

A Brief History of Saint Norbert of Xanten

Saint Norbert of Xanten (aka. Norbert Gennepe) was born in 1080 and died on the 6th of June 1134. In the 12th-century he became the German Catholic Archbishop of Magdeburg. He was Canonized a Saint by Pope Gregory XIII in 1582. He is the founder of the order of canons regular of Prémontré. His statue appears above the Piazza colonnade of St. Peter's Square in Rome. He initially lived a worldly life even as a subdeacon avoiding positions of religious responsibility. He was then thrown from a horse that was frightened by a lightning bolt causing Norbert's profound religious conversion. He was a strict disciplinarian, and three followers died because of this. He failed to reform the canons of Xanten He then sold all of his possessions and gave the proceeds to the poor.

He visited Pope Gelasius II, who gave him permission to become an itinerant preacher and he preached throughout lands in what is now western Germany, Belgium, the Netherlands and northern France, being credited with a number of miracles. He chose the Rule of St. Augustine and also adopted some of the customs of the Cistercians - the whole idea was that his active priests needed an ascetic and contemplative haven and that was the purpose of the abbey discipline.

Norbert then chose a valley in the Forest of Coucy (a grant from Barthélemy de Jur, the Bishop of Laon), about 10 miles from Laon, named Prémontré. A camp around the chapel of Saint John the Baptist. In 1125/6, the constitution for the order was approved by Pope Honorius II. He was instrumental in protecting the Church's rights against the secular power during the Investiture Controversy.

In the schism following the election of Pope Innocent II in 1130, Norbert supported Innocent and resisted Antipope Anacletus II. In Norbert's last years, he was chancellor and adviser to Lothair II, the Holy Roman Emperor, persuading him to lead an army in 1133 to Rome to restore Innocent to the papacy.

When Norbert died in Magdeburg on 6 June 1134, both the canons at the cathedral and the canons at St. Mary's Abbey claimed the body. The two parties resorted to Lothair III who decreed the body should be buried in the Norbertine Abbey. In 1524, Martin Luther preached in the city and, as a result, Magdeburg became a Protestant city. Numerous attempts were made over the centuries by the Abbey of Strahov in Prague to retrieve Norbert's body. Only after several military defeats at the hand of Emperor Ferdinand II was the abbot of Strahov able to claim the body. On May 2nd, 1627, the body was finally brought to Prague where it remains to this day, displayed as an auto-icon in a glass-fronted tomb. Statues of Saints Norbert, Wenceslaus, and Sigismund on the Charles Bridge in Prague. The statue of Saint

Norbert is in the middle while on the left is Saint Wenceslas and on the right is Saint Sigismund.



Premonstratensian (or Norbertine) Canons are present in Europe, the United States of America, Canada, the United Kingdom, South America, Zaire, South Africa, India and Australia. The Norbertine Canons are involved in education, parochial ministry, university chaplaincy, and also youth work. St. Norbert College in De Pere, Wisconsin, is the first institution of higher education to be founded by the Norbertine Order.

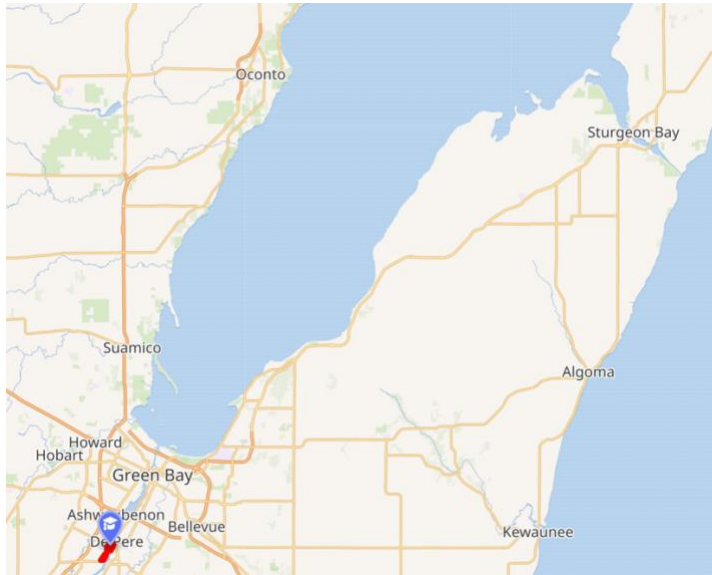


St. Norbert College is a private Norbertine liberal arts college in De Pere, Wisconsin, United States. Founded in October 1898 by Abbot Bernard Pennings, a Norbertine priest and educator, the school was named after Saint Norbert of Xanten. In 1952, the college became coeducational. St. Norbert College also houses the Center for Norbertine Studies,

a collaborative partnership between the college and the Premonstratensian order. St. Norbert College's mascot is nicknamed 'Sir Norbert the Green Knight' and the school colors are green and gold.



SAINT NORBERT



"Świety" (or *święty* in Polish) is a Polish word meaning "holy" or "saint". It can be used as an adjective to describe something sacred or as a noun to refer to a saint, often with the specific context of someone who is deceased and recognized for their exceptional holiness and piety.

As an adjective, *święty* means:

Holy:

Referring to something that is sacred, connected with God or a religious figure, or worthy of worship.

Examples:

Pismo Święte translates to the Holy Scripture.

Duch Święty means the Holy Spirit.

Ojciec Święty translates to the Holy Father (the Pope).

As a noun, *święty* means:

Saint: A deceased person who has been officially recognized as exceptionally holy or virtuous by a religious group.

Example: The female equivalent of *święty* is *święta*.

In broader contexts, *święty* can also be related to the Old Slavic word *svetъ*, which means "strong" or "powerful," and later developed the sense of "holy".