

Denis Geraghty's forthright stance in *New Blackfriars* re *The Vatican and Homosexuality* came as somewhat of a surprise because there are so few today, except the very 'foolish', who are prepared to stand up for principle and for their convictions. So he would surely now support me were I to say how right, in principle, were the detractors of Galileo when they proclaimed his ideas to be 'stark staring bonkers', being not only against the natural law (in other words *disordered*) but also against the consistent doctrine of the Church. And then there were all those others, particularly in the sixteenth century, who argued against innovators who maintained that human beings should not be enslaved. Such an idea was manifestly against God's creation, being against the natural order of things (Aristotle's philosophy was much appealed to here), and contrary to the teaching of St Paul and the Church's constant tradition. The people in that minority too were surely 'stark staring bonkers', and yet there are only a minute number of Christians today (very largely or almost entirely in South Africa) who have the courage to support the traditional view (or something effectively equivalent to it) and proclaim it publicly. The world's judgement on them at the moment is harsher than that they are 'stark staring bonkers', but they will surely welcome Denis Geraghty's support. Perhaps I go a little too far here, but it is good to know for certain on whose side people really are—even if it is not actually intended.

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Achille Formis

The butchers of Heaven
with their blue aprons
in the bare grey cave-like room
where the pool is as silent as ice
... waiting still ...
ready to offer a miraculous event
... still