

Reading Reflection: Pope Saint John Paul II's 1992 Address to the Pontifical Academy of Sciences

In your group, read the excerpt from Pope Saint John Paul II's 1992 Address to the Pontifical Academy of Sciences. Work in your group to answer the questions about your assigned paragraph. Then complete the questions about the remaining paragraphs during the class discussion. Use a separate sheet of paper if needed.

Paragraph 10

1. Why does Pope Saint John Paul II call the Galileo conflict a myth?

2. The Pope says the Galileo conflict led to a "tragic mutual incomprehension" (paragraph 10). What was the nature of this mutual misunderstanding?

3. According to the Pope, what has been the result of this mutual misunderstanding?

Paragraph 11

1. According to the Pope, how has modern science changed our understanding of the Galileo conflict?



2. What lesson can we learn from the Church's conflict with Galileo, according to the Pope?
3. In your opinion, how can we apply this lesson to conflicts of any type today? Give one or two concrete examples.

Paragraph 12

1. According to Pope Saint John Paul II, what lesson does the Galileo conflict teach us about different areas of expertise?
2. What does the Pope say is the relationship between Scripture and science?
3. The Pope argues that we should not see opposition between faith and science. Why not? How do they complement each other?

Paragraph 13

1. What does Pope Saint John Paul II say is most important in scientific theory or philosophical study?



2. How does the Pope advise the Pontifical Academy of Science to avoid conflicts between faith and reason?

3. How does the work of the Academy contribute to the mission of the Church, according to the Pope? Why?

Paragraph 14

1. Pope Saint John Paul II identifies “two modes of development” in humanity. What are they?

2. Why does the Pope encourage scientists to be aware of both modes of development?

3. According to the Pope, what can science and technology teach us about God?

(The quotations on this handout are from Pope Saint John Paul II's 1992 Address to the Pontifical Academy of Sciences, numbers 10 and 14, in *Papal Addresses to the Pontifical Academy of Sciences 1917–2002 and to the Pontifical Academy of Social Sciences 1994–2002* [Vatican City: The Pontifical Academy of Sciences, 2003], pages 341 and 343. Copyright © 2003 The Pontifical Academy of Sciences.)

