



## Donald Edward Byrne, Jr.

January 7, 1942 - July 10, 2018

Donald Edward Byrne, Jr., 76, of Harrisburg, died July 10, 2018.

Born in St. Paul, Minn., on January 7, 1942, he was the son of the late Donald and Edna Byrne. He earned his bachelor of arts degree at St. Paul Seminary in 1963; his master's degree at Marquette University in 1966; and his doctorate at Duke University in 1972. From 1971 to 2005, he was professor of religion and American Studies at Lebanon Valley College. His scholarship focused on American folk religion, particularly as expressed in the Methodist and Roman Catholic communities. Other interests included American studies, religion and ethics, religion and literature, peace studies, and mysticism. In 1987, he was awarded the Lindback Award for distinguished teaching. Following his retirement, the Religion & Philosophy Department established the Donald E. Byrne Jr. Award for Undergraduate Research in his honor.

He is the author of *No Foot of Land: Folklore of American Methodist Itinerants* (The Scarecrow Press, 1975) and numerous and award-winning publications of poetry in *Quarry*, *Karamu*, *Windless Orchard*, *Cream City Review*, *West Branch*, *Negative Capability*, and *Red Clay Review*. He was a singer, prolific songwriter, and multi-instrumentalist, both as a solo artist and with Central Pennsylvania-based bluegrass bands *Valley Grass* and *Reunion*.

A theologian, teacher, poet, musician, son, brother, father, friend, husband,

and sweetheart, Donald's spirit of adventure, intelligence, salty sense of humor, and deep kindness and compassion will be greatly missed.

He is survived by sweetheart Pamela Neill; brother Philip; daughters Julie, Clare, Mary and Monica; son Donald; grandson Niko and granddaughter Laxmi; and many other beloved family members. He is predeceased by his wife, Mary Anne Tietjen Byrne.

Memorial Mass will be held on Saturday, July 14, 2018, at 3 PM at St. Paul the Apostle Catholic Church, 125 Spruce St., Annville, Pa., 17003. A reception will follow in St. Paul's Parish Hall.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to Lebanon Valley College, designated In Memory of Donald Byrne, at the following link:  
[www.lvc.edu/give](http://www.lvc.edu/give).

# Previous Events

## Memorial Mass

JUL 14. 3:00 PM (ET)

St. Paul the Apostle Catholic Church  
125 S. Spruce St.  
Annville, PA 17003

# Tribute Wall

VO

“ It is clear that his loss will be felt by many and his memory cherished by all who had the pleasure to know him. I'm so sorry for your loss.



Valerie Ornstein - July 20, 2018 at 03:22 PM

LP

“ Sending you all comfort in your loss. I had Dr. Byrne in my first semester and my last even though I was a chemistry major. One of my favorite quotes in my first year honors class where he was one of two professors who tried to corral the students into coherent thoughts was, "Just because I have big brown eyes doesn't mean I grade easy." It was so true! And I valued him for that.

He was a role model, a mentor, someone I looked up to, and someone who dealt with my soul-searching with grace and aplomb. His impact on me was enormous.

With deepest sympathy,  
Dr. Laura Pence  
LVC chemistry '87

Laura Pence - July 13, 2018 at 08:15 AM



“ Sarah Carlson lit a candle in memory of Donald Edward Byrne, Jr.



Sarah Carlson - July 13, 2018 at 07:03 AM

RR

“ Dear Julie and the Byrne family, I am so sorry for your loss. Fr. Rory Rafferty OSB Pass Christian, MS.

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**Rory Rafferty** - July 12, 2018 at 11:01 PM

DC

“ Dr. Bryne was a genuine person. Even though I wasn't a history major, I would take his classes because he was a great professor. So lucky to have known him.



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**Donna Centofanti** - July 12, 2018 at 08:40 PM

JK

“ From 1955-1961 Don was a constant friend, fellow athlete, and academic leader. He was involved in select studies on Vatican II, the fruits of which are reappearing now with Pope Francis. In one of our discussions on death and its meaning, Don said he hoped he would not lose his "personality," when his time to die came. I, too, hope he doesn't lose that as well-- Don owed one of the best personalities I ever met. When we first met him in our freshman dorm at Nazareth Hall, Don introduced himself as "Pots" and set the mood for six enjoyable years. We did not meet again until the 50th class reunion in St. Paul, MN. Reconnecting with Don was immediate. He played guitar on our front porch as we sang the old folk songs. My wife and I drove to North Carolina to meet him and his family on their farm. His grown children are like the Muses, leading the world in art, philosophy, dance, singing, farming, literature, publishing-- spreading love and joy. We met Pam and saw her love and dedication to him and his to her. The love he shared for Mary Anne, his wife of many years was imprinted in his poetry and songs lyrics.

*Don, I'll never forget you. If anyone can cross the great divide, it will be you. I'll be looking for your messages. Enjoy the afterlife you so greatly earned and respected.*

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**John King** - July 12, 2018 at 08:22 PM

JK

*sorry for the errors-- usually there's a chance to edit on line*

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**John King** - July 12, 2018 at 08:26 PM

JU

*John King, ty so much; heart filled to read this tribute and funny amazing memories--xoxo*

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**Julie** - July 12, 2018 at 09:27 PM

TK

*John....I only knew Don Byrne through you, and the many wonderful stories you told about him. I think Don nailed it when he said each of our personalities are the gifts God gave to us. It's why we were each born from all eternity as who we are.*

*Even more important, it tells us how much each of us are loved by Him. Like the universe God created, there's nobody else like us, anywhere. Don is lighting up his corner with all his good works and love for so many others.*

*How can you not love a guy who calls himself "Pots?" You can't.....Tom King*

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**Tom King** - July 13, 2018 at 01:10 PM

PD

*“ Don Byrne was one of the most beloved faculty members. Anyone who met him, whether as a student or a fellow professor, was instantly warmed by his friendly smile and easy-going demeanor. He will be greatly missed.*

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**PHYLIS DRYDEN** - July 12, 2018 at 06:31 PM



*“ Dreams From the Heart Bouquet was purchased for the family of Donald Edward Byrne, Jr. .*



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July 12, 2018 at 04:33 PM



“ A New Sunrise Spray was purchased for the family of Donald Edward Byrne, Jr. .



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July 12, 2018 at 03:15 PM



“ So many happy memories from the 50s and early 60s - even though "the tears are on my cheeks and there are none to comfort me", it's the moments of laughter we shared throughout those years that I will always fondly recall.

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**John Diffley** - July 12, 2018 at 02:35 PM



“ When I came to Lebanon Valley College in 1973, there was a small group of professors here that made me proud to be a member of the LVC faculty – foremost among them was Donald Byrne. Don's sense of authenticity as a person was evident to both students and faculty alike. Many of my chemistry students over the decades told me how much they appreciated Professor Byrne as a teacher. Don was able to connect with students (and with faculty as well), and draw out the best in them.

--Owen Moe

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**Owen Moe** - July 12, 2018 at 01:28 PM



“ I started teaching at LVC in 1989 as a young 30 year-old first-time faculty member. Throughout the 10 years I spent teaching at The Valley, Don was a cherished colleague - impressively intelligent, quick-witted and, most of all, kind. Rest in peace Don. And thank you for being a wonderful role model.

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**Steven Specht** - July 12, 2018 at 11:45 AM