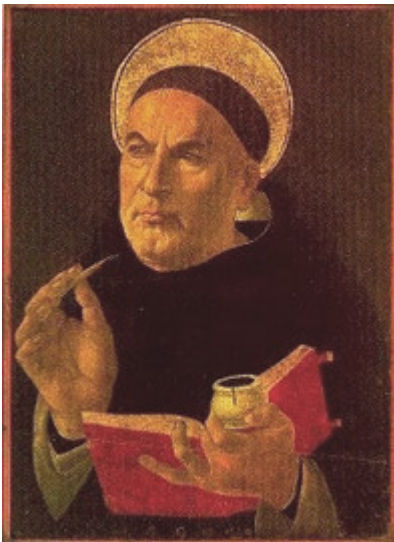




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The Cross Exemplifies Every Virtue

St. Thomas Aquinas



Thomas d'Aquino was born to a well-to-do family in Southern Italy in the year 1225. Against his family's wishes, he joined a new religious congregation known as the Order of Preachers or Dominicans. He became one of the greatest scholars of the age and taught theology at the University of Paris alongside the Franciscan, St. Bonaventure. He died in 1274 while on his way to the Ecumenical Council of Lyons and was later canonized and declared a doctor of the Church. This excerpt from a conference given by St. Thomas Aquinas (Colatio 6 super Credo in Deum) is used in the Roman Catholic Office of Readings for the liturgical memorial (feast) of St. Thomas Aquinas on January 28.

Why did the Son of God have to suffer for us? There was a great need, and it can be considered in a twofold way: in the first place, as a remedy for sin, and secondly, as an example of how to act.

It is a remedy, for, in the face of all the evils which we incur on account of our sins, we have found relief through the passion of Christ. Yet, it is no less an example, for the passion of Christ completely suffices to fashion our lives. Whoever wishes to live perfectly should do nothing but disdain what Christ disdained on the cross and desire what he desired, for the cross exemplifies every virtue.

If you seek the example of love: Greater love than this no man has, than to lay down his life for his friends. Such a man was Christ on the cross. And if he gave his life for us, then it should not be difficult to bear whatever hardships arise for his sake.

If you seek patience, you will find no better example than the cross. Great patience occurs in two ways: either when one patiently suffers much, or when one suffers things which one is able to avoid and yet does not avoid. Christ endured much on the cross, and did so patiently, because when he suffered he

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did not threaten; he was led like a sheep to the slaughter and he did not open his mouth. Therefore Christ's patience on the cross was great. In patience let us run for the prize set before us, looking upon Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith who, for the joy set before him, bore his cross and despised the shame.

If you seek an example of humility, look upon the crucified one, for God wished to be judged by Pontius Pilate and to die.

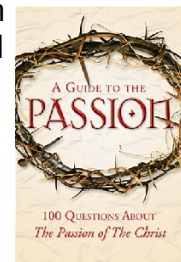
If you seek an example of obedience, follow him who became obedient to the Father even unto death. For just as by the disobedience of one man, namely, Adam, many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one man, many were made righteous.

If you seek an example of despising earthly things, follow him who is the King of kings and the Lord of lords, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. Upon the cross he was stripped, mocked, spat upon, struck, crowned with thorns, and given only vinegar and gall to drink.

Do not be attached, therefore, to clothing and riches, because they divided my garments among themselves. Nor to honors, for he experienced harsh words and scourgings. Nor to greatness of rank, for weaving a crown of thorns they placed it on my head. Nor to anything delightful, for in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink.

A Guide to the Passion: 100 Questions About The Passion of The Christ

Millions of people have seen see Mel Gibson's epic film *The Passion of The Christ*. This movie is not just another extraordinary Hollywood production—it's a personal call for each of us to encounter the person of Jesus Christ. Co-Authored by Marcellino D'Ambrosio, Ph.D. it answers 100 questions about Mel Gibson's *Passion of Christ*.



The Meaning of the Passion

Mel Gibson's movie was released on Ash Wednesday for a reason. Lent is about remembering the consequences of sin and price that Jesus paid for our salvation. But as we ponder the movie and the events it depicts, we can't help but ask why it had to happen this way? Why did Jesus have to pass through such horrible torture to redeem us.

Could not forgiveness and salvation have been obtained in some other way? Why does the Devil figure so prominently in the movie? And why does Mary play such an important role? This talk, a perfect complement to the film and [The Guide to the Passion](#), will help you get the most out of the movie and the most out of the season. 45 minutes, followed by questions and answers.

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