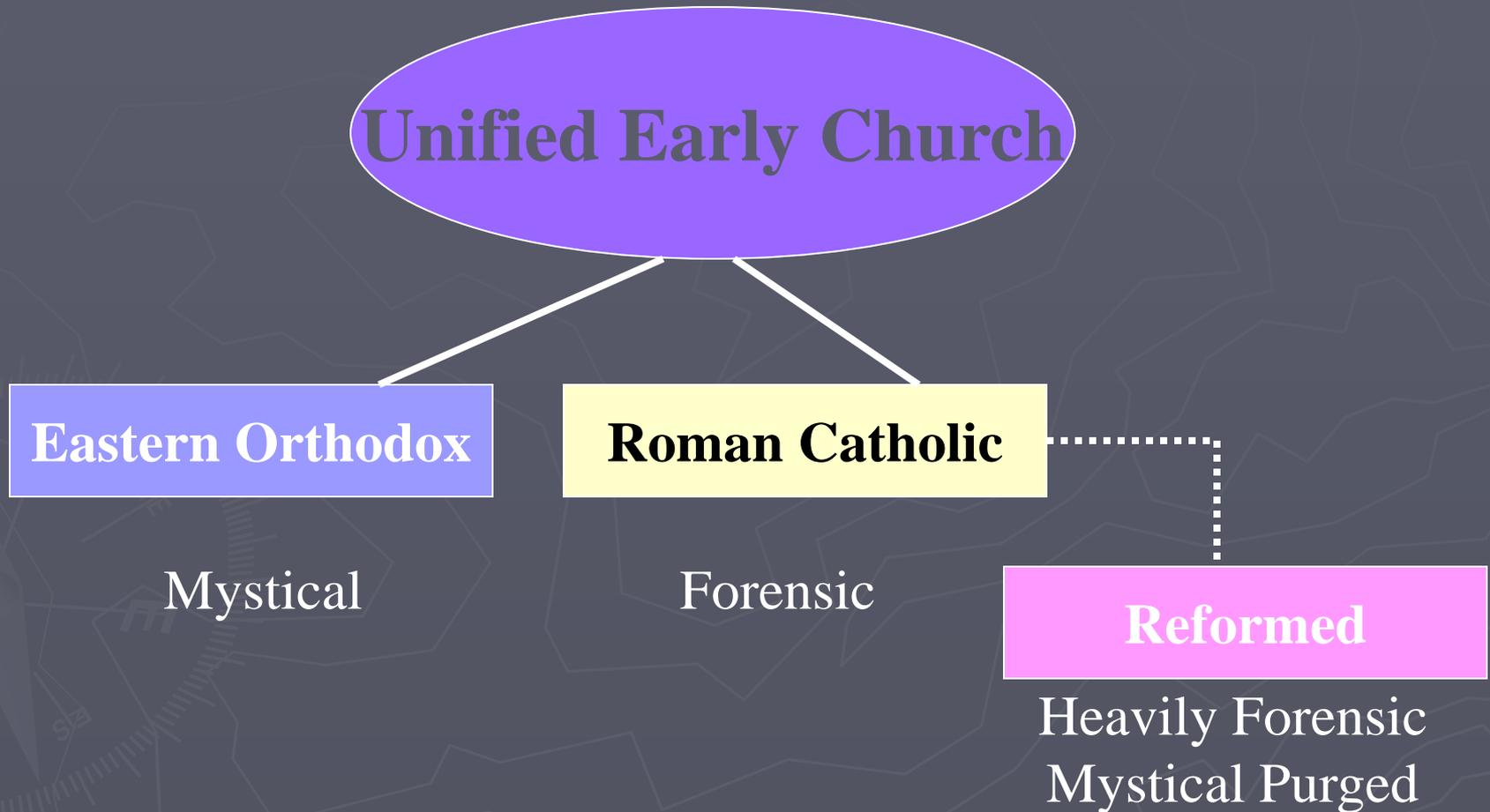




Medieval Church: Roman Catholic Theology

Randy Broberg
Grace Bible Church
2002

Theology: Major Trends of Divergence



The Development of Roman Catholic Theology

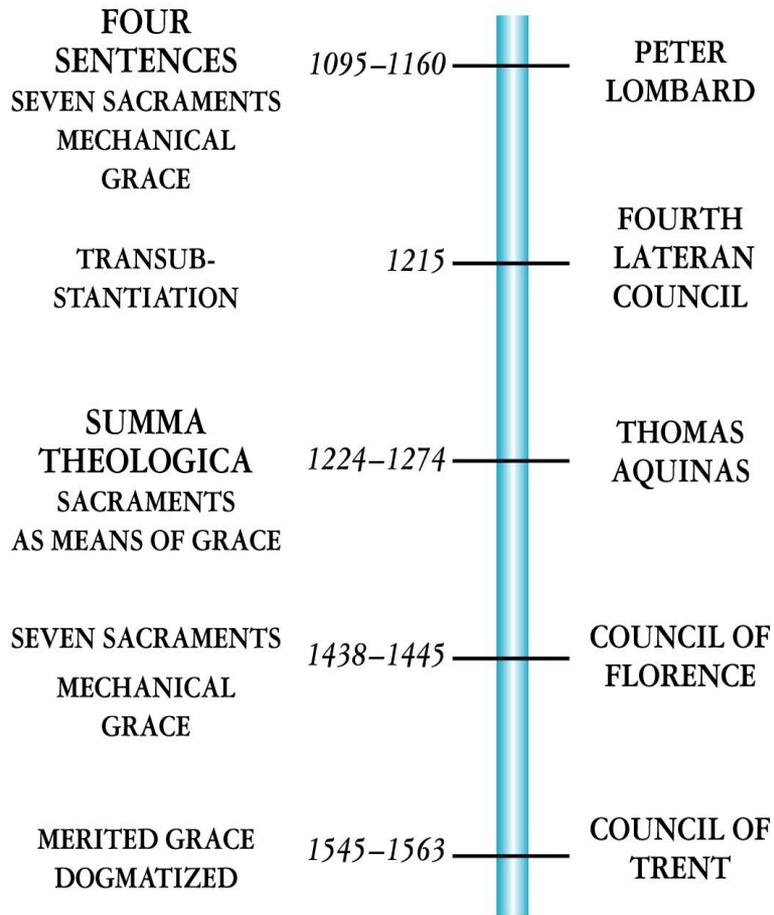
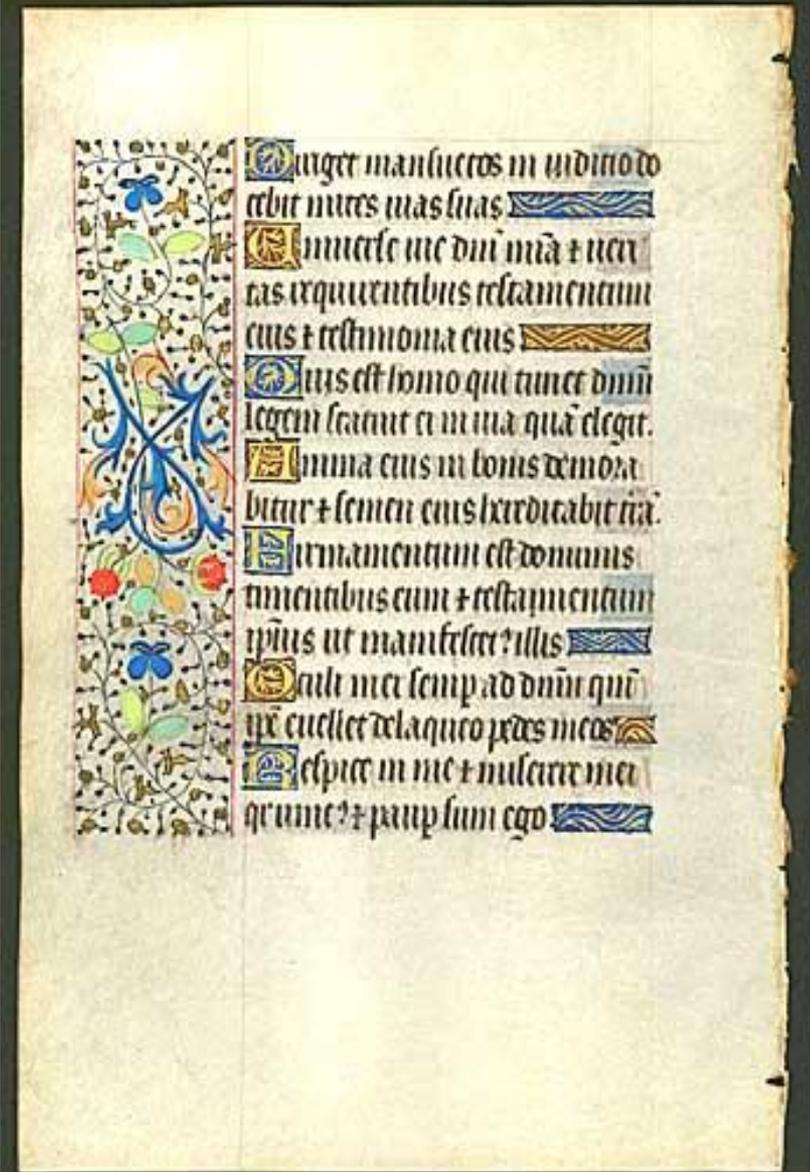


Chart 100



What was scholasticism?

- ▶ Britannica: "the philosophical systems and speculative tendencies of various medieval Christian thinkers who, working on a background of fixed religious dogma, sought to solve anew general philosophical problems (as of faith and reason, will and intellect, realism and nominalism, and the provability of the existence of God), initially under the influence of the mystical and intuitional tradition of patristic philosophy and especially Augustinianism and later under that of Aristotle."
- ▶ As a theological method it is associated with organized textbook theology and the thesis method.
- ▶ The scholastics, although mostly monks, were often based in the new universities which were springing up, such as Paris, Oxford (before 1200), and Cambridge (1209).

The Rise of Scholasticism

Schools in Monastic Communities



Multiplication of Cathedral Schools



Rise of Universities

Dialectic method

- Anselm
- Abelard
- Lombard

New class of professional teachers

Emergence of Aristotelian corpus and philosophy

- Aquinas

The Medieval Rise of Universities

- ↳ Evolved from medieval schools known as *studia generalia*
 - ↳ Places of study open to students throughout Europe.
 - ↳ Efforts to educate clerks and monks beyond the level of the cathedral and monastic schools.
- ↳ Earliest Western universities:
 - ↳ **Salerno, Italy**- 9th c. Medical School
 - ↳ **Bologna, Italy**- 11thc. Law School
 - ↳ **University of Paris** -mid 12th c.- Theology School
 - ↳ **Oxford University in England**--end of the 12th century.



University came from Latin term for groups of teachers

A Master of Theology about 1250

- ▶ study the Bible
- ▶ study the Fathers of the Church
- ▶ study Peter Lombard's Sentences (completed by 1158)
- ▶ lecture and produce a commentary on the Sentences

"Liberal Arts" comes from Roman concept that certain topics like philosophy were to be taught only to free citizens, hence "liberated"

University Curricula

Educational Process

Liberal Arts

(philosophy, humanities, and the like)

Bachelor of the Bible

Bachelor of the Sentences

Master (synonymous with doctor)

Academic Exercises

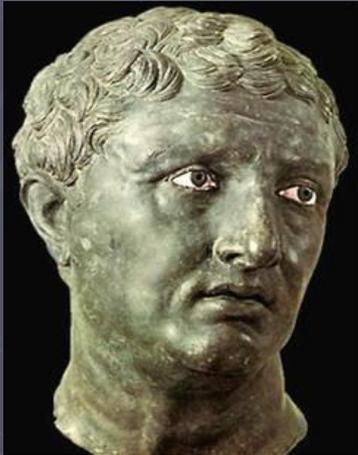
Commentaries on the Bible,
commentary on the Sentences,
sermons, disputations

Ancient Works Arrive from Arabs



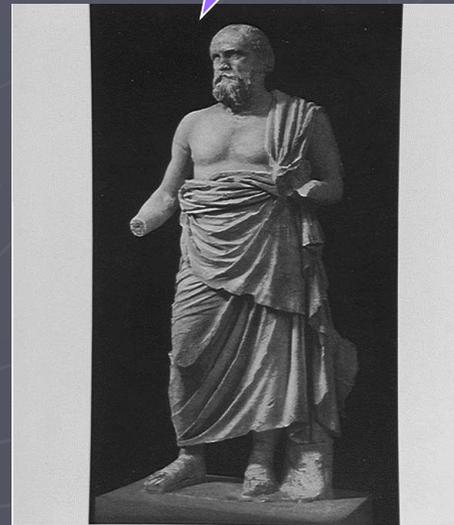
- ▶ The Arabs preserved the scientific works of the Greeks .
- ▶ Scholars gathered at cities like Damascus, Baghdad, and Cairo, at eastern end of the Mediterranean, and at Cordova and Toledo, in Spain, at the western end by the 11th century.
- ▶ Beginning in the 12th cent. after the reconquest of Spain, the Arabic versions of Greek works were translated into Latin
- ▶ Averroës, an Arabic philosopher whose interpretations of Aristotle were translated into Latin, was one of the first to influence Western philosophical thought away from strict rationalism and spiritualism. he attempted to delimit the separate domains of faith and reason, pointing out that the two need not be reconciled because they did not conflict.

Nor did I think your orders were so strong that you, a mortal man, could over-run the god's unwritten and unfailing laws.



Sophocles

Do the gods love piety because it is pious, or is it pious because they love it?



The Golden Age of Aristotle

- ▶ In the 12th century his works were translated from Arabic into Latin.
- ▶ Aristotle's philosophy was regarded with some suspicion, largely because his teachings were thought to lead to a materialistic view of the world.
- ▶ In the 13th century, Thomas Aquinas found in Aristotle a philosophical foundation for Christian thought.
- ▶ Thomas Aquinas called Aristotle "the philosopher."
- ▶ The Schoolmen begin knowing only Plato and fragments of Aristotle

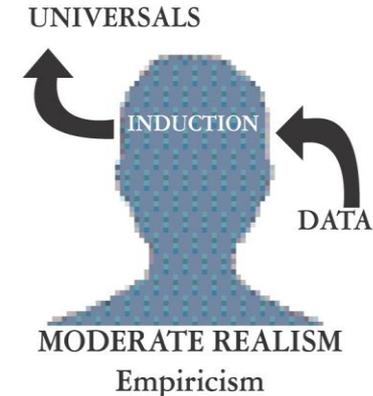
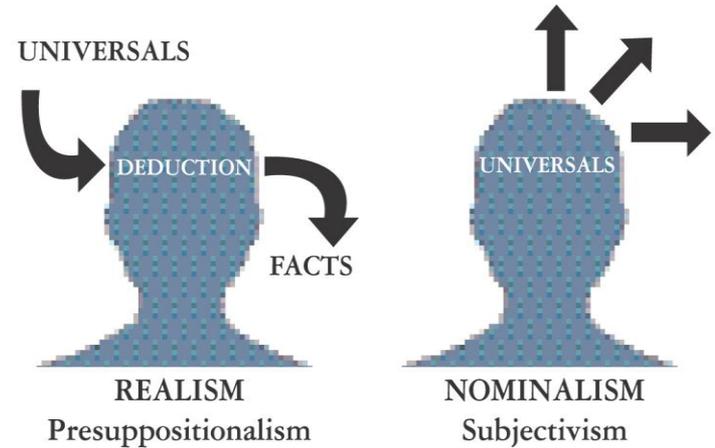
The Introduction of Aristotle's Writings into Western Theology

TIME	BOOKS	NATURE OF THE INFLUENCE
1. Boethius (480–524)	<i>Categories</i> <i>Peri Hermenias</i>	Logic, Grammar (Philosophy as a tool of technical analysis)
2. c. 1100	<i>Prior and Posterior Analytics</i> <i>Topics</i> <i>Sophistical Arguments</i>	Logic, Grammar, Dialectics (Dialectics as a theological method)
3. 1175–1215	The remainder of his books	Aristotelian Content (Categories, content, and structure from <i>Physics</i> , <i>Metaphysics</i> , <i>Psychology</i> , and <i>Ethics</i>)

Scholastic Method

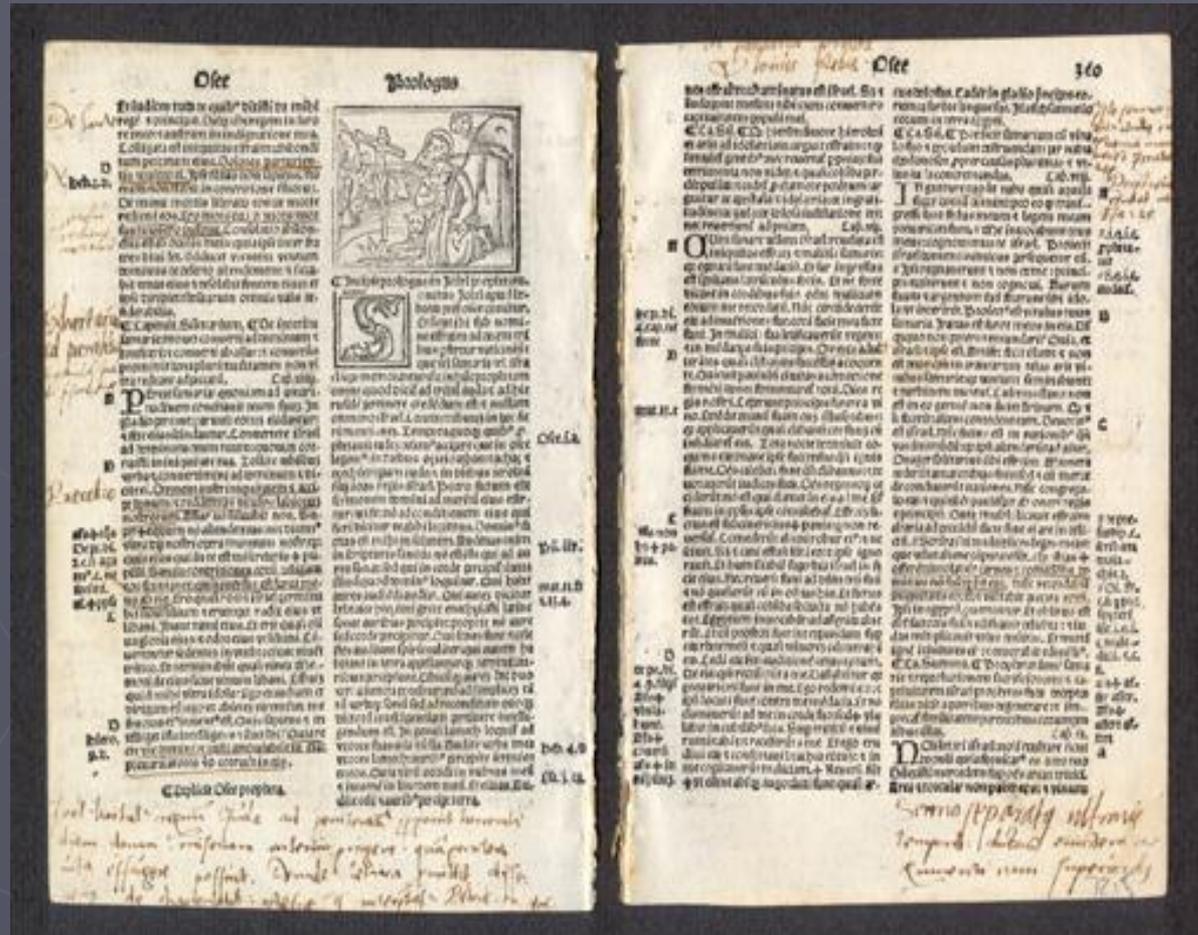
- ▶ Basic to all scholastic thought was the conjunction of faith (spiritualism) and reason (rationalism).
- ▶ use of reason was essential to deepen the understanding of what is believed on faith, or dogma, and ultimately to give a rational content to faith.
- ▶ attempts to reconcile reason and faith, philosophy and revelation.
- ▶ Developed obscure doctrines: how many angels could dance on the head of a pin, what hour Adam sinned.

Scholastic Approaches to Knowing



Trends in Scholasticism

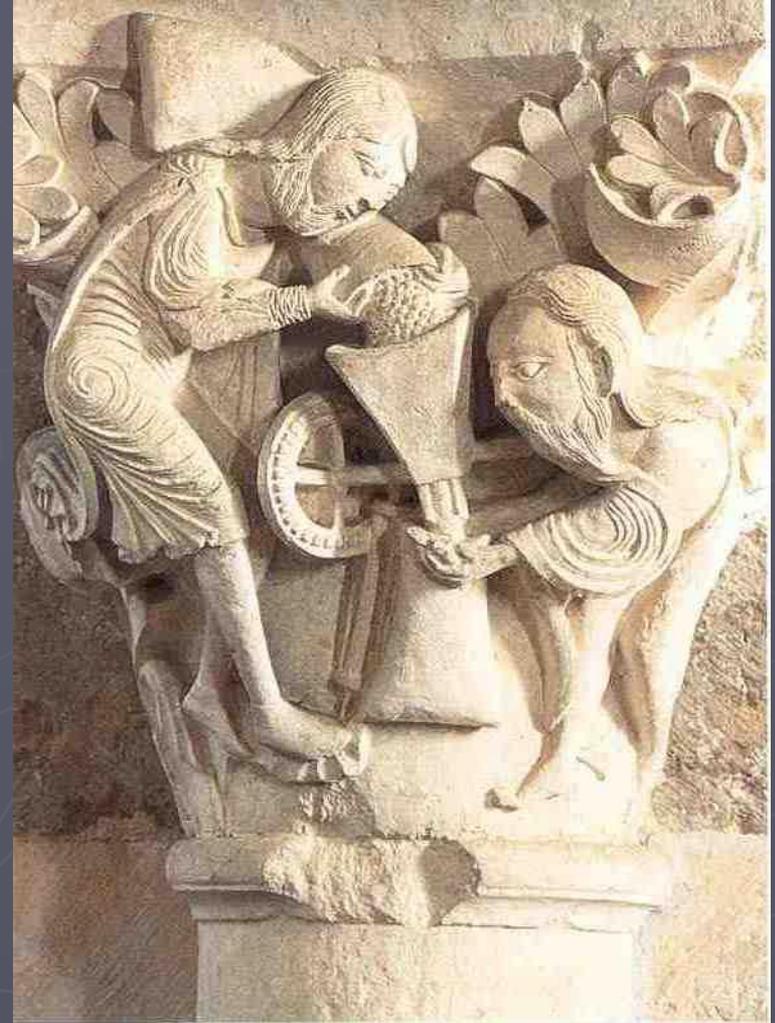
- ▶ Augustinianism and Aristotelianism
 - For Augustinians—priority of faith
 - For Aristotelians—priority of reason
- ▶ Thomism and Scotism
 - Thomists: **intellect**, preeminent characteristic of God
 - Scotists: **will**, preeminent characteristic of God



Anselm's Ontological Argument

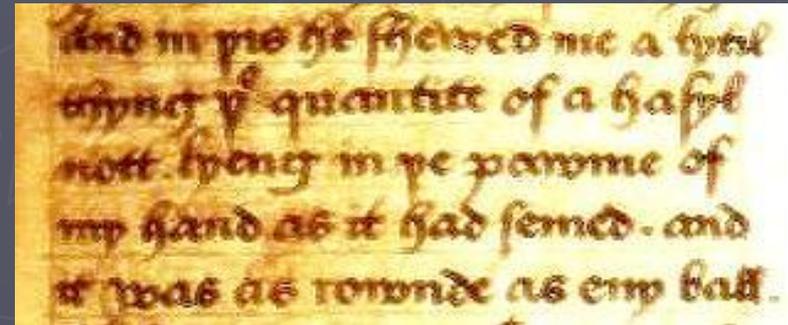
Follow St. Anselm's Argument Point By Point:

- 1) God is defined as the being in which none greater is possible.
- 2) It is true that the notion of God exists in the understanding (your mind.)
- 3) And that God may exist in reality (God is a possible being.)
- 4) If God only exists in the mind, and may have existed, then God might have been greater than He is.
- 5) Then, God might have been greater than He is (if He existed in reality.)
- 6) Therefore, God is a being which a greater is possible.
- 7) This is not possible, for God is a being in which a greater is impossible.
- 8) Therefore God exists in reality as well as the mind.



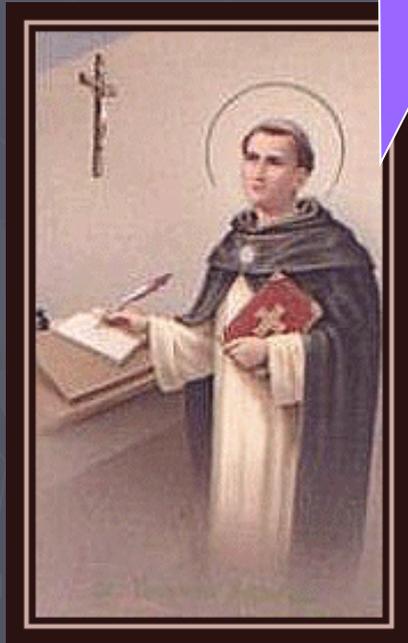
Acquinas and Aristotle

- ▶ Christianized Aristotle during the high middle ages
- ▶ Synthesized Aristotle and Scripture
 - Begin with Reason
 - Revelation complements and completes Reason
- ▶ His time in Paris coincided with the arrival of Aristotelian science, newly discovered in Arabic translation; his great achievement was to integrate into Christian thought the rigors of Aristotle's philosophy, just as the early church fathers had integrated Plato's thought in the early Christian era.



Acquinas and Human Reason

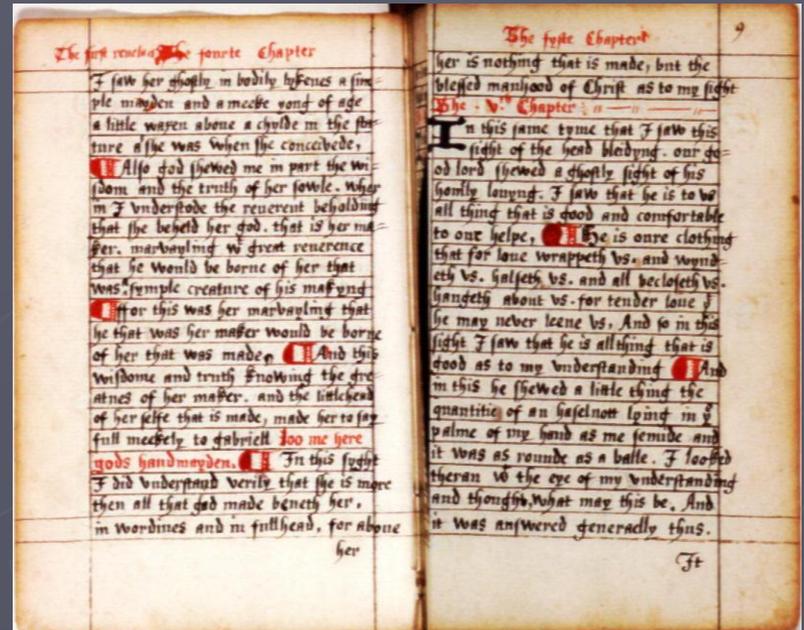
I understand,
in order that I
may believe.



- ▶ Reason is given full weight, but perhaps not undue weight. It is considered a valid tool, but it cannot discover all the mysteries of the faith. Certainly many things, like the existence of God, can be proved by human reason. Others, like the Trinity, come only through revelation.
- ▶ He held that reason is capable of operating within faith; while the philosopher relies solely on reason, the theologian accepts faith as his starting point and then proceeds to conclusion through the use of reason.
 - Through reason we could know the truth of things... His Proofs of God - "Summa theologica".

Aquinas' *Summa Theologica*

- ▶ his genius was in systematization, and he systematized and buttressed Catholic thinking like no one before or since.
- ▶ A prolific writer, he produced more than 80 works, including *Summa contra Gentiles* (1261-64) and *Summa theologiae* (1265-73).
- ▶ Wrote *Summa Theologiae*, ("Compendium or Totality of Theology")
- ▶ Most important theology text to come from the Scholastic period.
- ▶ *Summa Theologiae* presents doctrine in the scholastic way, as a series of questions and pro and con answers.
- ▶ The *Summa* consists of three parts
 - God as he is in himself
 - God as man's end (and the way back to God)
 - Christ as man's way to Go



Questions to Consider

- ▶ Did Scholastics go to far in the direction of logic and knowledge at the expense of emotions and feeling?
- ▶ Do we understand the world through the lenses provided by our faith or do we understand our faith through the lenses of our knowledge and experience?
- ▶ Can we prove the existence of God?



The Franklin