

## Lives of Saints

# St Thomas Aquinas

1225 - 1274

Feastday: 28th January



“Make me  
more and  
more believe  
thy promise,  
hope in thee  
and love Thee  
overall!

*St Thomas Aquinas*

I was born in the 13th Century in the Castle of Rocca Sicca near Aquino. When I was five years old, my parents sent me to the Benedictine monastery at Monte Cassino.

They were hoping that I would choose this way of life, and would later become an abbot. Then, in 1239 I was sent to Naples to complete my studies. It was here that I was first attracted to Aristotle, the Greek philosopher. When I was 16, I abandoned my family's plans for me and joined the Dominican Order. My mother could not accept this, and I was literally “captured” and kept at home for over a year. Once free I went to Paris and then to Cologne, where I finished my studies with Albert the Great. I had quite an exciting life. I was a professor in Paris, I lived at the court of Pope Urban IV, I directed the Dominican school at Rome and Viterbo, I combated adversaries of the mendicants and Averroists and I argued with some Franciscans about Aristotelianism.

My life may be summed up in a few words: praying, preaching, teaching, writing, journeying. I had one passion, an ardent zeal for the explanation and defense of Christian truth. I concentrated especially on faith and reason. Reason is our power to know, learn and understand and it is a gift. But we also have another gift: that of revelation, especially in Jesus Christ.

Many people admire my Summa Theologica, but I thought that what I wrote in it was like straw compared to who God really is, and I never finished it. I was a simple man, and declined the ecclesiastical honours offered to me by the Pope. I died in 1274.

S.D.C.  
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C H R I S T I A N Æ

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