

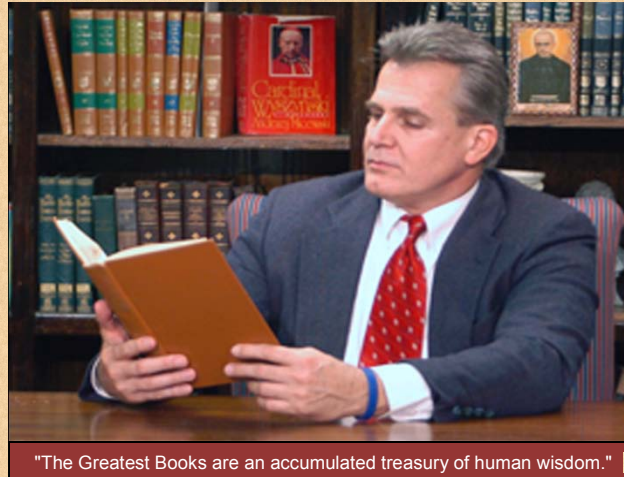
# WHAT ARE THE GREATEST BOOKS?

Dr. David Marzak, Director

**KOLBE'S GREATEST BOOKS** are indispensable components of liberal education because liberal education—unlike training and schooling—culminates in wisdom, and *The Greatest Books* are an accumulated treasury of wisdom, which is a contribution of Christian civilization and men of good will to the modern world. They are called “greatest” because of the formative impact they have had as a tour de force of our civilization, because they masterfully deal with the greatest questions the human mind is capable of thinking about and because they are central to the education of free human beings.

Because man is a free being made in the image and likeness of God, he has the ability to be the most noble creature on earth. This image and likeness is manifest in man’s highest faculties: spirit, intellect, and will. When human beings properly develop and exercise these faculties the result is phenomenal creative expression in the arts, sciences, and humanities, which are contained in *The Greatest Books*.

Here in 101 color coded volumes are the writings of eminent statesmen, philosophers, poets, saints, and scientists, the greatest thinkers and exemplars of humankind; men and women dedicated to the development, penetration, and diffusion of ideas that have shaped the legal, ethical, moral, and spiritual codes, which are the bedrock of our civilization.



"The Greatest Books are an accumulated treasury of human wisdom."

These masterful writings have enlightened popes and kings, statesmen and generals, along with countless others everywhere. They form the record of our civilization and the story of its development.

*Kolbe's Greatest Books* are an integral part of liberal education devoted to the acquisition of intellectual skills and to the truth and wisdom, which help set men free to live a good life in pursuit of happiness. In every age men and women seek clarity and understanding of perennial questions asked about God and man, heaven and hell, wisdom, justice and charity, virtue and vice, human suffering, the best form of government, the use and abuse of power and authority, the meaning of life and death, and other fundamental questions, which perplex the human soul.

In Shakespeare and Dostoevsky human nature combats pride, ambition, envy, and lust; in John of the Cross and Teresa of Avila human nature seeks highest perfection; In the *Federalist Papers* aristocracy and democracy engage in a crucial battle; in Newton and Einstein man struggles to

**BROWN - MATH & SCIENCE**  
**GREEN - LITERATURE, POETRY,  
EPIC NARRATIVE**  
**BLUE - ECONOMICS, POLITICS,  
HISTORY & JURISPRUDENCE**  
**BLACK - PHILOSOPHY**  
**PURPLE - THEOLOGY**  
**RED - SPIRITUAL CLASSICS**

understand the cosmos; in Freud and Augustine man endeavors to understand himself; Aquinas and Dante explore virtue, sin, grace, redemption, and final judgment.

When most current novels and best sellers are no longer remembered, the Greatest Books will still be cherished and read by millions as they have been for over two thousand years.



