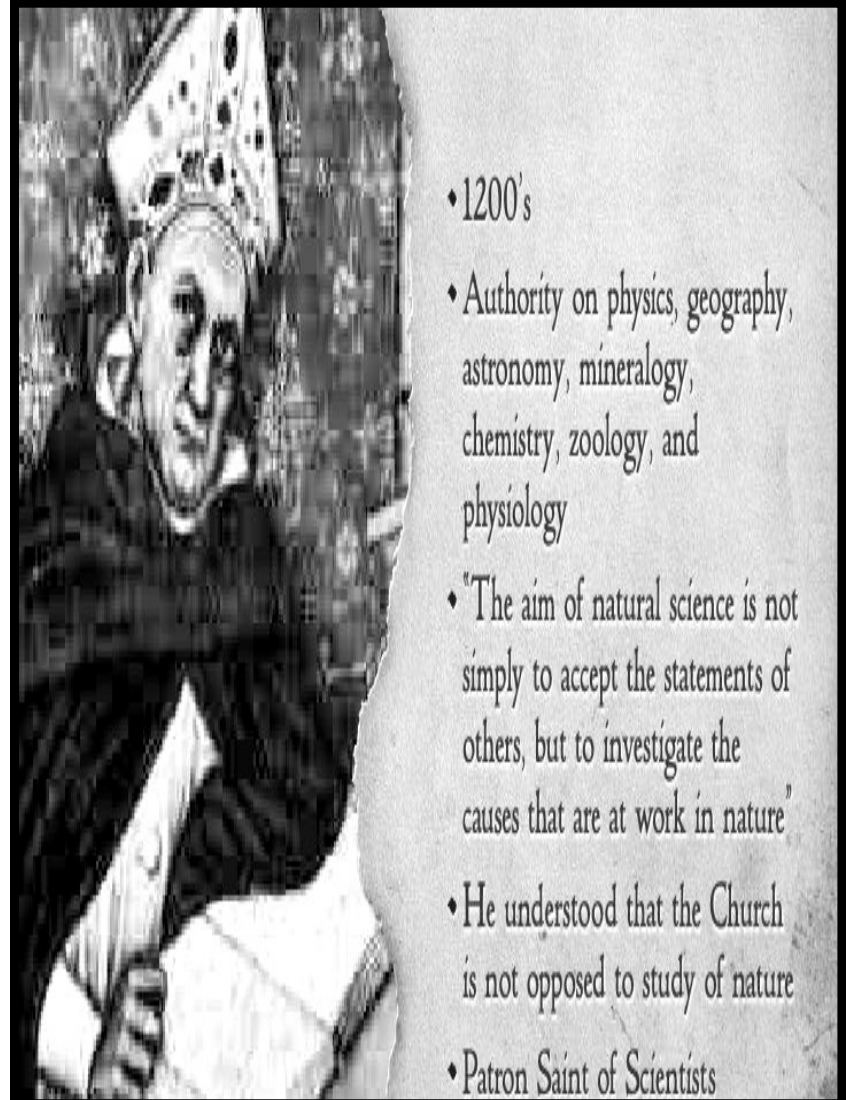




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*Catholic Physics - Reflections of a
Catholic Scientist - Part 12
On avoiding the occasion of the sin of anger;
why I won't respond to comments
by evangelical atheists*



- ♦ 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

Catholic Physics - Reflections of a Catholic Scientist - Part 12

On avoiding the occasion of the sin of anger; why I won't respond to comments by evangelical atheists



“My dear brothers, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry, for man's anger does not bring about the righteous life that God desires.” First letter of James, 1:19-20

“Do not be quickly provoked in your spirit, for anger resides in the lap of fools.” Eccl 7:9

As a cranky old physicist, one of my many great failings—both moral and intellectual—is the inability to suffer fools gladly. I gave up a spot as moderator for the Magis Facebook page (and left Facebook) and stopped visiting Catholic Answers Forum because I would become stressed and angry by the irrational, illogical assertions of the evangelical atheists trolling these sites for “fresh meat” (as one atheism website put it). Here's one example of the irrational, illogical assertions that one can't really debate: “the use of example doesn't prove that something is neither necessary nor sufficient.” If you assert that it is a necessary condition that a scientist be an atheist to be a good scientist, and you produce one example of a good scientist who is not an atheist you have shown the not necessary condition. If you produce

one example of an atheist who is not a good scientist, then you have shown that it is not a sufficient condition. Now, I should add that discussions with some of the atheists/agnostics commenting on these sites was enjoyable and fruitful; the debate was civilized, no assertions were made as fact or truth that were not supported by logic or evidence.

Nevertheless, my response to those who didn't follow the path of rational discourse was much like that of Charlie Brown's to Lucy's non-sequiturs—my stomach began to ache and stress bollixed all the vital signs. Reading Dr. Andrew Newburg's book, *How God Changes Your Brain*, I find that stress and anger also damage the neural circuitry in the brain. Since I am already on the entrance ramp to the senile dementia thruway, I can't afford to lose any more neurons, and therefore will avoid the occasion of sin. In the future I will not look at comments to my blogs (and therefore won't respond to any). Since the evangelical atheists making snarky comments will not, for the most part, engage in rational discourse, and since most readers can see through their assertions, not much will be lost to evangelization by this neglect.

One final point. What I find most distressing about the evangelical atheists is their unwillingness to engage in any study that conflicts with their preconceptions. This closing of the “Scientific Mind” (so-called) has been thoughtfully explored in a fine article by William Briggs . There are atheists/agnostic (Thomas Nagle, Christopher Hitchens) whom I enjoy reading, even though I disagree with some or most of their views. I wonder how many works by Keith Ward, Peter Kreeft, or Edward Feser have been read by the evangelical atheists trolling religious sites?

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

