

# **Ecclesia, *Quid Dicis de Te Ipsa?***

A 50-Week Journey of Faith

Guided by St. Thomas Aquinas, St. John of the Cross, and St. John Paul II

For Catechumens and Candidates in the RCIA Process

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# Introduction

Welcome to your year-long journey of faith — a pilgrimage of heart, mind, and soul toward full communion with the Catholic Church. This guide is built upon three lights of wisdom:

- **St. Thomas Aquinas** – for clarity of mind and truth.
- **St. John of the Cross** – for purification and interior freedom.
- **St. John Paul II** – for the dignity of the human person and the joy of believing.

The phrase “*Ecclesia, Quid Dicis de Te Ipsa?*” means “Church, what do you say of yourself?” This question will accompany you throughout these 50 weeks, helping you discover your identity as a beloved member of Christ’s Mystical Body.

# 1 Weeks 1–10: Awakening of Faith

## Week 1 — Seeking God

**Scripture:** John 1:38 — “What do you seek?”

**Meditation:** Faith begins with a question. What is your heart truly seeking?

**St. Thomas Aquinas:** “Faith is the beginning of eternal life.” (*ST* II–II, q.4, a.1)

**St. John of the Cross:** “To come to possess all, desire the possession of nothing.”

**St. John Paul II:** “Faith and reason are like two wings on which the human spirit rises.” (*Fides et Ratio*, 1)

**Reflection:** Write what first drew you to the Church. What truth are you searching for?

## Week 2 — Meeting the Living God

**Scripture:** Exodus 3:14 — “I AM WHO I AM.”

**Meditation:** God is not an idea but a living presence.

**St. Thomas Aquinas:** “God’s essence is to exist.”

**St. John of the Cross:** “God is silent, yet His silence is music.”

**St. John Paul II:** “The revelation of God is an act of love.” (*Dei Verbum*, 2)

**Reflection:** When have you sensed God’s silent presence in your life?

## Week 3 — The Word Became Flesh

**Scripture:** John 1:14

**Meditation:** God became man so that man might share divine life.

**St. Thomas Aquinas:** “The Incarnation was the most fitting way for man’s restoration.”

**St. John of the Cross:** “The Word of the Father now speaks in silence.”

**St. John Paul II:** “Jesus Christ reveals man to himself.” (*Redemptor Hominis*, 10)

**Reflection:** What does it mean to you that God became human?

## 2 Weeks 11–30: Growing in Understanding

### Week 15 — Grace and Freedom

**Scripture:** Ephesians 2:8–9

**Meditation:** You are saved by grace — a gift, not an achievement.

**St. Thomas Aquinas:** “Grace perfects nature; it does not destroy it.”

**St. John of the Cross:** “Grace is the flame that consumes the soul with divine love.”

**St. John Paul II:** “Freedom finds its fulfillment in truth.” (*Veritatis Splendor*, 87)

**Reflection:** How does God’s grace free you from self-reliance?

### 3 Weeks 31–40: Purification and Illumination

#### Week 35 — Embracing Spiritual Darkness

**Scripture:** Psalm 139:12 — “Even the darkness is not dark to You.”

**Meditation:** God often purifies through silence and difficulty.

**St. Thomas Aquinas:** “Faith is of things unseen.” (*ST* II–II, q.1, a.4)

**St. John of the Cross:** “The dark night leads the soul to the light of union.”

**St. John Paul II:** “In suffering is hidden a particular power that draws man close to Christ.” (*Salvifici Doloris*, 26)

**Reflection:** Where do you find hope in the midst of your struggles?

## 4 Weeks 41–50: Mystagogia and Mission

### Week 50 — The Church and Your Mission

**Scripture:** Matthew 28:19–20

**Meditation:** The journey does not end at Easter; it begins anew.

**St. Thomas Aquinas:** “The Church is the Mystical Body of Christ.”

**St. John of the Cross:** “The soul united to God becomes a living flame of love.”

**St. John Paul II:** “The Church is the universal sacrament of salvation.” (*Lumen Gentium*, 48)

**Reflection:** How will you live as a witness of the Church in your daily life?