

St. Norbert College

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5-2011

### Where did students dine on campus prior to the Union Cafeteria?

Brea Lee '07

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## May 2011

### Question:

Dear Abbot Pennings,

Where did students dine on campus prior to the Union Cafeteria?

Brea Lee '07

### Answer:

My dearest Brea,

I thank you most kindly for your inquiry. It is no doubt of interest to many in the St. Norbert community as we eagerly anticipate the unveiling of Michels Commons, the new dining facility opening on our hallowed campus this fall.

It will be a very different experience from the college's earliest years, when students dined on the lower level of Main Hall. As befit the times, students sat at tables dressed with white linens while aproned cooks prepared meals in the adjacent kitchen.

In the 1940s, meals were served in the basement of Residence Hall. While this moniker may perplex you, the edifice to which it refers will be familiar. Those alumni who made St. Norbert their home between 1954 and 1979 will remember this building as Berne Hall, so named for the Norbertine mother abbey in Holland. More recent graduates will recognize it as Burke Hall, the name it assumed in 1979 and retains today.

The year 1961 saw construction of the Frank J. and Margaret Sensenbrenner Memorial Union. That autumn, St. Norbert students partook of their first meals in a facility more or less



### 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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devoted to dining.

Now that beloved building is in the midst of its transformation into Michels Commons. It promises a state-of-the-art dining experience for the fine students who will grace our campus in the years and decades to come.

Given your evident interest in campus dining, I urge you to consider bidding your adieu to Sensenbrenner Union in its present form by attending Party at the Caf on May 7. Should you indeed participate in this farewell feast of cafeteria favorites, please do me the kindness of visiting the Mulva Library foyer, whence I await you a mere street crossing away.

*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

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