

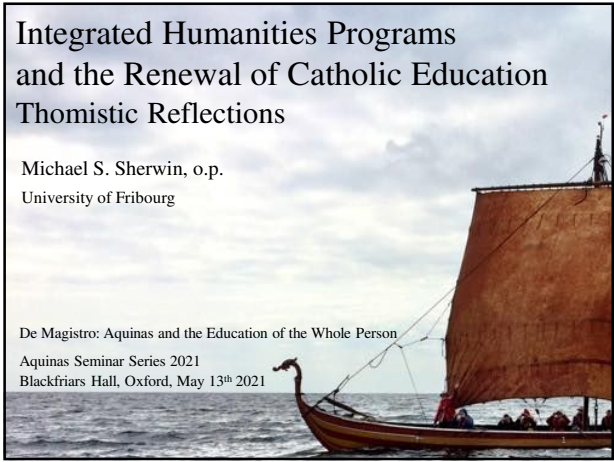
Michael S. Sherwin, o.p.

Blackfriars, Oxford, May 13th 2021

**Integrated Humanities Programs  
and the Renewal of Catholic Education**  
Thomistic Reflections

Michael S. Sherwin, o.p.  
University of Fribourg

De Magistro: Aquinas and the Education of the Whole Person  
Aquinas Seminar Series 2021  
Blackfriars Hall, Oxford, May 13<sup>th</sup> 2021



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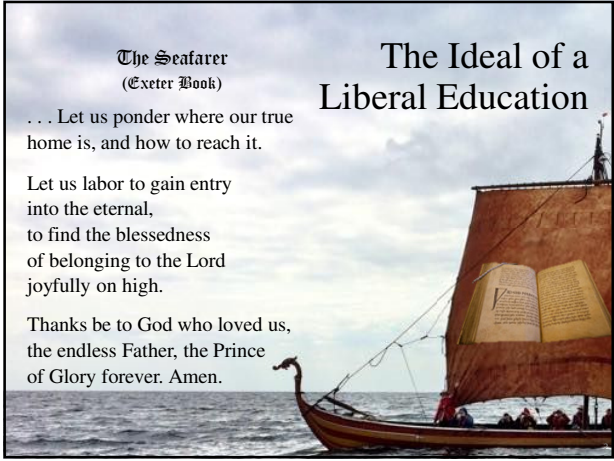
**The Seafarer**  
(Exeter Book)

... Let us ponder where our true home is, and how to reach it.

Let us labor to gain entry into the eternal, to find the blessedness of belonging to the Lord joyfully on high.

Thanks be to God who loved us, the endless Father, the Prince of Glory forever. Amen.

**The Ideal of a Liberal Education**



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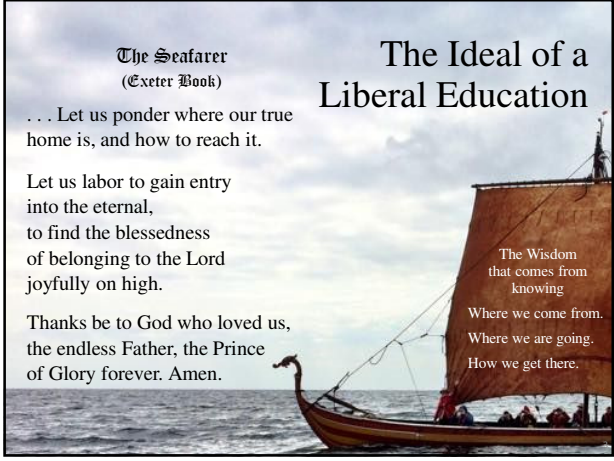
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**The Ideal of a Liberal Education**

The Wisdom that comes from knowing  
Where we come from.  
Where we are going.  
How we get there.



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Michael S. Sherwin, o.p.

Blackfriars, Oxford, May 13th 2021

Integrated Humanities Programs  
and the  
Renewal of  
Catholic Education

**The Itinerary**  
(Sherwin Lecture)

I. The History of an IHP Program  
II. The Salient Features of the Program  
III. Some Implications of the Program  
IV. Some Questions about such Programs




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Integrated Humanities Programs  
and the  
Renewal of  
Catholic Education

**The Question**  
(cur Laurenti in Kansia?)

Why study the **Pearson Integrated Humanities Program** at the University of Kansas, a large state university in Lawrence, Kansas?

What does Kansas have to do with Jerusalem?




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Integrated Humanities Programs  
and the  
Renewal of  
Catholic Education

**The Answer**  
(multum per omnem modum)

Apparently "much and in all ways."

During its nine years in existence (1970-79):

- More than two hundred students of the program became Catholics;
- Many fallen away Catholics among the students returned to the practice of their faith;
- Many vocations to the priesthood and religious life were pursued by its graduates:
  - An archbishop, a bishop, an abbot, a prior, a prioress several religious superiors, a rector of a seminary, three novice masters, and even monks at Benedictine monastery of Notre Dame de Fontgombault, France.
- Several alumni were among the founders of the Benedictine Monastery of Clear Creek, in Oklahoma.




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### I. The History:

#### Founding of the Pearson Integrated Humanities Program

• University of Kansas

• **The Problem:**

- Disaffection and dissatisfaction of the students.
- Anonymous and impersonal experience of undergraduates at a big state university.

• **The Solution:**

- The founding of five "colleges within the College" (1966-1968), among them Pearson College.
- The founding of "subcollege" programs, among them the Pearson Integrated Humanities Program (1970), a program of general education for lower division undergraduates (freshman and sophomores) which began with twenty honors students.
- The following year, 137 students chose to be a part of the program, becoming one of the most popular programs on campus.




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### I. The History:

#### Founding of the Pearson Integrated Humanities Program

• The Founders:

• **Dennis Quinn**  
Professor of English,  
director of the program:  
*sanguine*

• Frank Nelick  
Professor of English  
*famously choleric*

• John Senior  
Professor of Classics  
*melancholic poet*




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### I. The History:

#### Demise of the Pearson Integrated Humanities Program

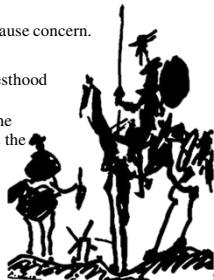
• University of Kansas

• **The Scandal of success and of Catholic Conversion:**

- The popularity of the program began to bring it under admirative scrutiny.
- The conversions to Catholicism began to cause concern.

• **The Scandal of Monastic vocations:**

- The deeper scandal of vocations to the priesthood brought the program to public attention
- The revelation that several students from the program had become monks in France was the last straw.
- The program was abolished in 1979.




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## II. The Salient Features:

Fundamental elements of the program

- Features common to all the sub-college programs at the University of Kansas:
  - A residential program: the students lived in the same dormitories and ate at the same dining halls.
  - The program lasted four semesters: the first two years of their university experience, providing general education, in preparation for their specialized studies that would begin in their third year.




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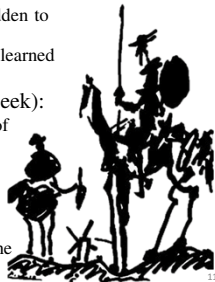
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## II. The Salient Features:

Fundamental elements of the program

- **The Lectures** (80 min., twice a week): a three-way conversation about the texts conducted by the three faculty members: classical and English literature discussed.
  - Students were required to attend and forbidden to speak.
  - The lecture begin first with song. Students learned many songs.
- **Conversation group** (60 min, once a week):
  - 12 students and one professor: discussion of assigned texts. (17 such groups, divided by year.)
- **Rhetoric class** (60 min, once a week):
  - 15 students per class, taught by TA, with required writing assignments and speeches: the assignments were based on the reading.




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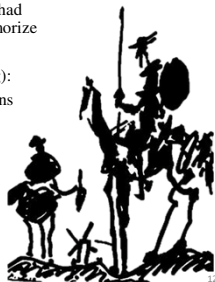
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## II. The Salient Features:

Fundamental elements of the program

- **Poetry memorization sessions** (once a week):
  - A sophomore would recite the poem from memory to a small group of freshmen,
  - The Freshmen would repeat after him until they had memorized the poem: they were required to memorize 40 poems.
- **Stargazing sessions** (regular, weather permitting):
  - Dr. Quinn would take students on night excursions outside of Lawrence to gaze at and learn the stars as well as the mythology associated with the constellations.
- **Latin option** (daily): conversation method
- **European Travel**
- **The formal Walz Ball and the Fair**




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### III. The Implications:

#### Some Implications of the Program

- Wisdom begins in Wonder (*Nascantur in Admirazione*)
  - Wonder is provoked by contact with nature (the heritage of IHP at Wyoming Catholic College)
  - The education of memory and imagination (oral and auditory learning)
    - Song and poetry
- Wisdom comes from learning to argue
  - Questions asked and answers articulated and challenged in community with others (more oral and auditory learning)
- Wisdom comes from knowledge as loved
  - Dance and celebration: a communal love of the true, the good, and the beautiful




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### III. The Implications:

#### Some Implications of the Program

- An interpretation:
  - Integral Humanities programs as medicinal and remedial
    - What traditional local culture once provided
    - What traditional families once provided
    - The orality and celebration of local culture
  - See Larry McMurtry, *Walter Benjamin at the Dairy Queen* (1999)
  - Remediation is possible, if life becomes a question
    - See Richard McKenna, "New Eyes for Old: the Quest for Education"
  - Recovering animality: bodily and communal
    - Dance
    - Song
    - Celebration
    - Service




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### IV. The Questions:

#### Some Questions about such Programs

- The Reading list
  - IHPs, the Far East and the Wild West
- The Emergence of Home Schooling
  - Implications for IHPs
- Back to Nature: are we ready for it?
  - Implications for community
  - Our friends, the animals
- The Amish temptation or "parallel polis" (Yoder or Havel?)




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