

---

# Pro Rege

---

---

Volume 16  
Number 1 *Arts Issue*

Article 11

---

September 1987

## Sonnet to Jack

Mike Vanden Bosch  
*Dordt College*

Follow this and additional works at: [https://digitalcollections.dordt.edu/pro\\_rege](https://digitalcollections.dordt.edu/pro_rege)



Part of the [Christianity Commons](#), and the [Higher Education Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

Vanden Bosch, Mike (1987) "Sonnet to Jack," *Pro Rege*: Vol. 16: No. 1, 23.  
Available at: [https://digitalcollections.dordt.edu/pro\\_rege/vol16/iss1/11](https://digitalcollections.dordt.edu/pro_rege/vol16/iss1/11)

This Poetry is brought to you for free and open access by the University Publications at Digital Collections @ Dordt. It has been accepted for inclusion in Pro Rege by an authorized administrator of Digital Collections @ Dordt. For more information, please contact [ingrid.mulder@dordt.edu](mailto:ingrid.mulder@dordt.edu).

*(The following two poems were written to honor Professor Jack Vanden Berg who retired in May 1987 after teaching English at Dordt for twenty years.)*

### Sonnet to Jack

You did what few dare do: start overnew.  
You left behind contented cows, bovines  
Placid as a June breeze, who wouldn't construe  
A scooping style or quiet moods as signs  
Of character amiss. As sure as feed  
Was offered, it was taken in delight.  
No cows of corn had ever said, "We need  
Our feed more tasty; prepare our silage right."  
Instead they chewed on what you gave, not once  
But twice. Who'd leave a class with such desire  
For what his hand could give? You did. Each wants  
To think he'd do the same—it took a fire  
Beyond the spark that smolders in most breasts  
To leave success to face much sterner tests.

*Mike Vanden Bosch*

### for Jack VandenBerg on his retirement

Somehow, Jack,  
what sticks with me  
about you  
is the way you say  
"been"

like "bean."

The word has an  
elegance  
upon your lips.

I hear in it respect  
for the Chaucerian  
grace  
of literature  
some literature  
and the grace  
of learning  
and of teaching it.

And in your "bean"—  
"I have bean..."  
"This has bean..."—I hear  
a field of legumes,  
plain things ruffled at sunset.

I feel the dirt  
under my nails  
and yours  
and under  
the joke

whose randier implications  
you savor  
and yet sidestep

with

such grace.

*Randall VanderMey*