



Dr. Vincent Gerard O'Neill

October 5, 1930 - April 17, 2019

Vincent Gerard O'Neill
Memphis, TN

Vincent Gerard O'Neill, 88, longtime Professor of Literature and Languages at Christian Brothers University, passed away on Wednesday, April 17, 2019, at Methodist Hospital in Germantown. Vincent was born on October 5, 1930, in Arthur, Ontario, Canada, the fourth child of the late Thomas Cornelius and Helena Agnes (Ellen) Vasey O'Neill.

His early education was from the School Sisters of Notre Dame in Catholic schools in and around Kitchener, Ontario. He later attended the De La Salle Christian Brothers Juniorate in Aurora, Ontario. He earned a teaching certificate from the Toronto Normal School; his B.A. and M.A. from Assumption College of the University of Windsor, London, Ontario; and his Ph.D. in Early Tudor British literature from the University College of the University of London.

For 69 years, Dr. O'Neill taught in Christian Brothers' schools, beginning at De La Salle Juniorate in Aurora; St. Paul Elementary School in Toronto, where he taught Grades 2 and 3 in the same classroom; Cardinal Newman High School in Montreal; the Christian Brothers Scholasticate at the University of Windsor, where he was Director; and St. Joseph High School and College in Yorkton, Saskatchewan. In 1968, he came to Memphis to teach at Christian Brothers College, now Christian Brothers University, where he remained until his death, teaching the following courses over the years: English Composition, Introduction to Literature, British Survey, Chaucer, Renaissance Prose and Poetry, Milton and Seventeenth Century, Shakespeare, Modern Poetry, World Literature, and Advanced Practical Grammar. He was also a published poet with 27 poems published in literary journals over the years. His final poem is expected to be published later this year.

In addition to his longtime commitment as a Catholic educator at CBU, Dr. O'Neill was an active communicant in his parish, Blessed Sacrament Catholic Church, where he often served as a substitute organist and helped out wherever he was needed. In addition to his

teaching apostolate, Dr. O'Neill was also one of seven original owners of the High Point Pinch, a popular destination in the Pinch District of Memphis in the 1990s, where he loved entertaining patrons on St. Patrick's Day as "Danny O'Neill from Dublin," playing the piano and singing Irish songs.

Besides his parents, Dr. O'Neill is preceded in death by his sister, Theresa Mary O'Neill Hauser; and three brothers, Thomas Cornelius O'Neill II, William Joseph O'Neill, and John Francis O'Neill. He leaves many nieces and nephews in Canada and many students, former students, colleagues, and friends throughout Memphis, the United States, and Canada, who were edified by his long devotion as an educator and friend and his faithfulness to God and the Church.

Visitation will be on Friday, April 26, from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m., at Canale Funeral Directors, with the praying of the Rosary at 7:00 p.m. The Funeral Mass will be said on Saturday, April 27, at 10:00 a.m. at St. Anne Catholic Church on Highland. Burial will be in Calvary Cemetery at a later time.

Cemetery

Events

Calvary Cemetery

1663 Elvis Presley Blvd
Memphis, TN, 38106

APR 26 **Visitation** 05:00PM - 07:00PM

Canale Funeral Directors
2700 Union Avenue Extended, Memphis, TN, US, 38112

APR 26 **Rosary** 07:00PM

Canale Funeral Directors
2700 Union Avenue Extended, Memphis, TN, US, 38112

APR 27 **Funeral Mass** 10:00AM

St. Anne Catholic Church Highland
706 S. Highland St., Memphis, TN, US, 38111

Comments



“ We share many years of happy memories during our friendship with Vince. Especially when he returned to Canada for summer holidays ,reconnecting with family and friends. He was a fine,caring gentleman who always brought music and fun with him,as well as concern for others. We feel privileged to have known him.
Bernard &Mary Harkin

Bernard &Mary Harkin - April 26 at 08:59 PM



“ Lavender Reflections Spray was purchased for the family of Dr. Vincent Gerard O'Neill.



April 25 at 11:41 AM



“ I want to express my deepest sympathy to Vincent's family, friends, colleagues, students and all who knew Vincent for their loss. Already the earth is a different place without his presence. He was one of God's hidden treasures: a great teacher and poet and man. St. Augustine said that the man whose life is in harmony with his teaching teaches to greater effect. So it was with Vincent. When he first came to Memphis, I was one of his students. I can still hear his voice reciting Eliot's Waste Land. His voice was distinct and resonant even in speech. What struck me even more than any of his gifts was his spirit. Vincent was so alive, and he awakened life in me. A many faceted person with a wonderful intellect and depth of character, he touched so many lives. He exuded joie de vivre. He loved to dance and sing and recite poetry. The two of us loved to talk about the taboo subjects: religion and politics. Vincent never grew old; he was ageless. We were friends for almost 50 years. The last time we spoke on the phone we knew it might be the last time. However, we also knew that those who love God never meet for the last time. So, in the words of St. Thomas More, we said: "Pray for me as I will pray for thee that we may merrily meet in Heaven." May flights of Angels lead Vincent on his way / To Paradise and Heaven's eternal day.
Elizabeth Boyd

Elizabeth Boyd - April 23 at 06:43 PM



“ Divine Peace Bouquet was purchased for the family of Dr. Vincent Gerard O'Neill.



April 23 at 01:09 PM



“When he shall die,
Take him and cut him out in little stars,
And he will make the face of heaven so fine
That all the world will be in love with night
And pay no worship to the garish sun.”

— William Shakespeare

Betty McWillie - April 21 at 11:20 PM



“ I frist met Vince when I was 14 and have known and had contact with him since that time. Am 84 now! It was such a gift to have known and reacted with him for so long. What a smart person and so helpful! This is a person who will be missed! Bob Conlin

Bob Conlin - April 20 at 03:49 PM



“ I did not know Dr. O'Neill, but I have a glimpse of the person he must have been in the gracious spirit of my friend, Paul Dooley, in whose honor and to whom I send my deepest condolence.
Graves Enck

Graves Enck - April 20 at 02:50 PM



“ Tears fall,
they form a puddle at my feet,
reflecting memories of you...

Uncle Vincent was a sweet, intelligent, funny man. He is loved, dearly missed, never forgotten.



“ Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of Dr. Vincent Gerard O'Neill.



April 20 at 09:26 AM



“ Shelagh O'Neill lit a candle in memory of Dr. Vincent Gerard O'Neill



Shelagh O'Neill - April 20 at 08:25 AM



“ Dr. O'Neill was a wonderful person! I never had him for a class but I knew him well, and would occasionally converse with him in French (he was fluent, being from Canada.) He will definitely be missed by everyone at CBU.

Clinton Yelvington - April 19 at 03:42 PM