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Ask the Abbot

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3-2009

I wonder if the college archives have any more information on [Father Luke Dionne's] legacy?

Kim Szatkowski '81

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March 2009

Question:

Dear Abbot Pennings,

I've always heard what a wonderful, generous man my great uncle, Father Luke Dionne, was. But he died suddenly when I was very young – I believe that would have been in the 1960s. Now, since nearly everyone who knew him is deceased, I wonder if the college archives have any more information on his legacy?

By the way, it is interesting that the Dionne family coat of arms includes the fleur-de-lis, also associated with the Norbertines, and that the family motto is 'In Service to God.' Just curious, perhaps this went into Luke's decision to become a Norbertine priest?

Kim Szatkowski '81

Answer:

Dear Kim,

Thank you kindly for writing me. How I enjoy hearing from our former students.

The Rev. Luke B. Dionne, O.Praem., graduated from St. Norbert College in 1935.

Fr. Dionne had vast experience in education prior to his return to St. Norbert College in the early 1960s. After graduation, he became a member of the faculty of Southeast Catholic High School in Philadelphia. In 1943, he was assigned to Central Catholic High School, known at one time as Premontre and



Ask the Abbot

As the founder of St. Norbert College, and having a prime seat in the center of campus throughout the years, I, Abbot Bernard Pennings, hold the answers to many of your burning questions about the college.

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now as Notre Dame Academy. In 1948, he became the school's vice principal.

It was in 1956 when Father Dionne joined the faculty of St. Norbert College. After a year, he returned to Philadelphia as vice principal of Bishop Neumann High School and subprior of the Norbertine community in Philadelphia. He returned to St. Norbert in 1961 where he served as both dean of men and chairman of the committee on student aid.

His friends and confreres were all bereft when he passed away after suffering a coronary attack in March of 1966.

It would be interesting to know more about Father Dionne, and about the heraldic connection between his family and the Norbertines. I wonder if any of our dear readers have more information that they could share with our community?

Responses to "Ask the Abbot" questions are penned by St. Norbert College staff in the name of Abbot Bernard Pennings, O.Praem., who founded St. Norbert College in 1898.

St. Norbert College

100 Grant Street
De Pere, WI 54115
920-337-3181
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