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I was strolling through campus when I noticed that we're not the only ones abiding by the mask requirements. St. Norbert of Xanten is, too! Who is responsible for this? Will the other statues be getting masks, too? I'd hate for them to feel left out!

Megan Leisgang '21

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August 2020

Question:

Dear Abbot Pennings:

I was strolling through campus when I noticed that we're not the only ones abiding by the mask requirements. St. Norbert of Xanten is, too! Who is responsible for this? Will the other statues be getting masks, too? I'd hate for them to feel left out!

Megan Leisgang '21

Answer:

My dearest Megan,

Your keen sense of observation serves you well! Our founding saint, present to our senses here on campus through his statue in the academic quad, is sporting a hand-sewn mask constructed with the pattern of Wisconsin and its two-letter abbreviation. Father Norbert, who built his order upon principles of love, selflessness and *communio* during the 12th century, is real to us on campus as much through the lived charisms of the order as through his representation in bronze: I feel sure he himself willingly embraced all necessary precautions for the safety of his 12th-century community in times of pestilence, and it cheers me to see his likeness taking such a lead here among us today.

This wonderful effort was a collaboration between Lauren Gaecke, our registrar, and Shelly Mumma, director of our office of leadership, student engagement and first-year experience. They hope to remind our faculty, staff and students to also abide by the campus-wide mask mandate. Among many



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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efforts to keep our community as protected as possible during this time of pandemic, we now are all required to wear face coverings whenever we – like the spirit of Norbert – are out and about on campus.

While our other statues currently lack masks, Lauren tells me she would love to be able to find the time to mask them all. If it's something people want to see, she can try! Though, extensive time is required to measure all the statues and sew all the masks. Let us demonstrate the true meaning of *communio* and make this dream a reality!

I eagerly await our next correspondence. Thank you for your inquiry.

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

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