**Fides quaerens intellectum**

**Faith Seeking Understanding**

**Anselm of Canterbury**

* **Born:** 1033
* **Birthplace:** Aosta, Piedmont
* **Died:** 21 April 1109
* **Best Known As:** Archbishop of Canterbury, England, 1093-1109

Born near the border between what are now Italy and France, Anselm entered the monastic school of Bec in Normandy in 1060. He eventually became the Archbishop of Canterbury in 1093, and is considered one of the most influential thinkers of medieval Europe and Christianity. His motto *credo ut intelligam* ("I believe so that I may understand") reflected his intention to explain faith in God through reason. St. Anselm is most famous for his argument for the existence of God, called the ontological argument. It goes like this: we understand God to be the greatest possible being; but a God who exists *only* in our minds isn't as great as one who is in our minds *and* who really exists; and since God is, by definition, the greatest possible being, he must exist in our minds *and* in reality. St. Anselm was canonized in 1494.