Who was Thomas Aquinas? Pope Benedict asks {cimovie}Aquino.flv|Title|aquino.jpg{/cimovie}

January 28, 2011. January 28 is the day the Catholic Church honors St. Thomas Aquinas. The Italian saint was a domenican priest and is widely recognized as being one of the most influential figures in the study of theology.

He is also known for his ideas on ethics, political theory, and human rights.

Benedict XVI
"Thomas's conviction that we are naturally able to acknowledge the principles of the natural moral law remains timely, since that law, grounded in the truth of man's nature, is the basis of respect for human dignity and universal human rights."

He is considered to be a model teacher for those studying in the priesthood and is the patron saint of Catholic schools and universities.

He was never able to finish his best known writing the 'Summa Theologica,' but it is still widely used by theologians, like his ideas on the nature of God, that He is neither obvious or unprovable.

Benedict XVI
"Thomas' insistence on the harmony of faith and reason respected the autonomy and complementarity of these two ways of knowing the truth which has its ultimate origin in God's Word."

Many consider his writings to be his greatest contribution to the Catholic Church. His message of unity and harmony is one that Benedict XVI has been trying to invoke when speaking to all Christians.

Thomas Aquinas died in the year 1274 and was canonized by Pope John XXII in 1323, less than 50 years after his death.