



The Catholic Tradition of Classical Education with Dr. Andrew Seeley

Lesson 1: Course Introduction

Outline:

The History and Wisdom of Catholic Education

Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things *are* honest, whatsoever things *are* just, whatsoever things *are* pure, whatsoever things *are* lovely, whatsoever things *are* of good report; if *there be* any virtue, and if *there be* any praise, think on these things. (Philippians 4:8)

Classical Education is a grassroots movement that rose out of parents and teachers wanting to provide the best for their children. It is a family oriented recovery of thousands of years of experience, and a renewal based upon learning from that experience. Teachers experience freedom to teach what is worthwhile to the child. Students are aware that something worthwhile is being offered to them. Younger students are enthusiastic about poetry and can recite the stories they learn to their parents. Students of classical schools are not trained merely to pass exams, but to have an authentic vision of educating students.

Description of Thomas Aquinas College

The college features a non-elective curriculum includes the following:

- 4 Years of **Theology**
- 4 Years of **Philosophy**
- 4 Years of **Math**
- 4 Years of **Science**
- 4 Years of **Humanities**
- 2 Years of **Language**
- 2 Years of **Music Theory**

The publication *Ex Corde Ecclesiae* by Pope John Paul II pointed out two things that universities must remember, when it comes to how they should be directed:

- Universities should be ordered first and foremost to the discovery of truth.
- Universities should realize that truth (though found in all the disciplines) is one truth that must be integrated.

Description of the Institute for Catholic Liberal Education (ICLE)

The Institute works with K-12 Catholic schools that are seeking to give their children the best education possible.



- From the ICLE [website](#): **The Institute for Catholic Liberal Education inspires and equips Catholic educators to renew today's Catholic schools by drawing on the Church's tradition of education, which frees teachers and students for the joyful pursuit of faith, wisdom, and virtue.**

The Institute proposes to fulfill its mission by:

- Reflecting on Church teachings and historical approaches to guide today's lived experience of education
- Recovering and adapting the classical tradition of liberal education as embraced and developed by the Church
- Supporting Catholic educators through conferences, teacher development programs, in-service workshops, consultation, and publications
- Advancing this vision among schools, colleges, dioceses, and other individuals and institutions involved in Catholic education

St. Jerome Academy

Example of a leading Catholic school that was renewed and revived by returning to classical Catholic education: **St. Jerome Academy**

- 2010 – St. Jerome Academy experienced a significant decline in enrollment and a suffocating annual debt burden, which meant that it was inevitably going to be closed by the Archdiocese. The school administration (including Principal Mary Pat Donoghue) asked families for input and ideas for how to renew the school and the response was to draw on the best traditions of Catholic education. The school then decided to recover the classical tradition of Catholic education, and created the St. Jerome Educational Plan. Since that time St. Jerome has grown remarkable in both quantity and quality.
- From the St. Jerome [website](#): St. Jerome School educates children in the truest and fullest sense by giving them the necessary tools of learning and by fostering wonder and love for all that is genuinely true, good, and beautiful. We emphasize classical learning because we want our students to read well, speak well, and think well and ultimately because truth and beauty are good in themselves and desirable for their own sake. We seek to incorporate our students into the wisdom of two thousand years of Catholic thought, history, culture, and arts so that they might understand themselves and their world in the light of the truth and acquire the character to live happy and integrated lives in the service of God and others.