

YOUR
WAY OF
BEING

*The one who fashioned together their
hearts is the one who knows
all their works.
Psalm 33:15*



Fern

WEEK SEVEN

YOUR WAY OF BEING

Opening Prayer

Heavenly Father,

You have made each of us with a unique way of being.

Open my heart to see how You made me to be.

Help me to remember that You meet me and love me
where I am.

Amen.

*The one who fashioned together their
hearts is the one who
knows all their works.
Psalm 33:15*



Song for Reflection:
Gymnopédie No. 1 - Satie



ST. THOMAS AQUINAS
DOCTOR OF HUMANITY



*Know Thyself, and thy faults, and
thus live.*

-St. Thomas Aquinas

- ✦ **Early Life:** Born in Italy in 1225 to a wealthy noble family. From childhood he devoted himself to study, immersing himself in philosophy and the great thinkers of the ancient world.
- ✦ **A Contested Vocation:** At 19, he chose to join the Dominican order against his family's wishes. They kidnapped him on his way to Rome and held him captive for nearly a year, determined to change his mind. He was unmoved.
- ✦ **The Burning Log:** His brothers sent a woman to his room to seduce him. Thomas drove her out with a burning log. That night, angels appeared and bestowed upon him a girdle of chastity — still revered as a relic today.
- ✦ **Formation:** Sent to study under St. Albert the Great, he became his most beloved pupil. When Pope Innocent IV offered him the abbacy of Monte Cassino, he declined — choosing study over status.
- ✦ **Life's Work:** He spent his life teaching, writing, and seeking God through reason. His *Summa Theologica* is among the most influential works in Western history. His hymns *Panis Angelicus* and *Pange Lingua* are still sung today.
- ✦ **"It All Seems Like Straw":** In 1273, Thomas received a profound mystical vision and laid down his pen. Everything he had written, he said, seemed like straw compared to what God had shown him. The *Summa* remains unfinished.
- ✦ **Death & Legacy:** He died in 1274, mid-commentary on the Song of Songs. He is honored as a Doctor of the Church — the Angelic Doctor, the Universal Doctor, the Doctor of Humanity.

YOUR SONG OF BEING

- ✦ Before the world had a name, God fashioned each human heart with intention. Your temperament is not an accident of biology — it is the signature of the One who made you.
- ✦ The classical tradition, drawn from Hippocrates and developed through the wisdom of St. Thomas Aquinas, identifies four fundamental temperaments: Sanguine, Choleric, Melancholic, and Phlegmatic. Each reflects a distinct and beautiful way of being human.
- ✦ Most of us are a blend — a primary temperament seasoned by a secondary one. This is not impurity. It is complexity. It is God painting with more than one color.
- ✦ Your temperament shapes how you feel, how you respond, how you love, how you pray, and how you encounter God. Understanding it is not an exercise in self-absorption — it is an act of reverence toward the One who fashioned your heart.
- ✦ As St. Thomas Aquinas reminds us: "The things that we love tell us what we are." Your temperament shapes what moves you, what stirs you, what draws you toward God. It is, in its own way, a love language between you and your Creator.

FOUR TEMPERAMENTS OVERVIEW

There are four main temperaments that are identifiable that make up the temperament blends. Temperament refers to a person's natural tendencies and specifically refers to how we react to things in life.

Each of the four temperaments measures three different things: speed, intensity and duration

Sanguine

- Speed: Quick to react
- Intensity: High
- Duration: Short-lasting

Choleric

- Speed: Quick to react
- Intensity: High
- Duration: Long-lasting

Melancholic

- Speed: Slow to react
- Intensity: Deep
- Duration: Long-lasting

Phlegmatic

- Speed: Slow to react
- Intensity: Low
- Duration: Short-lasting

SANGUINE

REFLECTING GOD'S JOYFUL HEART

The Sanguine temperament is warm, expressive, and alive. She lights up a room without trying. She feels everything quickly and moves through the world with an infectious energy that draws others toward her.

How God Made Her: Quick to feel, quick to recover. Emotionally warm and naturally optimistic. She lives fully in the present moment and loves deeply and generously.

Her Gifts: Joy, warmth, enthusiasm, compassion, the ability to make others feel seen and welcomed. She reflects the delight of God — the One who rejoices over His children.

Her Invitation to Grow: Depth and follow-through. Her feelings move quickly, which means she can be easily distracted or inconsistent. She is invited to root her joy in something deeper than the moment.

How She Tends to Pray: Spontaneously and expressively — she speaks to God like a friend. Adoration and charismatic prayer often resonate. She may struggle with silent, structured prayer.

In Scripture: *"Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice."* — *Philippians 4:4*

Her Gift to Others: She brings the warmth of God's delight into every room she enters.

CHOLERIC

REFLECTING GOD'S PURPOSEFUL HEART

The Choleric temperament is strong, decisive, and driven. She was made to lead. She sees what needs to be done and moves toward it without hesitation, carrying others with her.

How God Made Her: Quick to feel, slow to let go. She is passionate and determined, with a natural capacity for vision and action. She does not shrink from difficulty.

Her Gifts: Leadership, courage, clarity, the ability to get things done. She reflects the strength and purposefulness of God — the One who works all things for good.

Her Invitation to Grow: Humility and surrender. Her strength can become control. She is invited to offer her will to God and trust that His purposes are greater than her plans.

How She Tends to Pray: Actively and intentionally — she brings her plans before God and asks for His direction. She may struggle with the stillness prayer requires and with receiving rather than doing.

In Scripture: *"Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men."* — Colossians 3:23

Her Gift to Others: She reflects the purposeful love of a God who acts — who moves mountains and calls us toward our destiny.

MELANCHOLIC

REFLECTING GOD'S DEEP HEART

The Melancholic temperament is thoughtful, sensitive, and profound. She feels the weight of the world and the beauty of it in equal measure. She loves deeply, thinks carefully, and longs for what is true, good, and beautiful.

How God Made Her: Slow to feel, slow to recover. She experiences emotion with great depth and carries it for a long time. She is introspective, idealistic, and perceptive — often seeing what others miss.

Her Gifts: Depth, loyalty, creativity, the pursuit of excellence, a finely tuned conscience. She reflects the searching love of God — the One who knows us fully and loves us still.

Her Invitation to Grow: Trust and surrender of perfection. Her sensitivity can become anxiety; her idealism can become despair. She is invited to bring her depths to God rather than carrying them alone.

How She Tends to Pray: Contemplatively and deeply — she is drawn to silent prayer, lectio divina, and Adoration. She feels God's presence most in beauty, in stillness, and in honest encounter.

In Scripture: *"He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds."* — Psalm 147:3

Her Gift to Others: She brings the depth and tenderness of God's heart — the love that sees and knows and stays.

PHLEGMATIC

REFLECTING GOD'S PEACEFUL HEART

The Phlegmatic temperament is calm, steady, and deeply kind. She is the still water in a rushing world — unhurried, unflappable, and quietly present to everyone around her.

How God Made Her: Slow to feel, quick to recover. She is even-tempered, patient, and consistent. She does not seek the spotlight but is deeply faithful in the quiet places.

Her Gifts: Peace, patience, gentleness, steadfastness, the ability to be fully present. She reflects the peace of God — the One who says "Be still, and know that I am God."

Her Invitation to Grow: Initiative and passion. Her peace can become passivity; her calm can become disengagement. She is invited to let God stir her heart and move her to act from love.

How She Tends to Pray: Quietly and consistently — she is drawn to routine, gentle prayer, and the sacraments. She may not feel dramatic movements in prayer, but her faithfulness is itself a gift.

In Scripture: *"The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness..." — Galatians 5:22*

Her Gift to Others: She brings the peace of God into every space — the steadiness that reminds us He is not in a hurry.

THE 12 BLENDS

Most people are a blend of a primary and secondary temperament. Your primary shapes how you move through the world; your secondary adds depth and nuance. No blend is better than another — each is a more complete portrait of a soul made by God.

Sanguine-Choleric - Warm and driven. Full of energy, vision, and infectious enthusiasm. Loves people and loves to lead them somewhere beautiful.

Sanguine-Phlegmatic - Warm and easy. Sociable and gentle, she moves through life with grace and ease. She loves well and rarely ruffles feathers.

Sanguine-Melancholic - Joyful and deep. The rarest and most complex blend — she laughs easily and feels everything profoundly. Drawn to beauty, people, and meaning all at once.

Choleric-Sanguine - Driven and warm. A natural leader who genuinely loves people. She pursues her goals with energy and brings others along for the ride.

Choleric-Phlegmatic - Driven and steady. A rare combination of passion and calm. She leads with both fire and peace — decisive but not reactive.

Choleric-Melancholic - Driven and deep. Visionary and exacting — she holds herself and her work to a high standard. Powerful when surrendered to God.

THE 12 BLENDS - CONTINUED

Melancholic-Choleric - Deep and determined. She pursues truth and excellence with intensity. Her inner life is rich and her outer life is purposeful.

Melancholic-Sanguine - Deep and warm. She feels everything and loves beautifully. Her depth is softened by warmth; her joy is deepened by meaning.

Melancholic-Phlegmatic - Deep and still. Quietly profound. She thinks before she speaks, loves with great faithfulness, and carries her inner world with grace.

Phlegmatic-Sanguine - Peaceful and warm. Easy to be with and genuinely kind. She creates a sense of welcome and rest wherever she goes.

Phlegmatic-Choleric - Peaceful and purposeful. Calm on the surface with a quiet drive underneath. She accomplishes more than people realize.

Phlegmatic-Melancholic - Peaceful and deep. Still waters running very deep. Faithful, thoughtful, and profoundly kind — she is a safe harbor for those who need rest.

VIRTUES TO SEEK & VICIES TO AVOID

Every temperament carries both beauty and shadow. The virtues listed here are not a checklist — they are the particular invitations God extends to the heart He gave you. The vices are not condemnations — they are the specific places where your temperament, left unsanctified, tends to wander.

Temperament	Virtues	Vices
Sanguine	Temperance Perseverance Prudence	Inconstancy Vanity Superficiality
Choleric	Humility Meekness Patience	Pride Anger Willfulness
Melancholic	Hope Trust Gratitude	Scrupulosity Sadness Self-pity
Phlegmatic	Fortitude Zeal Diligence	Sloth Passivity Indifference

PASSIONS TO BRIDLE & PASSIONS TO SPUR

Your passions are not your enemies. They are the energy God placed in you — wild and powerful and capable of great good. Bridling a passion does not mean extinguishing it. Spurring a passion means inviting God to light a holy fire where your heart has grown cold.

Temperament	Passions to Bridle	Passions to Spur
Sanguine	Pleasure-seeking Restlessness Emotional volatility	Perseverance Depth Commitment
Choleric	Anger Pride The need to control	Gentleness Receptivity Surrender
Melancholic	Sadness Fear Self-Criticism	Hope Trust Holy courage
Phlegmatic	Comfort-seeking Passivity Disengagement	Zeal Holy-restlessness Courage

TEMPERAMENT & SCRIPTURE/THEOLOGY

"The one who fashioned together their hearts is the one who knows all their works." — Psalm 33:15

Ancient Wisdom, Sacred Roots: The four temperaments were first observed by Hippocrates and later integrated into a Christian understanding of the human person by St. Thomas Aquinas. This is not modern personality theory — it is one of the oldest frameworks for understanding the human soul.

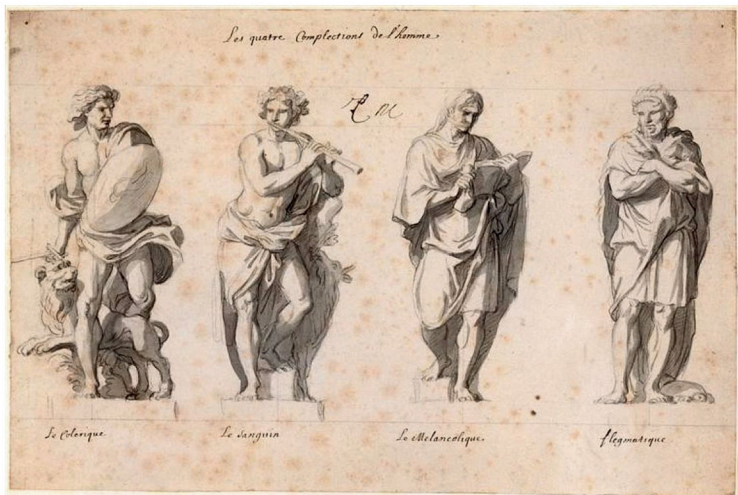
Temperament & the Body: Aquinas understood that soul and body are unified. Your temperament is expressed through your body — in how quickly your heart responds, how long your emotions linger. This is not weakness. It is incarnation.

No Temperament is Holier Than Another: Every temperament has saints and every temperament has its particular path to holiness. God does not ask you to become a different temperament. He asks you to become a sanctified version of the one He gave you.

The Saints as Witnesses: St. Peter's passionate impulsiveness. St. John of the Cross's dark, poetic depth. St. Francis de Sales's gentle patience. St. Catherine of Siena's fearless fire. God made them all. God used them all.

Temperament & Prayer: Your temperament shapes how you naturally encounter God. The Sanguine finds Him in community. The Choleric in purposeful action. The Melancholic in silence and beauty. The Phlegmatic in faithful routine. Your temperament is not an obstacle to prayer. It is a door.

Freedom, Not a Box: Understanding your temperament names what is already true so you can bring it to God with clarity. *"Lord, this is how You made me. Sanctify it. Use it. Transform what needs transforming and deepen what is already Yours."*



"faithful reproductions of two-dimensional public domain works of art are public domain"

TEMPERAMENT & RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD

Your temperament is the particular shape of the heart God gave you to seek Him. It does not box you into one way of praying — it reveals the door you were made to walk through most naturally. The spiritual life is not one-size-fits-all. The saints knew this. Your temperament is not an obstacle to holiness. It is the specific clay God is working with.

The Sanguine & God - She encounters God most readily through community, beauty, and movement — praise and worship, charismatic prayer, Adoration with music, and the warmth of shared faith. Her prayer is spontaneous and relational. Her spiritual invitation is to root her devotion deeper than feeling — practices like Lectio Divina or a simple daily Examen can build what her temperament alone cannot: staying power. Her desolation often looks like spiritual restlessness, jumping from devotion to devotion. Her consolation is contagious joy — when she is spiritually alive, everyone around her knows it.

The Choleric & God - She encounters God most readily through purpose and action — intercession, works of mercy, and the clear sense that she is being used for something that matters. Her prayer is intentional and goal-oriented. Her spiritual invitation is surrender — learning to receive rather than initiate, to be still long enough to be formed rather than just deployed. Silent Adoration and contemplative prayer stretch her in exactly the places she resists. Her desolation looks like spiritual drivenness — pushing forward in ministry while inwardly dry. Her consolation is a fearless, purposeful faith that moves mountains.

The Melancholic & God - She encounters God most readily through silence, beauty, and honest encounter — Lectio Divina, silent Adoration, and the poetry of the Psalms. She does not settle for surface devotion. Her spiritual invitation is trust — to bring her depths to God rather than carry them alone, and to release the perfectionism that tells her she is never devout enough. The Examen and a regular confessor can be transformative for her. Her desolation often looks like scrupulosity or spiritual despair. Her consolation is a profound, loyal, luminous faith that sees what others miss.

The Phlegmatic & God - She encounters God most readily through faithful routine and the sacraments — the Rosary, daily Mass, and the steady rhythm of a life ordered toward Him. She does not need dramatic spiritual experiences to remain anchored. Her faithfulness itself is a form of prayer. Her spiritual invitation is passion — to let God stir her heart and say yes to the Spirit even when it disrupts her peace. Her desolation often looks like spiritual passivity — faithful on the surface, inwardly unmoved. Her consolation is a steady, unshakeable faith that weathers every storm without losing its peace.

Lord, You fashioned my heart with intention. You know how it moves, how it loves, how it seeks You. Meet me where You made me. And where I am slow to come to You, draw me gently toward Yourself. Make my temperament a path to Your heart, not a barrier to it. Amen.

LIVING IT OUT

Pause in Prayer: Take a deep breath and invite the Lord into this moment.

"Lord, show me the beauty of how You made me. Help me to receive my temperament not as a limitation, but as a gift — the particular way You chose for me to love and be loved."



Reflect: What temperament blend did you discover today? Were you surprised — or did it feel like coming home?

What resonated most deeply? What felt like recognition?

Is there anything about your temperament that you have struggled to accept? Bring it to Him now.

LIVING IT OUT. CONTINUED

Notice: In the days ahead, pay attention to the moments when your temperament feels like a gift — when it flows naturally and serves those around you.

Notice also the moments when it feels like a cross — when your natural way of being creates friction, misunderstanding, or frustration.

Hold both with curiosity rather than judgment. Both are invitations.

Discern: How might God be asking you to lean into your temperament this season — to trust the way He made you rather than apologize for it?

And where might He be gently asking you to grow — not into a different temperament, but into a more surrendered version of your own?

WEEKLY CHALLENGE

This week, notice one moment when your temperament felt like a gift — and one moment when it felt like a cross. Choose one person whose temperament differs from yours and ask God to show you the beauty in how He made them.

Closing Prayer

Heavenly Father,

Thank You for the gift of my temperament.
Help me to embrace the way you created me to be
And to use my natural inclinations to draw closer to
You.
Amen.



*"Grant me, O Lord my God, a mind
to know you, a heart to seek you,
wisdom to find you, conduct pleasing
to you, faithful perseverance in
waiting for you, and a hope of
finally embracing you.
Amen."*

-St. Thomas Aquinas



MY TEMPERAMENT PORTRAIT

This is how God made you.

My Temperament Blend:

In one sentence, this means:

My greatest gifts to those around me:

My invitation to grow:

How I tend to encounter God most naturally:



