control of the history of letter writing in classical and late antiquity as well as a grasp of the epistolary corpus of Augustine in its literary and historical context. Her conclusion is a very clear summary of her thesis and its development throughout the book. According to Ebbeler, Augustine ultimately failed in his attempt to adapt the traditional friendly letter exchange to the task of correcting error in the Christian community, quite simply because the individuals with whom he corresponded were unwilling to accept correction. One also wonders how willing Augustine, who took firm and unrelenting theological and political positions, would have been to accept correction from his adversaries.

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The Case of Galileo: A Closed Question? By Annibale Fantoli. Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2012. xii + 271 pages. $28.00 (paper).
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Annibale Fantoli's answer to the question posed in the subtitle of this book is negative. John Paul II went a good way toward laying to rest the lingering controversies concerning the treatment of Galileo by the Holy Office in the early seventeenth century, Fantoli acknowledges. Yet, as he sees it, there is still an embarrassing touch of cover-up on the part of the commission the pope set up to review the case. The eventual papal statement claims there were errors on both sides of the dispute, and that unfortunately Pope Urban VIII and the Holy Office felt they had no choice but to discipline Galileo for making claims that far exceeded the evidence at the time. Fantoli disputes this reading. The bulk of the book is devoted to a review of historical evidence, including that made newly available to scholars when the archives of the Holy Office were opened in 1998.

The occasion for John Paul II to address the Galileo case was the 350th anniversary of Galileo's death, for the pope an opportunity to establish better relations between science and faith. He had set up a commission under French cardinal Poupard, which gave Poupard material for formal statements and for "experts," as Fantoli puts it (247), to compose a statement the pope could deliver. Though Fantoli believes the pope was quite sincere in his desire to bring an honest and honorable close to the long-controversial Galileo affair, Fantoli finds the statements by both Poupard, and thus also the pope, at least disingenuous.

Six of the seven chapters are devoted to a review of the actual events, as best as Fantoli can determine (and based on his own earlier, much longer

book). To make his case, Fantoli cites primary materials relentlessly, whether written by Galileo, Cardinal Robert Bellarmine, Florentine diplomats, or ecclesial officials, pointing out where textual sources are ambiguous or missing. The book strikes this reviewer as a meticulous and balanced study.

Fantoli focuses on a few major points. One is what type of warning Bellarmine gave Galileo in 1616 about presenting Copernicanism as a settled issue. A document signed by Bellarmine and given to Galileo insists that Galileo could treat the Copernican hypothesis as possible, but that he must not treat it as proven. Bellarmine himself seems to have thought it could never be proven—who can really understand the celestial realm, after all?—so the geocentric tradition must stand by default, as best conforming to Scripture. (Ironically, as Galileo had pointed out in his famous letter to the Grand Duchess Christina, Augustine had already faced the problem that the geocentric view was Greek science and not truly biblical.) But a Holy Office official named Michelangelo Segizzi summarized the Bellarmine-Galileo meeting differently, saying Bellarmine had forbidden Galileo even to teach Copernicanism.

A second focus is whether Galileo had reason to think his old friend Maffeo Barbarini, who became Urban VIII, would not mind if Galileo did indeed present the case for Copernicanism ("teach" it?) along with the geocentrism of the Aristotelians in a written dialogue. Galileo misread the pope's situation, intention, and theories and thus to his own surprise found himself called before the Inquisition in Rome. In Fantoli's persuasive rendition, both the pope and the inquisitors (seven of the ten judges, at least) found it possible to stretch or distort the evidence to force Galileo to recant and "abjure," which meant that if he ever again defended Copernicanism, even as a hypothesis, he would become a heretic, subject to burning.

In the end Fantoli applies the results of his careful work to a somewhat negative evaluation of how the Vatican today handles awkward issues. He reflects on the difficulty many in the church still have, as he sees it, of adapting to a new and quite possibly legitimate worldview. He compares the Aristotelians of Galileo's time to moral theologians today who use a premodern approach to modern medical issues, such as the use of contraceptives. This erudite study, crammed with details and names, is well worth the time and attention of anyone interested in this story.

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