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Quotes by Aquinas, St. Thomas

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Son of the Count of Aquino, born in the family castle in Lombardy near Naples. Educated by Benedictine monks at Monte Cassino, and at the University of Naples. He secretly joined the mendicant Dominican friars in 1244. His noble family kidnapped and imprisoned him for a year to keep him out of sight, and deprogram him, but he rejoined his order in 1245.

He studied in Paris from 1245-1248 under Saint Albert the Great, then accompanied Albertus to Cologne. Ordained in 1250, then returned to Paris to teach. Taught theology at University of Paris. He wrote defenses of the mendicant orders, commentaries on Aristotle and Lombard's Sentences, and some bible-related works, usually by dictating to secretaries. He won his doctorate, and taught in several Italian cities. Recalled by king and university to Paris in 1269, then recalled to Naples in 1272 where he was appointed regent of studies while working on the Summa Theologica.

On 6 December 1273 he experienced a divine revelation which so enraptured him that he abandoned the Summa, saying that it and his other writing were so much straw in the wind compared to the reality of the divine glory. He died four months later while en route to the Council of Lyons, overweight and with his health broken by overwork.

His works have been seminal to the thinking of the Church ever since. They

systematized her great thoughts and teaching, and combined Greek wisdom and scholarship methods with the truth of Christianity. Pope Leo VIII commanded that his teachings be studied by all theology students. He was proclaimed Doctor of the Church in 1567.

By nature all men are equal in liberty, but not in other endowments.

- Aquinas, St. Thomas

Friendship is the source of the greatest pleasures, and without friends even the most agreeable pursuits become tedious.

- Aquinas, St. Thomas

Well-ordered self-love is right and natural.

- Aquinas, St. Thomas

To convert somebody go and take them by the hand and guide them.

- Aquinas, St. Thomas

Because philosophy arises from awe, a philosopher is bound in his way to be a lover of myths and poetic fables. Poets and philosophers are alike in being big with wonder.

- Aquinas, St. Thomas

A man has free choice to the extent that he is rational.

- Aquinas, St. Thomas

Most men seem to live according to sense rather than reason.

- Aquinas, St. Thomas

The highest manifestation of life consists in this: that a being governs its own actions. A thing which is always subject to the direction of another is somewhat of a dead thing.

- Aquinas, St. Thomas

Those who are more adapted to the active life can prepare themselves for contemplation in the practice of the active life, while those who are more adapted to the contemplative life can take upon themselves the works of the active life so as to become yet more apt for contemplation.

- Aquinas, St. Thomas

Beware of the person of one book.

- Aquinas, St. Thomas

Temperance is simply a disposition of the mind which binds the passion.

- Aquinas, St. Thomas

Happiness is secured through virtue; it is a good attained by man's own will.

- Aquinas, St. Thomas



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