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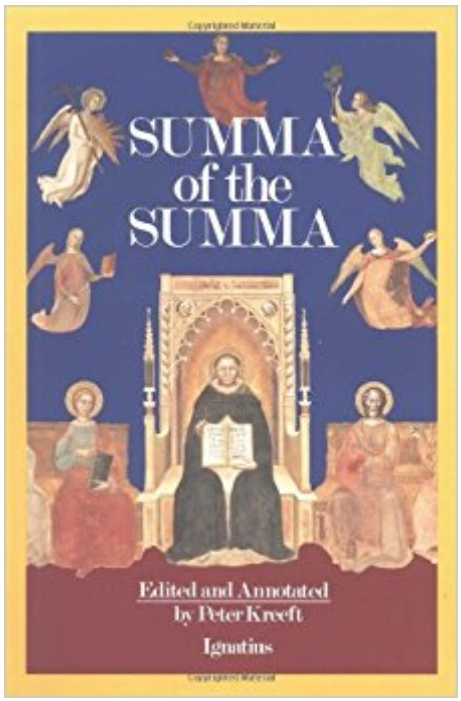
A Summa Of The Summa



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Synopsis

Saint Thomas Aquinas is universally recognized as one of the greatest philosophers who ever lived. His writings combine the two fundamental ideals of philosophical writing: clarity and profundity. He is a master of metaphysics and technical terminology, yet so full of both theoretical and practical wisdom. He is the master of common sense. His major work, the Summa Theologica, is timeless, but particularly important today because of his synthesis of faith and reason, revelation and philosophy, and the Biblical and the classical Greco-Roman heritages. This unique book combines selected essential philosophical passages from Thomas' Summa with footnotes and explanations by Kreeft, a popular Thomist teacher and writer. Kreeft selected those passages from Thomas that are intrinsically important, non-technical enough to be intelligible to modern readers, and most likely to be used in a class or by independent readers who want to study the Summa on their own. Kreeft's detailed footnotes explain difficult or technical passages and call attention to points of particular significance for the modern reader. This book is the most intelligent, clear, and useful access to Saint Thomas in print. Includes a glossary and an index.

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Customer Reviews

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Thomas Aquinas (1225, 1274) was arguably the greatest philosopher in the 1800 years between

Aristotle and Descartes. He is most famous for his 5 proofs of GodÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s existence, which are found in his most famous work, the Ã ƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“Summa TheologicaÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â• (Summary of Theology), a 2,000 page tome. That work intimidates those who have never read any Aquinas. But Peter Kreeft annotates and edits that work in his 500 page Ã ƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“Summa of the SummaÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â•. Kreeft is one of the most popular of all modern philosophers and has written scores of books on philosophy that cover difficult topics such as moral relativism and Immanuel KantÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s philosophy in language that most adults can easily understand.Aquinas addresses scores of topics in what he calls Questions and for each Question he poses distinct yes or no questions that he calls Articles. For each Article, he gives objections to his answer, cites an authority, gives his answer using reason and logic, and then responds to each objection. For example, on the Questions about ethics, Aquinas refutes both KantÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s duty based ethics and Ã ƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“the ends justify the meansÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â• ethics.Kreeft has chosen to ignore most of AquinasÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s theological articles. He then selects 40 or 50 of the remaining Questions and then edits each Question down to what he considers the important Articles. In each Article, he often excludes non-essential parts and omits part of the answer. This is how he reduces 2,000 pages to 500.Aquinas, like all good philosophers, uses precise unambiguous terms in his writing. However, some of these terms (like accident, form, and essence) have technical meanings that a modern reader must know to understand Aquinas. So Kreeft includes a glossary up front that a reader should read before reading any Aquinas. Kreeft also includes 300 footnotes that often either gives an example of AquinasÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s argument or shows how Aquinas has refuted errors made by more recent philosophers like Kant or Christopher Dawkins.Bertrand Russell, an atheist, did not include Aquinas in his history of philosophy. But if you want a good sample of the works of one of the best philosophers of all time, read this book.

The entire gamut of ideas and arguments in Thomas' Summa conveyed in simple and modern language. A place to start for those coming to Aquinas for the first time and especially for students who might need to contend with this mainstay of Medieval philosophy.I reserve one star for the thing-in-itself.

Summa means summary. But Summa Theologiae is a 3,000-page summary of the Catholic faith. With such a formidablelength a summary of THE summary is a "watershed" for those who merely want to understand St Thomas' classic theologicalopus. And Paul Kreeft's "A Summa of The

Summa" provides a great reading relief, not to mention its excellent handling of thesummarizing task.God bless and thank you Mr. Kreeft !

The best short volume for review of the teaching of the magnificent St. Thomas Aquinas. It uses St. Thomas own words, instead of paraphrasing him - and elucidates his teaching through the lively footnotes and commentary of Peter Kreeft. As much as he contributes to the work, Kreeft never intrudes on St. Thomas' own words. I read and re-read this fairly regularly to keep the logic of St. Thomas fresh in my mind without the massive task of re-reading the entire Summa.

Heavy reading but the footnotes help to clarify the points Thomas Aquinas is making.

This is an excellent introduction to the Summa. The annotations were very helpful and the glossary really helped with the terminology. Kreeft takes the 3000 pages of the Summa and condenses them to a little over 500 pages. He mostly focuses on the philosophical writings. Although I'm glad he chose this approach for this book, I would love for Kreeft to put together another book focusing on the theological parts of Aquinas' Summa as well (maybe a Summa of the Summa Part Two). He could especially cover part III, which was not covered in this book. This would give the reader a better overview of Aquinas' work, especially for those not quite ready to commit to the full 3000 page work. Plus, Kreefts copious notes are essential for those who are not scholars of philosophy or theology.

What really can you say? This is the essence of St. Thomas Aquinas and a terrific edit of Catholic philosophy and theology.

A helpful guide to Thomas's way of reasoning. A solid introduction to the rigorous philosophical study of Christian theology. Good core knowledge and enjoyable, accessible reading.

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