

170th Convention 2022 Keynote Speaker - Oct. 29, 2022

Brother James Michael Dowd

Brother James Dowd, Prior of The Benedictine Way, has been a monk for many years. Before serving in Nebraska, he served at Holy Cross Monastery in West Park, NY and at Mariya uMama weThemba Monastery in Grahamstown, South Africa. Brother James is passionate about exploring the intersection of the quest for Christian social justice and the contemplative life. Before his years in monastic life, Brother James had a career in theater and television.



Upon the invitation of Bishop J. Scott Barker, Brother James Michael Dowd traveled from New York City in 2016 to serve as the Diocese of Nebraska's first monk-in-residence. Within his first year, Br. James and Bishop Barker began on a path of discernment that would lead them to a new kind of Benedictine community in Omaha, Nebraska.

After two years of discernment and through the tireless efforts of these leaders and of the entire diocese, the Community of the Benedictine Way celebrated its foundation on September 14th, 2018. The community currently lives in two houses on the campus of the Church of the Resurrection in north Omaha.

This community was to be an example of Benedictine life in the 21st century; gathering to itself a multi-generational, diverse group of people who desired to live together as a Christian community in the context of Benedictine spirituality, according to the Rule of Benedict; a life of prayer; service to the poor and forgotten; and care of creation.

It would consist of three branches: The Benedictine Service Corps (one-year commitment for young adults), The Oblate Way (both residential and non-residential for adults who desire Benedictine spirituality but not vowed monastic life), and The Monastic Way (for those who seek traditional vowed monasticism). Together, this community would work to bring God's Kingdom to earth.

* Brother James Dowd Gave Up Show Biz to Run a Monastery in Omaha