

St. Norbert College

## Digital Commons @ St. Norbert College

---

Ask the Abbot

Alumni Relations

---

12-2017

### I'm curious, why are we the Green Knights?

Aleksandra Kaminski '19

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.snc.edu/asktheabbot>

---



## Alumni

- [Events & Reunions](#)
- [Behind the Arch](#)
- [Benefits and Services](#)
- [Get Involved](#)
- [Give to SNC](#)
- [Alumni Awards](#)
- [Knight Lights](#)
- [Alumni-Owned Businesses Network](#)
- [Alumni Board](#)
- [Student Alumni Ambassadors](#)
- [Staff](#)

## December 2017

### Question:

Dear Abbot Pennings,

I'm curious, why are we the Green Knights?

Aleksandra Kaminski '19

### Answer:

Dearest Aleksandra,

Your question delights me, most particularly as I was recently reminded of the answer myself, when I was perusing our collection of student handbooks. In the useful volume from the academic year 1971-72, my attention – and my poetic imagination – was caught by this carefully typewritten entry:

“The term ‘The Green Knight’ was first used by Alfred Lord Tennyson in one of his stories of the Knights of the Round Table: ‘Gawain and the Green Knight.’ The name was adopted to all athletics teams and the student body of St. Norbert College in general at the suggestion of Father Anselm M. Keefe shortly before World War II.

“The ‘Green Knight,’ however, was meant to be more than just a name for athletics teams. It was meant to be representative of St. Norbert himself, for the man who founded the Norbertine order and for whom St. Norbert College is named was himself a knight, possessing the qualities of chivalry, courage and reverence, which went with the title.”

Dear me, I fear our conscientious student author’s learning may only have taken him or her so far, since I believe



### 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.

[Submit Your Question](#)

Tennyson’s poem alluded to the Green Knight myth of much earlier date, recounted in works of the 14th century, indeed. All the same, this little excursion into our own history has given me a taste to return to my own well-read volume of the Victorian poet laureate. Perhaps that will be my bedtime reading – along with another of these most fascinating handbooks.

*Responses to “Ask the Abbot” questions are penned by St. Norbert College staff in the name of Abbot Bernard Pennings, who founded St. Norbert College in 1898.*

## St. Norbert College

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

[Contact Us](#)

[Careers](#)

[Library](#)

[News](#)

[Events](#)

[Box Office](#)

[Undergraduate](#)

[Graduate](#)

[Schneider School of  
Business & Economics](#)

