

Saint Thomas Aquinas

Friar, Teacher, and the Work of Wisdom

A source-first historical and hagiographic biography

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A Life Made Legible by Work

Thomas Aquinas left an immense intellectual record and almost no continuous account of himself. His questions, commentaries, sermons, disputed determinations, and unfinished syntheses show a Dominican friar thinking in public: receiving authorities, distinguishing meanings, meeting objections, and trying to lead created intelligence toward God. They do not disclose a modern private life. The scenes that have made him most familiar—the silent schoolboy called an ox, the captive resisting temptation, the crucifix praising his writing, and the scholar declaring his books straw—come principally from canonization testimony and early hagiography assembled decades after his death.

This life therefore begins with a double fact. Thomas is unusually accessible as an author and unusually mediated as a personality. Contemporary charters, university and papal acts, the chronology of his works, and testimony from people who knew him secure a remarkable itinerary through the schools and convents of thirteenth-century Europe. William of Tocco and the canonization inquiries preserve human memories that no other archive supplies, but they also arrange those memories to demonstrate sanctity. Later Catholic reception confesses Thomas as saint and Doctor of the Church; that judgment neither turns every anecdote into eyewitness history nor makes every proposition timeless.

The governing question is how a younger son from a frontier aristocratic household became a Friar Preacher, master of sacred doctrine, and author whose account of creation, grace, reason, virtue, and beatitude could outlive the institutional conflicts that formed it. The answer is not the story of a lone genius escaping his century. It is the story of a vowed religious working inside households, schools, courts, scriptoria, controversies, friendships, and worship—and of a Church that received his work through argument as well as praise.

1 Between Castle, Abbey, and New University

1.1 A birth without a birthday

Thomas was born about 1225, probably at the Aquino family's castle of Roccasecca in the Kingdom of Sicily. Modern reconstructions ordinarily place the birth in 1224 or 1225, while a current alternative favors 1226. No contemporary birth act fixes the year, day, or room. The range is reconstructed from later statements about his age and from the sequence of his education. "Aquinas" identifies the family and territorial association with Aquino; it is not a surname in the modern sense. His father Landulf belonged to the lesser nobility attached to the political world of Emperor Frederick II. His mother Theodora came from the related aristocratic networks of southern Italy. Documentary traces of siblings and property make this household more than hagiographic scenery, but they do not yield the intimate childhood sometimes supplied by later retelling.

The region stood between papal and imperial power. Monte Cassino was at once a great Benedictine monastery, a landholder, a school, and a strategic fortress. Family members held or sought ecclesiastical positions; placing a younger son with the abbey could serve devotion, education, and lineage together. Early biographers say that Thomas was offered to Monte Cassino as a child. The claim is credible within the family's documented relations, but their descriptions were written after his sanctity had become the subject. They cannot establish that anyone already foresaw a theologian or that an abbacy was a settled plan.

At the abbey Thomas encountered the Psalter, Latin grammar, liturgical time, common discipline, and the material order of books. A later question placed in the child's mouth—what is God?—works perfectly as a hagiographic overture. It may preserve remembered curiosity; it cannot be heard as a stenographic record of vocation. The historically stronger point is institutional: before Thomas learned the rapid exchange of university disputation, he knew a house in which study, prayer, property, patronage, and politics could not be separated.

1.2 Naples and a changing curriculum

Conflict around Frederick II disrupted Monte Cassino, and Thomas continued his education at the imperial studium in Naples, probably from about 1239. Founded to train servants without requiring travel to Bologna, the school joined civic and royal purposes to a newly enlarged curriculum. Latin translations made more of Aristotle available; Arabic and Jewish commentators entered Christian debate through translation; logic and natural philosophy pressed

questions that an inherited textbook order could not simply ignore. Later sources name teachers, especially Peter of Ireland and Martin of Dacia, but no transcript reconstructs Thomas's exact course or first conclusions.

Naples also brought the Order of Preachers into view. The Dominicans were a young mendicant order whose common life, poverty, study, preaching, and mobile obedience differed sharply from the stable and aristocratically entangled future his family could imagine at Monte Cassino. Thomas did not choose "reason" instead of monastic faith. He chose one ecclesial form of religious life over another, and the choice carried economic and dynastic consequences. His later theology would insist that grace perfects rather than destroys nature. His own vocation first became public as a conflict over which natural bonds and ecclesial goods should govern a son.

Claim: Thomas studied at Monte Cassino and Naples before entering the Order of Preachers.

Witness: Family and ecclesiastical documents control the setting; early Dominican lives and the canonization dossier supply the personal sequence; modern chronology coordinates them.

Limit: No school register gives a complete curriculum, and later narratives interpret childhood from the saint Thomas became.

2 The Preachers and the Cost of Leaving Home

2.1 A contested habit

Thomas entered the Order of Preachers at Naples around 1244. The exact day and formula are not preserved. The order quickly moved him away from the reach of his family, apparently intending further study at Paris. While he traveled north, brothers serving in the imperial military seized him and returned him to family custody. This was not a random abduction by strangers. It was an aristocratic household attempting to reverse a religious and social decision that endangered its plans.

The detention probably lasted months, perhaps close to a year, in family strongholds at Monte San Giovanni and Roccasecca. Later lives compress the episode into a cell and organize it as a trial of constancy. The more modest historical core is still severe: Thomas was prevented from following the order he had joined, while Dominicans and family negotiated over him. He continued to read and would not renounce the habit. His sisters and mother appear in the stories as agents rather than one-dimensional persecutors; eventual release suggests accommodation within the family as well as persistence by Thomas.

The most vivid chastity episode says that relatives introduced a woman to seduce him, that he drove her away with a burning brand, and that angels then girded him. It is early hagiographic evidence for how Dominican memory joined vocation, bodily integrity, and divine aid. It is not independently controlled as a domestic incident. The study returns to its transmission rather than making the scene carry the historical account of sexuality, family motive, or Thomas's emotional life.

2.2 Obedience beyond the household

By 1245 Thomas was free to rejoin the friars and continue north. A romantic version makes his escape a solitary rejection of family. The records instead show overlapping communities: kin negotiated; Dominican superiors directed; teachers received; and a young friar submitted his exceptional abilities to a corporate program. His vow did not erase gratitude or natural obligation, but it changed their order. In the *Summa theologiae* he would later distinguish the debts owed to parents and country from religion directed to God (II-II, qq. 101–102), and would argue that a solemn religious profession can place a person beyond parental authority in the matter vowed (II-II, q. 189, a. 6). Those mature arguments should not be treated as secret memoir. They show why the conflict remained intellectually legible within his account of human bonds.

The Dominicans sent Thomas to Paris and then, with Albert the Great, to Cologne. The order did more than rescue him. It supplied the offices, libraries, travel, disputations, secretaries, and commands through which nearly all his surviving work became possible. "Thomas the individual" and "Thomas the Dominican" cannot be separated without losing the form of his life.

Claim: Thomas's family detained him after his Dominican profession and he later rejoined the order.

Witness: Early biographers and canonization witnesses converge on the conflict; documentary family context and subsequent Dominican career control its outline.

Limit: Duration, locations, speeches, escape mechanics, and the temptation scene vary or depend on hagiographic witnesses.

3 Albert, Cologne, and the Discipline of Distinction

3.1 A student in a transregional school

Thomas reached Paris in 1245, when the university's theology faculty and the mendicant convents were becoming centers of international intellectual life. He studied under Albert the Great and followed him to the new Dominican studium at Cologne in 1248. The route joined an Italian friar to a German teacher through a Parisian institution using Latin to debate Greek, Arabic, Jewish, and Christian authorities. The familiar phrase "medieval synthesis" can make this sound already settled. It was instead a work of discrimination: Which texts were Aristotle's? What did his commentators add? Which demonstrations held? Where did revelation change the question?

Albert's importance was not that he handed Thomas a finished system. He modeled the patient exposition of newly available learning and the possibility that a friar could study nature without treating creation as a rival to its Creator. Thomas's later commentaries often distinguish Aristotle's words from an interpreter's conclusion, and philosophical demonstration from theological authority. That habit became one of his most durable gifts. It also exposed him to continuing suspicion from readers who regarded extensive Aristotelian engagement as capitulation and from later admirers tempted to make every Aristotelian instrument a Christian conclusion.

Early Dominican memory describes Thomas as large, quiet, and underestimated by other students; Albert supposedly answered the nickname "dumb ox" by predicting that his teaching would resound through the world. The story's point is evangelical reversal: concealed intelligence becomes service rather than display. It survives too late and too perfectly shaped to serve as a classroom transcript. Thomas's actual emergence is visible in work and appointment, not in a recovered insult.

Thomas was probably ordained a priest during the Cologne years, 1248–1252. The evidence used here does not fix an exact date or ordaining prelate. This transition matters even where its ceremony is unrecoverable: the teaching, preaching, Mass, and sacramental theology of his later life were the work of a Dominican priest, not only of a university scholar.

3.2 From sentences to existence

Thomas returned to Paris about 1252 to begin the sequence that led to a chair in theology. As bachelor he lectured on Scripture and then on Peter Lombard's *Sentences*, the standard occasion for organizing questions about God, creation, Christ, grace, sacraments, and last things. His four-book commentary is not a youthful *Summa* in rough form. It belongs to the pedagogical and textual order of the assigned work, even where later positions begin to appear.

The compact *On Being and Essence*, usually placed in this first Paris period and addressed to fellow friars, shows a different scale. It asks how essence and existence are said of material substances, immaterial creatures, and God. The work receives Avicenna as well as Aristotle, but it does not merely baptize either. In creatures, what a thing is does not explain that it is; in God, Thomas argues, essence and existence are not composed. A biographical claim follows only cautiously: the young lecturer had learned to make inherited vocabularies answer a theological problem through precise distinctions. The text does not reveal whether the quietness of later memory was temperament, concentration, rhetoric, or legend.

Formation also meant preaching, liturgy, and conventual obedience. University titles can obscure these. Thomas remained a friar whose academic labor served the order's mission, and whose theology ordinarily begins from sacred doctrine rather than from a free-standing project of philosophical originality. His philosophy is real; it is also embedded in a vocation whose final object exceeds what philosophy can demonstrate.

4 Master in a University at War with Its Friars

4.1 The delayed chair

Thomas qualified for the mastership in theology in 1256, younger than the ordinary statutory age. His advancement occurred amid a bitter conflict between secular masters and the mendicant orders. The dispute involved teaching posts, corporate oaths, pastoral privileges, poverty, and the right of religious institutes to participate in the university. William of Saint-Amour attacked the friars not merely as professional competitors but as dangers to the Church. Papal intervention by Alexander IV and the condemnation of William's *De periculis novissimorum temporum* helped secure the mendicant masters' position.

Thomas's *Against Those Who Attack the Worship of God and Religion* answers within that conflict. He defends a religious life ordered to study, teaching, and preaching; voluntary poverty does not make apostolic ministry illicit, and contemplation can overflow into instruction. The polemical occasion matters. A later reader should not turn a defense of new orders into a timeless denial of institutional self-interest, nor reduce the theological argument to a fight over jobs. Thomas believed the mendicant form could serve the Church because disciplined study and common poverty freed preaching for truth.

The received inaugural lecture associated with the verse "watering the mountains from above" presents sacred teachers as receiving wisdom from God and communicating it without owning its source. Whether every detail of the occasion is fixed or not, the image fits the office he practiced: authority is ministerial, ordered downward from divine truth through finite teachers to hearers. It is a demanding ideal for someone whose name would later function as an authority in its own right.

4.2 The first Paris regency

From 1256 to 1259 Thomas taught as master, disputed publicly, preached, and supervised the academic exercises attached to his chair. Works commonly placed here include disputed questions on truth, the beginning of substantial biblical exposition, and defenses of religious life. The university method did not mean assembling token objections before a predetermined slogan. A good article identifies the issue, states serious reasons on both sides, distinguishes senses, gives a determination, and returns to each objection. The form trained intellectual charity when practiced honestly: an opponent's reason had to become intelligible before it could be answered.

The same form could sharpen combat. Thomas wrote within real institutional struggle and could describe adversaries through categories they rejected. His later reputation for serenity must not bleach the argumentative stakes. Yet his characteristic answer was architectural rather than merely victorious. Natural reason, revealed teaching, vowed perfection, ecclesial office, and pastoral usefulness had to be placed in an order in which one good did not destroy another.

In 1259 Thomas left the Paris chair and returned to Italy under Dominican obedience. The move ended neither authorship nor public responsibility. It shifted their geography and brought him closer to the papal court, Greek-Latin ecclesial questions, Dominican formation, and the liturgical work with which later memory most closely joined his prayer and poetry.

5 Italian Years: Court, Classroom, and Altar

5.1 The order's schools and the papal world

The Italian period from 1259 to 1268 is not one uninterrupted residence. The chronology moves among Dominican assignments and papal-court cities, especially Naples, Orvieto, and Rome. Ordinances of the 1259 general chapter at Valenciennes name Thomas with Albert and other friars in ordering Dominican study. The precise effect of each participant is difficult to isolate, but the institutional direction is clear: study was not a private ornament. The order needed a graded program capable of forming preachers and teachers across provinces.

At Orvieto Thomas worked in the orbit of Urban IV. He compiled the *Golden Chain* on the Gospels, arranging Greek and Latin patristic excerpts so that voices separated by language could comment in sequence. Its method is receptive and editorial rather than merely original; attribution and translation questions attend individual excerpts. Urban also asked him to assess a collection of Greek theological texts. The resulting *Against the Errors of the Greeks* serves Latin hopes for reunion but sometimes depends on mistranslated, spurious, or decontextualized material. Thomas can reason carefully from the dossier he received without making that dossier critically adequate. The episode is a warning against identifying intellectual power with complete source control.

The *Summa contra gentiles*, largely composed across the first Paris and Italian years, likewise resists a simple legend. Later tradition connects it to Raymond of Penyafort and mission to Muslims. No surviving commission makes it a field manual for one religious population. Its first three books argue toward truths accessible to natural reason; the fourth treats truths known only through revelation. Islam, Judaism, eastern Christianity, ancient philosophy, and Latin academic debate form parts of its horizon, but its literary addressee and exact institutional purpose remain debated.

5.2 Corpus Christi and responsible attribution

Urban IV extended the feast of Corpus Christi to the Latin Church in 1264. William of Tocco's early life says that the pope commissioned Thomas to compose an office. Liturgical and textual scholarship has identified more than one office tradition and a complicated set of hymns, lessons, and prayers. The office commonly called *Sacerdos in aeternum* and the Mass beginning *Cibavit eos*, with texts including *Pange lingua*, are strongly and traditionally associated with Thomas; individual items and recensions do not all carry equal authentication. *Adoro te devote* has its own transmission and should not be silently made part of the papal commission.

The cautious attribution does not make the theological achievement small. Scriptural types, patristic teaching, scholastic precision, and singable Latin are ordered toward worship of Christ's sacramental presence and sacrifice. This is not a case of an abstract philosopher occasionally becoming devotional. For Thomas, sacred doctrine and liturgical contemplation address the same reality in different modes. Yet a feast's reception cannot certify every line's autograph, and later familiarity cannot erase the history of the texts.

5.3 A beginning for beginners

At the Dominican studium in Rome, commonly associated with Santa Sabina, Thomas began the *Summa theologiae* around 1265. Its prologue says that a teacher of Catholic truth must instruct beginners and complains that existing materials multiply useless questions or follow the order of books rather than the subject. The answer is not simplification in the modern sense. It is an enormous pedagogical architecture: God; creation's procession from God; the human creature's movement toward God through acts, passions, habits, law, and grace; and Christ and the sacraments as the way of return.

The plan makes every local question relational. Creation is really other than God yet radically dependent; human action has natural structures yet needs grace for supernatural beatitude; moral virtues perfect powers rather than replace them; sacraments are visible instruments ordered to Christ's Passion. The article form keeps objections in view. Its later use as a quarry of isolated answers can conceal that movement and the work's declared teaching purpose.

Claim: Thomas composed a eucharistic office in connection with Urban IV's extension of Corpus Christi.

Witness: William of Tocco gives the early commission report; the bull *Transiturus*, office manuscripts, and textual criticism control the institutional and textual history.

Limit: The report is not a surviving contract or autograph, several office traditions exist, and individual hymns and prayers require separate authentication.

6 Paris Again: Aristotle, Mendicants, and One Intellect

6.1 Return under pressure

The Dominican order sent Thomas back to Paris in 1268 or 1269. A second regency was exceptional and signals both confidence in him and the intensity of the disputes. The faculty confronted renewed attacks on mendicant religious life, disagreement over Aristotelian propositions and their Arabic commentators, and sharp intramural debates about creation, knowledge, the soul, and divine action. Thomas's second Paris period was therefore not the quiet completion of a system already achieved. Some of his most exact writing was produced because alternatives had become urgent.

Against Gerard of Abbeville and related criticism, Thomas defended evangelical poverty and a religious institute ordered to teaching in *On the Perfection of the Spiritual Life* and *Against Those Who Would Deter Men from Entering Religion*. These works distinguish counsel from command and perfection from ecclesiastical rank. Their immediate aim is apologetic. They should be read beside the real power acquired by successful mendicant schools and not turned into proof that every later institutional arrangement bearing the name "apostolic" realizes the ideal.

6.2 Aristotle and the separated intellect

Latin readers increasingly encountered Aristotle through Greek-Latin versions and through interpretations by Avicenna, Averroes, and others. Thomas wrote close commentaries on several Aristotelian works and received revised translations associated with William of Moerbeke. A direct personal commission or friendship should not be invented for every translation; the textual relation is firmer than the private one. Thomas used Aristotle as an authority in philosophy, not as a prophet whose every conclusion governed Christian teaching.

The controversy over intellect made the distinction concrete. Some Parisian masters were understood to teach one separate possible intellect for all human beings. In *On the Unity of the Intellect against the Averroists*, Thomas argued from Aristotle as well as from the integrity of individual human action that the intellectual soul is the form of this body and that each person understands. The conclusion mattered for responsibility, resurrection, and personal beatitude. His ending invites an opponent to answer publicly rather than in corners. The invitation displays academic confidence and polemical heat; it does not identify every unnamed opponent or make "Averroism" a single stable school.

Étienne Tempier, bishop of Paris, condemned thirteen propositions in December 1270. They included claims about one intellect and necessity. The act does not name Thomas, and similarity between a condemned phrase and one part of a Thomistic distinction is not enough to declare him condemned. Conversely, his opposition to the unity of intellect did not remove suspicion from every other position. The later 1277 dossier would show how easily propositions could be detached, aggregated, and made to stand for a school.

6.3 Creation, individuation, and argument among colleagues

Thomas disputed with other Christian masters as well as interpreters of Aristotle. Questions about whether the world had a temporal beginning illustrate his method. Revelation teaches creation's beginning; Thomas denied that natural reason could demonstrate either an eternal created world or a temporal beginning. An eternal creature would still depend on God for its whole act of being. This logical possibility did not become his reading of Genesis. By distinguishing dependence from temporal sequence he defended the doctrine while refusing an argument he thought invalid.

Other debates concerned the plurality of substantial forms, the soul's relation to the body, angelic knowledge, illumination, and the divine ideas. In 1319 Bartholomew of Capua reported what friars had said about a Paris dispute between Thomas and John Pecham; the record identifies neither its issue nor a verbatim exchange. Real disagreement is secure, but one transmitted confrontation cannot stand for coherent "Thomist" and "Augustinian" parties already complete. Bonaventure, Pecham, Siger, and Thomas each wrote in genres and moments that resist team labels.

Meanwhile Thomas continued the *Summa*, disputed questions on evil, virtue, the soul, and spiritual creatures, biblical lectures, quodlibetal sessions, and Aristotelian commentary. The concurrency is part of the biography. A determination on one question could depend on assistants, reporting, revision, and a library of authorities while

the same friar preached and met the order's common schedule. Intellectual history that preserves only finished propositions misses the laboring institution that produced them.

7 Naples, the Unfinished Page, and Fossanova

7.1 A final school

In 1272 Thomas left Paris and returned to teach theology at Naples. A royal order of 15 October funded a monthly allowance while he lectured there. The return joined the Dominican school to the city of his early formation and placed him again near his family region and the Angevin court. He preached and continued Part III of the *Summa theologiae*. Surviving reportations make the last teaching collaborative: a hearer's record may preserve genuine instruction without becoming an author-revised text.

His work was not simply withdrawing from the world toward private contemplation. Part III treats Christ, the mysteries of Christ's life, and the sacraments. The sequence remains incomplete, breaking off in the treatment of penance. The familiar "Supplement" printed after it was assembled posthumously, principally from the earlier commentary on the *Sentences*. It transmits Thomistic material but is not the continuation Thomas himself finished.

7.2 What happened in December 1273?

After Mass around the feast of Saint Nicholas in December 1273, Thomas ceased his ordinary writing. Bartholomew of Capua testified in 1319 to a report passed from Thomas's companion Reginald of Piperno through John of Anagni. In that chain Thomas said that what he had written appeared like straw in relation to what had been shown him. William of Tocco gives a related hagiographic ending. This is early evidence, but not Reginald's deposition or Thomas's own written statement. Its wording, date, and visionary interpretation belong to transmitted memory.

The cessation itself is strong: the corpus stops, companions noticed a marked change, and the *Summa* remained unfinished. Its cause is less secure. Theological contemplation, physical collapse, neurological illness, exhaustion, or some combination cannot be diagnosed from medieval reports. Calling it a mystical experience can faithfully name the earliest witnesses' interpretation; calling it a stroke claims medical evidence they do not provide. Nor does the "straw" image revoke the works. In its received meaning, disproportion before divine reality relativizes even true theology; it does not certify that every prior sentence was false.

7.3 The road to Lyon

Gregory X summoned Thomas to the Second Council of Lyon, whose agenda included reunion with the Greek Church. Despite diminished strength, he began the journey north early in 1274 with companions. Transmitted testimony says that he struck his head against a tree lying across the road, followed by a period of illness at the castle of Maenza. These details come through early biographical tradition, not a medical or travel log. When he could go no farther, he was received by the Cistercians at Fossanova.

Thomas died there on 7 March 1274. The date is firm in early chronological and liturgical memory. Accounts of his final confession, exposition of the Song of Songs, and words before the Eucharist express a fitting Christian death but vary in form and textual control. They should not be fused into a single verbatim scene. He was buried at Fossanova, and almost immediately his body became the focus of competing custody, signs, and institutional desire.

He was still only in his late forties, perhaps about forty-nine. The modest age and unfinished *Summa* make his output astonishing, but volume is not the measure his own theology gives wisdom. Study is ordered to truth, truth to contemplation and charity, and teaching to a good shared. The incomplete page exposes the contingency of the worker without making the work meaningless.

Claim: Thomas stopped ordinary composition in December 1273 and died at Fossanova on 7 March 1274.

Witness: The unfinished corpus, early chronology, canonization testimony, and early lives converge on cessation, journey, place, and death date.

Limit: The revelation’s content, exact “straw” wording, medical cause, travel accident, final speeches, and deathbed exposition remain textually layered.

8 Books Made in a Workshop

8.1 Not one book called Thomism

Thomas wrote in forms whose purposes differ. Biblical commentaries and lecture reports follow sacred pages; Aristotelian expositions ordinarily seek the philosopher’s intention; disputed questions preserve the architecture of academic determination; quodlibets answer issues proposed in public sessions; polemical works intervene in live conflicts; the two *Summae* order large fields for different pedagogical purposes; sermons exhort; liturgical texts are meant to be sung and prayed. A sentence moved from one form to another may lose its question, audience, level of authority, or stage of development.

Ancient catalogs, manuscript evidence, cross-references, style, and doctrine have gradually separated authentic works from doubtful and spurious attributions. The Leonine Commission’s critical edition remains a continuing project. Corpus Thomisticum offers an invaluable electronic corpus and authentication aids, but an online text does not dissolve manuscript variants or give every reportatio the status of an autograph. The printed *Opera omnia* familiar to later readers contains layers that Thomas did not himself assemble into one final system.

The chronology matters. The *Sentences* commentary belongs to a required early exercise; the *Summa contra gentiles* developed through several years; the *Summa theologiae* began after much teaching and remained unfinished; positions can be refined. A real change should be demonstrated from controlled texts, not inferred whenever two translated phrases differ. Conversely, harmony should not be manufactured by reading a late distinction back into every early formulation.

8.2 Hand, voice, and collaborators

Thomas composed with quill, notebooks, exemplars, dictation, and human help. Autograph material displays compressed handwriting and revision. Early witnesses describe him dictating to several secretaries, an image sometimes turned into a feat beyond ordinary capacity. The underlying collaborative practice is credible and necessary: Reginald of Piperno and other *socii* organized travel, books, oral delivery, copying, and perhaps posthumous compilation. Their service does not erase authorship; it makes authorship material.

Reportationes raise a special limit. A student’s record may be the only form in which a lecture or sermon survives. It can witness Thomas’s teaching while also containing abbreviation, misunderstanding, rearrangement, or later revision. The source audit therefore does not use “Thomas says” uniformly for an autograph, an author-supervised work, a reported lecture, an early catalog attribution, and a later devotional text.

The workshop extended backward through translation. Thomas read Aristotle in Latin, often through changing versions; received Avicenna, Averroes, Maimonides, and patristic sources through particular textual channels; and used florilegia whose attributions could fail. It extended forward through editors who supplied titles, divisions, punctuation, parallel citations, and the *Supplement*. His achievement is not diminished by this dependence. Theologically, dependence is precisely how created intelligence works: it receives, judges, and communicates goods it did not originate.

8.3 Objection as an act of justice

Thomas’s mature article commonly begins with objections, introduces a contrary authority, determines the question, and answers the objections. The parts do not all carry his final position. Quoting an objection as “Aquinas taught” is a basic source error; quoting the *sed contra* as though he endorsed every premise can be one as well. The determination and replies must be read together.

At its best, the form disciplines disagreement. It makes the strongest located difficulty visible, distinguishes terms before resolving them, and returns to what remains true in an opposing argument. It does not guarantee that Thomas

possessed the best source, represented a social group from its own voice, or escaped the blind spots of his setting. Method can expose an objection without repairing an unjust inherited premise. A source-first reader honors the intellectual virtue of the form by testing its evidence as carefully as Thomas tested a syllogism.

9 Wisdom, Creaturely Goods, and Difficult Inheritances

9.1 Sacred doctrine and the God who gives being

Thomas's theology begins neither with a generic supreme being nor with human religious feeling. Sacred doctrine receives principles revealed by God and considers creatures under the aspect of God as their beginning and end (*Summa theologiae* I, q. 1). Reason can demonstrate some truths about God, but the mysteries of Trinity and Incarnation are known because God speaks. Philosophical arguments are genuine within their competence and ministerial within theology; an appeal to revelation is not permission for a bad demonstration.

The “five ways” of I, q. 2, a. 3 are short arguments inside that larger project, not Thomas's whole natural theology. They reason from change, causality, contingency, gradation, and ordered action toward a first source. What such a source is must still be treated through divine simplicity, perfection, goodness, knowledge, and will. Thomas's preferred language of analogy refuses both univocity, as though “good” meant exactly the same of God and creatures, and sheer equivocation, as though creaturely goodness told nothing true of its cause.

Creation accordingly gives reality rather than competition. God causes the whole act of creaturely being; created causes remain real at their own level. Providence does not make fire cease to burn, an artisan cease to make, or a human choice cease to be voluntary. This layered causality lets Thomas join divine sovereignty to scientific and moral inquiry without assigning God and creature shares of one finite causal field.

9.2 Knowledge ordered to wisdom

Human knowing begins from sensible things. The intellect abstracts intelligible form and can reason from effects to causes; it does not naturally possess the direct vision of God. Thomas's insistence on one substantial human being—body and rational soul, not a person temporarily using a body—grounds the dignity of embodied knowing and the resurrection's importance. His account rejects one separate intellect shared by everyone, while receiving Aristotelian psychology within a doctrine of personal creation and destiny.

Faith is not belief against evidence. It is an intellectual assent moved by the will under grace to truth revealed by God. Some truths lie above reason, not against it; apparent conflict requires that the demonstration, the interpretation, or both be reexamined. Yet Thomas's world of authorities was historically bounded. He could reason from an inaccurate translation, accept Aristotelian biology, or know another community principally through Christian legal and polemical categories. Confidence in truth did not grant complete data.

Study becomes moral in II-II, q. 166: *studiositas* moderates the desire to know so that attention serves truth and vocation. Its contrary curiosity is not simple interest but disordered pursuit—by a wrong object, means, purpose, or neglect of duty. This helps explain Thomas's life better than a modern image of unlimited information acquisition. His work was vast because it was governed, collaborative, and ordered toward teaching and contemplation.

9.3 Nature, grace, Christ, and beatitude

The moral architecture of the *Summa* begins from the end. Every agent acts for a good; complete human happiness cannot consist in wealth, honor, power, pleasure, or any created good, but finally in the vision of God (I-II, qq. 1–5). Acts form habits; passions are not evil merely because they are felt; prudence, justice, fortitude, and temperance perfect human powers; faith, hope, and charity orient the person to a supernatural communion no acquired habit can produce.

Law participates in an order of reason for common good. Eternal law is divine wisdom governing creation; natural law is rational participation in it; human law specifies it under contingent conditions; divine law directs to the supernatural end and judges what human law cannot reach (I-II, qq. 90–108). The often-isolated first precept—good

is to be done and pursued, evil avoided—begins practical reasoning rather than supplying every conclusion without prudence, social knowledge, or revelation.

Grace heals and elevates rather than making created action fictitious. Christ is true God and true man, whose humanity acts instrumentally in salvation. The sacraments are efficacious signs ordered to Christ's Passion, present grace, and future glory. In the Eucharist Thomas uses the language of substance and accidents to confess conversion of bread and wine into Christ's body and blood without pretending that Aristotelian vocabulary exhausts the mystery. His theology is therefore not a philosophy with devotional additions; Christ and the sacramental economy complete the return whose created structures the earlier parts analyze.

9.4 Heresy and coercion

A responsible life must retain conclusions later readers find grave. Thomas rejects compelling Jews or pagans to make an initial profession of faith, because believing is voluntary (II-II, q. 10, a. 8). He nevertheless permits coercion of baptized dissenters and explicitly judges that an obstinate heretic, after ecclesial correction and excommunication, may be handed to secular power for death (q. 11, aa. 3-4). That answer belongs to a thirteenth-century legal and ecclesial culture of persecution, but it is his determination, not merely an objection he records.

The Second Vatican Council's *Dignitatis humanae* teaches civil immunity from coercion in religious matters and acknowledges conduct in Christian history contrary to the Gospel spirit. The present Catechism judges capital punishment inadmissible. These later Catholic judgments should not be put into Thomas's mouth as though he anticipated their full form. Nor should his medieval context be invoked to make the lethal conclusion unreal.

9.5 Jews, women, and servitude

Thomas's treatment of Jews combines protections with discriminatory premises. He rejects baptizing young children against non-Christian parents' will and tolerates Jewish worship (II-II, q. 10, aa. 11-12). His reasons include natural parental responsibility and avoidance of worse evils, but also the instrumental claim that Jewish rites witness Christian truth. In advice to the Duchess of Brabant he accepts inherited language of Jewish servitude, restricted exaction rather than equal citizenship, and distinctive dress. Protection from forced baptism is important; it is not modern religious or civil equality. *Nostra aetate* 4 later rejects collective Jewish guilt and antisemitism, while no. 5 rejects religious discrimination more generally. That later Catholic teaching is a development in reception, not a hidden gloss on the medieval letter.

On women, Thomas affirms one human species and says that the divine image in its principal sense of intellectual nature is found in women and men (I, q. 93, a. 4). Yet he also receives erroneous Aristotelian reproductive biology, describes the female as defective in the particular process of generation while intended in nature as a whole, restricts woman's distinctive help in the creation account to generation, and asserts domestic hierarchy on a supposed difference in rational discernment (q. 92, a. 1). The equality claim limits but does not cancel the hierarchy. Current Catholic teaching on equal personal dignity must be stated as the Church's reception, not used to sanitize his premises.

Thomas denies that a particular human being is a slave by absolute nature and limits a master's authority over conscience and marriage. He nevertheless treats servitude as secondarily natural through supposed utility under the law of nations, calls the slave an instrument in relation to the master, and denies the full reciprocity of justice between independent persons (II-II, q. 57, aa. 3-4; q. 104, aa. 5-6). This is not the later racialized Atlantic system, but neither is it abolitionism. His own principles concerning rational nature can support criticism beyond his conclusions; the distinction between a fruitful development and the historical author's position must remain visible.

Claim: Thomas joins unusually strong accounts of rational creaturely dignity with conclusions supporting coercion, hierarchy, and servitude.

Witness: The relevant *Summa* determinations and the letter to the Duchess of Brabant are subject-authored texts at exact loci; later councils and catechetical acts control only later Catholic reception.

Limit: Neither canonization nor Doctor status makes every medieval empirical premise, civil arrangement, or penal judgment irreformable.

10 From Suspect Propositions to a Doctor of the Church

10.1 The condemnations of 1277

Thomas died before the most famous institutional controversy over the Parisian Aristotelian debates. On 7 March 1277—three years to the day after his death—Bishop Étienne Tempier condemned 219 propositions. The list does not name Thomas. It gathers claims of different origin and coherence; some oppose positions Thomas expressly rejected, while a significant group touches or was understood to touch Thomistic theses. At Oxford later that month, Archbishop Robert Kilwardby prohibited a smaller set that more directly included distinctive positions associated with Thomas, especially concerning the unity of substantial form.

These acts did not amount to one universal condemnation of “Thomism.” They did make Dominican defense necessary and show that Thomas’s later authority was not immediate or uncontested. In 1325 the bishop of Paris revoked the 1277 condemnation only insofar as it touched or was said to touch Thomas after his canonization; the act left the propositions to free scholastic discussion and did not certify each one as true. A simple fall–vindication plot loses the textual limits of all three acts.

10.2 Inquiry and canonization

Dominican promotion of Thomas’s cult and teaching gathered memories, miracle reports, documents, and petitions. William of Tocco became a principal promoter and revised his *Ystoria* during the process. A papally authorized inquiry at Naples in 1319 heard witnesses whose proximity varied: some knew Thomas, some knew companions, and others reported public reputation or miracles. A second inquiry at Fossanova in 1321 focused especially on the tomb and miracles. The records are precious precisely because they preserve speaker and chain; extracting every answer into an undifferentiated eyewitness biography would discard their strongest feature.

John XXII canonized Thomas at Avignon on 18 July 1323. Canonization is official Catholic reception of sanctity and cult. It is not a modern verdict on every date in Tocco, a guarantee of every alleged miracle, or approval of each philosophical conclusion. The process also demonstrates how memory had become institutional: a religious order, universities, rulers, witnesses, notaries, and papal authority all helped make a dead teacher publicly legible as a saint.

10.3 Doctor, patron, and many Thomisms

Pius V declared Thomas a Doctor of the Church on 11 April 1567 in *Mirabilis Deus*. The title recognizes the eminent service of his teaching to the Church. It does not make him a source of revelation or require that every Catholic school adopt one later commentator’s reading. The Piana edition of his works and the great commentarial traditions helped create “Thomism,” but Dominican, Jesuit, Carmelite, analytic, transcendental, and other appropriations have not been one method or list of conclusions.

Leo XIII’s *Aeterni Patris* (1879) made Thomas central to a renewal of Christian philosophy, and the Leonine edition gave that renewal a critical textual task. In 1880 *Cum hoc sit* named him patron of Catholic schools. Seminary curricula, manuals, the modern Thomist revival, and twentieth-century debate magnified his institutional presence. Manual abbreviation sometimes made his thought look more closed than the objections, authorities, and development of the original works.

Paul VI’s *Lumen Ecclesiae* (1974) commemorated the seventh centenary of Thomas’s death while explicitly allowing the legitimacy of other Catholic schools. John Paul II and Benedict XVI praised the harmony of faith and reason and the theological orientation of his wisdom. In 2025 Leo XIV described Thomas and John Henry Newman together as co-patrons of the Church’s educational mission. The mutable wording matters: Thomas should not be called the sole current patron on the strength of the 1880 act alone.

His present Roman memorial is 28 January, associated with the medieval translation of his relics to Toulouse; 7 March remains his death date. A feast orders ecclesial remembrance. It does not settle a birth year, authenticate a portrait, or turn all later scholastic conflict into disobedience.

Claim: The Catholic Church canonized Thomas in 1323 and declared him a Doctor in 1567.

Witness: The canonization proceedings and bull, *Mirabilis Deus*, and later papal acts are official evidence for their respective acts.

Limit: Their objects are sanctity, cult, eminent teaching, patronage, and recommendation; they do not remove textual variants, historical limits, or legitimate Catholic schools.

11 Tradition under Review

11.1 The saint remembered backward

Early hagiography often lets the end illuminate the beginning. The infant who will write on the Incarnation clutches a paper bearing the angelic greeting; the underestimated student receives Albert's prophecy; the captive friar wins an angelic girdle of chastity; the mature theologian hears Christ approve his writing; the dying scholar relativizes all books before what he has seen. The sequence is theologically coherent. That coherence is evidence of formation as well as a reason not to treat the scenes as accidental camera images.

The "dumb ox" and chastity stories are canonization-era hagiographic traditions, not contemporary school and household records. The crucifix dialogue in which Christ praises Thomas and Thomas asks for Christ alone is introduced by Benedict XVI as something ancient biographers tell; papal reuse receives its spiritual meaning without backdating it. The straw report is closer to named companions but still reaches the 1319 deposition through a chain of speakers. These distinctions permit the stories to remain memorable without demanding historical certainty they cannot carry.

11.2 Death without a retrospective diagnosis

The reported collision with a tree lying across the road on Thomas's last journey appears in transmitted early testimony. The cessation of work, weakness, journey, and death at Fossanova are secure in outline. Modern diagnoses of stroke or chronic subdural injury are retrospective possibilities without clinical evidence. A poisoning allegation connected to Charles of Anjou belongs to an early-fourteenth-century Dante commentary tradition, not a near-contemporary cause-of-death record. Political drama should not fill the medical silence.

Accounts of a final exposition of the Song of Songs and eucharistic confession likewise differ. They witness how Cistercians and Dominicans understood a holy death: Scripture, sacrament, humility, and submission to the Church. Unless a particular wording and chain are named, they should be paraphrased as tradition, not printed as Thomas's last transcript.

11.3 A body desired by institutions

Thomas was buried at Fossanova, but the history of his remains was not a calm, continuous custody chain. Cistercians, the Aquino family, Dominicans, papal authority, cities, and rulers had spiritual and institutional interests in the saint's body. Medieval reports include concealment, opening, division, and translation. Relics made sanctity locally present, but they were also objects of jurisdiction and prestige. Hagiographic fragrance or incorruption claims belong to the witnesses and examinations that report them; they do not provide modern forensic identification.

Papal arrangements eventually enabled the principal translation to the Dominicans at Toulouse in 1368–1369. Further divisions and later movement, including disruption around the French Revolution, complicate any assertion that one present reliquary contains an untouched entire body. The present official Jacobins site in Toulouse is competent to describe its custody and display. It cannot by itself establish the identity and chain of every object claimed elsewhere. A relic claim must name object, transfer, custodian, and verification rather than borrowing certainty from Thomas's canonization.

11.4 The scholar made visible

No securely contemporary portrait establishes Thomas's face. Later artists make a Dominican theologian recognizable through a black-and-white habit, a book and pen, a radiant sun or jewel upon the breast, a church or university, and sometimes a defeated or converted opponent. Eucharistic imagery adds a chalice, host, or monstrance; the ox converts an insult into an attribute. These images are theology and reception, not portrait photography.

The title "Angelic Doctor" links purity, intelligence, and his extensive treatment of angels. "Common Doctor" emphasizes wide ecclesial usefulness. Neither is a civil name or evidence that he possessed angelic knowledge. Patronage of students, schools, universities, philosophers, theologians, and books developed from received work and official acts. Invoking that patronage can orient study toward holiness; it cannot turn a citation into proof.

Responsible devotion need not choose between disenchantment and credulity. It can receive a story's call to chastity, humility, contemplation, or intellectual service while also asking when the story first appears, who transmitted it, what genre shaped it, and what remains unknown.

12 The Work of Wisdom

Thomas Aquinas's life does not resolve into a contest between reason and faith. It shows their laborious ordering. A child of a politically exposed household entered a mobile order; a monk's pupil became a university master; an heir of Latin Christianity read Greek philosophy through Arabic and Jewish interlocutors; a polemicist tried to make objection serve truth; a writer of extraordinary abundance stopped with his largest work unfinished. At every stage wisdom was received through institutions and persons before it could be given.

His durable intellectual claim is architectural. Creation's dependence on God does not make created causes unreal. Grace does not abolish nature. Faith does not license contradiction. Body and soul form one human being. Virtue orders powers and passions toward a true end. Christ and the sacraments complete a movement no philosophy can supply. These are not detachable slogans; they are relations worked out across genres, objections, and years.

The same source discipline that discloses that achievement also exposes limits. Thomas could use inadequate Greek dossiers, inherited anti-Jewish law, erroneous biology, hierarchical social premises, and a coercive account of heresy. Later Catholic teaching and Thomistic development may criticize or move beyond such conclusions without pretending that he already taught the later judgment. Doctor status asks the Church to learn from an eminent teacher, not to remove him from history.

His sanctity is an ecclesial judgment; this study neither grants nor revokes it. Historically, the strongest sign of the vocation he pursued is not one perfect anecdote but the repeated conversion of learning into a common good: lectures, replies, texts, worship, formation, and questions left open to correction. The final silence does not cancel the books. It places them where Thomas's theology had always said creaturely wisdom belongs—true as gift, finite before its source, and ordered toward a vision it cannot manufacture.

A Scope, Chronology, and Evidence

A.1 Identity and bounds

Name and life. This study uses Saint Thomas Aquinas, Latin Thomas de Aquino: Dominican friar, priest, theologian, philosopher, biblical commentator, saint, and Doctor of the Church. He was born about 1225, within a responsible 1224–1226 reconstruction, and died at Fossanova on 7 March 1274. No exact birthday is claimed. "Angelic Doctor" and "Common Doctor" are received titles, not contemporary civil identifiers.

Places and institutions. The principal route is Roccasecca and Aquino; Monte Cassino; Naples; Paris; Cologne; the papal-court cities of central Italy, especially Orvieto; Rome; Naples again; Maenza; and Fossanova. Modern place names orient without deciding disputed medieval boundaries. Governing institutions include the Aquino household, Benedictine Monte Cassino, the Order of Preachers, the universities and studia of Naples, Paris, Cologne, and Rome, the papal court, and Cistercian Fossanova.

Language and ecclesial frame. Thomas wrote principally in Latin and read Greek, Arabic, Hebrew, and Jewish authorities largely through Latin translations, excerpt collections, and scholarly mediation. The work is a historical and hagiographic biography within Latin Catholic history. It does not make the Roman Church the only community capable of reading Thomas or treat thirteenth-century Latin formulations as the only Christian vocabulary.

Currentness. Official, institutional, digital-corpus, liturgical, relic-custody, and bibliographic claims retained here were checked through 20 July 2026. The current Roman memorial is 28 January. The present Toulouse custodial claim and the 2025 co-patronage formulation are mutable and must be rechecked in a future revision. Calendar claims are limited to the General Roman Calendar; Dominican, local, other-rite, and historical calendar editions were not comprehensively audited.

A.2 Reader, question, and thesis boundary

The intended reader is a serious general reader, cleric, student, or researcher who wants a sustained life before a summary of doctrines. The governing question is how Thomas’s Dominican vocation, schools, collaborators, controversies, prayer, and unfinished work produced a durable account of wisdom, and how that achievement can be received without flattening evidence or historical limits.

The historical thesis is that Thomas made distinction serve communion: divine and created causality, faith and reason, body and soul, nature and grace, contemplation and teaching remain really distinguishable precisely so they can be rightly ordered. This architecture grew from a corporate religious and academic life, not solitary abstraction. It also contains positions shaped by inadequate sources and medieval coercive, anti-Jewish, gendered, and servile orders. Later sanctity and Doctor judgments are stated according to their ecclesial objects; this study does not issue those judgments, revoke them, or extend them to every proposition and anecdote.

Included are the controlled life sequence; principal writing genres and development; Dominican, university, papal, court, and collaborative settings; representative theological and philosophical structures; the mendicant and Aristotelian controversies; difficult moral and social conclusions; cessation, death, burial, canonization, relic conflict, cult, iconography, patronage, and modern Catholic reception. Excluded are a full intellectual commentary, complete work and manuscript catalog, exhaustive Thomism history, canonization dossier edition, forensic relic judgment, and independent theological or ecclesiastical verdict.

A.3 Evidence key

Code	Meaning
A	Subject-authored or authorial evidence: Thomas’s works, autograph material, letters, and author-supervised texts, controlled by genre, chronology, textual status, and transmission. A work is not private memoir.
N	Contemporary or near-contemporary external evidence: charters, university and papal acts, early catalogs, participant or companion testimony. A canonization deposition preserves different proximity levels inside one official record.
E	Early received report: especially William of Tocco, Bernard Gui, Peter Calo, Ptolemy of Lucca, and hearsay in the inquiries. These may preserve lost memory while arranging it for sanctity and reception.
L	Later hagiographic, liturgical, artistic, scholastic, relic, quotation, and patronage tradition; evidence first for the age that transmits it.
M	Official ecclesial reception, limited to the act’s object: canonization, Doctor declaration, feast, patronage, conciliar teaching, or papal recommendation.
K	Named modern critical reconstruction, including work chronology, source dependence, condemnations, social history, and relic custody, with its premises and alternatives retained.
S	Source-grounded project synthesis; never attributed to Thomas or to an ecclesial act.

A.4 Detailed chronology

Date	Place	Event and evidence	Status
1224–1226	Roccasecca / Aquino region	Birth to Landulf and Theodora in an aristocratic household.	K range; no birthday
c. 1230s	Monte Cassino	Childhood education in relation to the Benedictine abbey.	E with documentary family context
c. 1239–1244	Naples	Study at Frederick II's studium; encounter with Aristotelian curriculum and the Order of Preachers.	E/K; curriculum reconstructed
c. 1244	Naples / road north	Entry into the Dominicans; family members intercept him during removal from Naples.	E; sequence strong
c. 1244–1245	Family strongholds	Detention and continued refusal to abandon the order; eventual return to Dominican direction.	E/K; duration and scenes variable
1245–1248	Paris	Dominican theological and philosophical formation under Albert's influence.	Institutional chronology / E
1248–1252	Cologne	Studies with Albert at the Dominican studium.	E/K; classroom anecdotes later
1248–1252	Cologne	Probable priestly ordination during the Cologne years.	K; exact date and prelate unresolved
1252–1256	Paris	Bachelor in Scripture and the <i>Sentences</i> ; early works including <i>On Being and Essence</i> .	Work and university chronology
1256–1259	Paris	Licence and first regency as master; secular-mendicant controversy and disputed questions.	Documents / A / K
1259	Valenciennes / Italy	Associated with Dominican study organization; begins a multi-city Italian assignment.	General-chapter record; individual contribution bounded
c. 1259–1265	Italy	Composition of much of the <i>Summa contra gentiles</i> ; purpose and addressee debated.	A manuscript/work chronology / K
1261–1265	Orvieto / papal court	<i>Catena aurea</i> , Greek dossier work, preaching, and early Corpus Christi attribution under Urban IV.	A/E; attribution qualified
c. 1265–1268	Rome	Dominican teaching and beginning of the <i>Summa theologiae</i> .	A/K; exact institutional title debated
1268/1269–1272	Paris	Second regency; mendicant polemic, Aristotelian commentaries, intellect and creation disputes, quodlibets, and continued <i>Summa</i> .	A/documents/K
10 Dec. 1270	Paris	Tempier condemns thirteen propositions in the intellectual controversy; Thomas is not named.	M/documentary act
1272–1273	Naples	Teaches theology, preaches, and continues Part III; a royal order funds his lectures.	N/A/E/K
about 6 Dec. 1273	Naples	After Mass, Thomas undergoes a reported change and ceases ordinary composition; the <i>Summa</i> remains unfinished at III, q. 90.	Early indirect report / corpus fact
early 1274	Road toward Lyon	Begins journey after summons to the Second Council of Lyon; illness worsens.	E; accident details qualified
7 Mar. 1274	Fossanova	Death and burial among the Cistercians.	Early chronological convergence
7 Mar. 1277	Paris	Tempier condemns 219 propositions; Thomas is unnamed, but some articles implicate positions associated with him.	M/K
18 Mar. 1277	Oxford	Kilwardby prohibits theses including positions more directly associated with Thomas.	M/K; scope local

Date	Place	Event and evidence	Status
1318–1323	Italy / Avignon	Tocco promotes the cause and revises his <i>Ystoria</i> ; inquiries at Naples (1319) and Fossanova (1321) gather testimony.	Official dossier / E
18 Jul. 1323	Avignon	John XXII canonizes Thomas.	M
1325	Paris	The 1277 act is revoked only insofar as it touches or is asserted to touch the canonized Thomas.	M; no blanket doctrinal approval
1368–1369	Fossanova / Toulouse	Principal relic translation to Dominican custody at Toulouse after prolonged conflict.	M/E/K; body history divided
11 Apr. 1567	Rome	Pius V declares Thomas a Doctor of the Church in <i>Mirabilis Deus</i> .	M
1879–1880	Rome	<i>Aeterni Patris</i> promotes Thomistic renewal; <i>Cum hoc sit</i> names Thomas patron of Catholic schools.	M
1974	Rome	Paul VI's <i>Lumen Ecclesiae</i> marks the seventh centenary and states both Thomistic preference and legitimate plurality.	M
1 Nov. 2025	Rome	Leo XIV describes Aquinas and Newman as co-patrons of the Church's educational mission.	M; mutable wording

A.5 Method, source limits, and negative results

The narrative coordinates Thomas's authenticated corpus, contemporary documents, the *Fontes vitae*, official reception, and named modern reconstruction. Canonization depositions are read witness by witness: a participant report is not merged with hearsay merely because both occur in the same proceeding. Tocco is both a crucial collector and the cause's promoter. Gui and Calo are not counted as independent corroboration where they depend on the same tradition. Work dates follow critical ranges and never create a private psychological diary from a proposition.

No controlled source established an exact birth date; complete school transcript; exact detention duration; independent contemporary witness for the "dumb ox," temptation, angelic girdle, or crucifix speech; Reginald's own deposition for the straw report; a clinical diagnosis or poisoning evidence; one untouched relic chain; contemporary portrait; or universal present patronage beyond named official acts. Absence within this bounded search is not proof that no local record exists.

The study inspected representative primary loci for doctrine and the difficult legacy. It is not a complete collation of the Leonine edition, every reportatio, all canonization witnesses, the Paris and Oxford dossiers, local archives, relic inventories, or Thomistic schools. Greek, Arabic, Hebrew, and Jewish sources were not independently collated against every Latin form Thomas used.

A.6 Rights and review state

Project-created prose and organization are intended for CC BY 4.0. Medieval Latin wording is public domain, but modern critical texts, editorial apparatus, translations, scholarship, web presentation, manuscript images, Vatican pages, and institutional catalog material retain their own status. Corpus Thomisticum's electronic presentation is expressly rights-reserved and is linked and paraphrased, not reproduced. The *Fontes vitae* scans were used as page-image and bibliographic controls; OCR is only a finding aid. No third-party image or extended protected translation is reproduced.

Internal source, chronology, tradition, metadata, production, and page review are recorded for this working study. Outstanding are independent medievalist, Dominican, Thomist, philosophical, theological, Jewish-Christian, gender-history, slavery-history, liturgical, canonization-process, relic, rights, and ecclesiastical review; a complete work and manuscript collation; and a work-specific rights review for distribution. The publication has no imprimatur, nihil obstat, or ecclesiastical approval and remains a study aid.

B References

B.1 Life sources, documents, and text controls

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- William of Tocco. *Ystoria sancti Thome de Aquino*, composed and revised during promotion of the canonization cause, especially ch. 18 on works and the Corpus Christi commission, Latin working text; and Claire Le Brun-Gouanvic, ed., *Ystoria sancti Thome de Aquino de Guillaume de Tocco (1323)* (Toronto: PIMS, 1996), edition record; accessed 2026-07-20. The modern edition remains protected.
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B.2 Official Catholic reception

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- Pius V. *Mirabilis Deus*, 11 April 1567. Doctor-of-the-Church date and status controlled also by Paul VI's exact retrospective record below; no broader doctrinal effect is inferred.
- Leo XIII. *Aeterni Patris*, 4 August 1879, Holy See English; and *Cum hoc sit*, 4 August 1880, Holy See Italian; accessed 2026-07-20. Used for the Thomistic renewal and patronage acts, not as a critical biography.
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B.3 Modern critical works

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