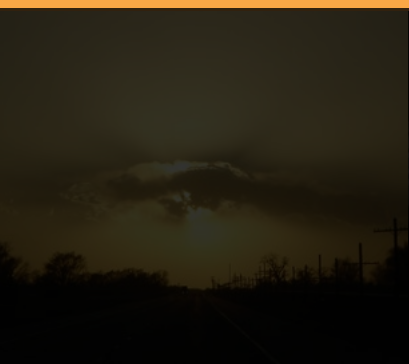


J. D. BENNING

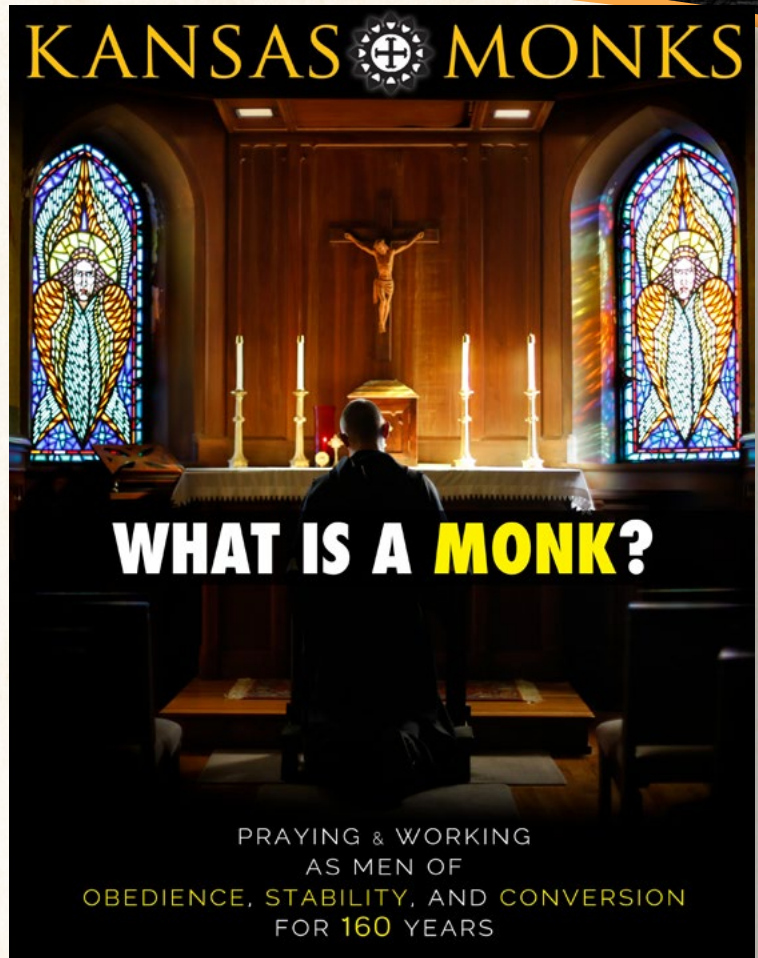
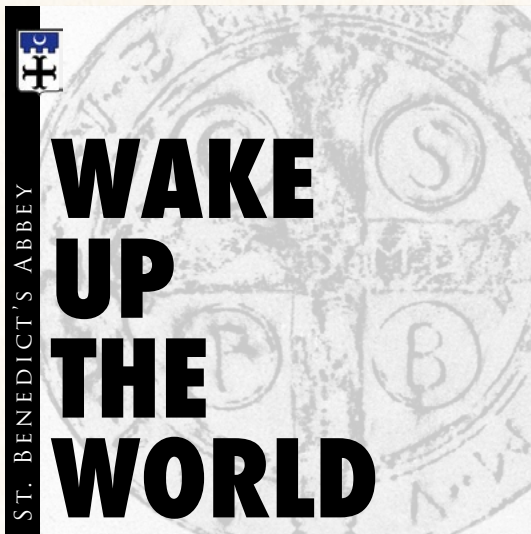
CREATIVE PORTFOLIO & RESUME



LAYOUT & DESIGN

My first job out of college was the photography and design for *Kansas Monks* magazine, the publication that I now lead as editor. It is our goal to offer an immersive experience in each and every issue, transporting the reader from wherever they are in the world to St. Benedict's Abbey.

A Brochure Cover:



"The Monastic Life" Magazine Layout:

THE MONASTIC LIFE

We can all remember the significant milestones in our lives, from our First Communion to our first car – monastic life is no different. As the monk progresses through the formation process toward the lifetime commitment at solemn profession, there are various stages of monastic life, each unique and important. We hope these pages serve as a tutorial as we seek to share our lives with you.

POSTULANCY

It starts with a knock at the door – after completing an application process, the men who wish to begin monastic formation gather on the porch behind the monastery and knock at the door. As they enter they are greeted by the Abbot and the vocations director with the monastic community waiting in the hallway behind them. As they are accepted into the community, they are led to their choir stalls in the abbey church.

The Postulancy is a transition from one's past life and the beginning of a new path, under the guidance of the Postulant Director. For four months the postulants wear cassocks and live in the monastic cloister. As they take the first steps toward integrating themselves in the monastic community they take on work assignments in and around the abbey, working the grounds and assisting with internal tasks. They also begin the formation process by taking classes from other members of the monastic community on a variety of topics from prayer and discernment to monastic history.

JUNIORATE

Upon completing the novitiate year, the novice can then apply to profess triennial, first vows. If he is accepted by the monastic community, with the permission of the Abbot and recommendation of his Novice Master, the novice comes before the Abbot and community at Mass and professes the monastic vows of Stability, Conversion through a monastic way of life, and Obedience. He then receives the monastic hood – the helmet of Christ.

These vows are temporary, binding for three years. During this period, the monk will begin to have official assignments. Under the direction of the Junior Master, the monk begins to live with responsibilities that contribute to the life of the monastic community. He is often introduced to the work of our apostolates. At the conclusion of the three years, another momentous discernment arises: to apply to profess Solemn Vows, to request an extension of Simple Vows, or to leave the community.

SOLEMN VOWS

At the conclusion of First Vows the monk can then apply to make a lifelong commitment to monastic life by professing Solemn Vows. The monk lies prostrate before the altar and is covered by the funeral pall symbolizing the death of his self and the surrendering of his will to God; the same funeral pall will be draped over his coffin at his Mass of Christian Burial. The monk now has full rights as a member of the monastic chapter and will serve in whatever capacity the abbot deems appropriate to his skills and the community's needs.

NOVIATE

Upon completing the postulancy, the candidate may apply to enter the novitiate. With his acceptance by the monastic community, he comes before the Abbot during Vespers and is invested in the monastic habit. The Abbot then announces to the novice and community the novice's monastic name, and he receives the *Rule* under which he will live. With this the novice leaves his identity behind, forsaking his clothing and name in favor of the monastic habit and name. The novitiate year immerses the novice in prayer and study of various topics (monastic charism, the Psalms, spiritual theology, etc.) Having no formal assignment, the novice is free from the onus of any type of consuming job and is given the structure to pray intensely, study monastic and theological topics, and offer himself generously to the fraternal life. Discernment of a very intentional nature is required during this time as well, for the young man considers whether or not to apply for First Vows.

ORDINATION

If the monk has discerned a call to the priesthood he will begin studying theology and philosophy at Benedictine College. Upon completing the prerequisites for major seminary, he will spend four years living apart from the community at a Benedictine abbey with a seminary attached. Upon ordination he will serve in our educational or parish apostolates, or in a position of service within the community.

BROTHERHOOD

Not all of the monks are called to the priesthood, but they serve the community in a variety of ways. According to the monk's talents he may be assigned to serve in our educational apostolates as a member of the faculty or staff, or he may be assigned to a position of service within the monastery itself – for more on that, see the *Day in the Life* article on page 12.

MORE DESIGN & WRITING

A large part of my work has been dedicated to fundraising – at live events, through peer-to-peer marketing, and direct-mail pieces. For a standard appeal I draft a letter, design a response card, and design a “premium” for the reader (typically a card you might hang on your refrigerator or place on your desk). I also founded a “young-donor” society, helping generate a new base of support for the monks of St. Benedict’s Abbey.

Additionally, I am the designer for all Abbey consumer goods, such as books & gifts, designing book covers, t-shirts, and product packaging.

Campaign Card:



ONE LEGACY › ONE FUTURE

PRAYING AND WORKING SINCE 1857



We humbly ask you to partner with us to match a \$200,000 challenge.

Benedict's Brittle Packaging:



Jockey Box Design:



Event Promo Flag:



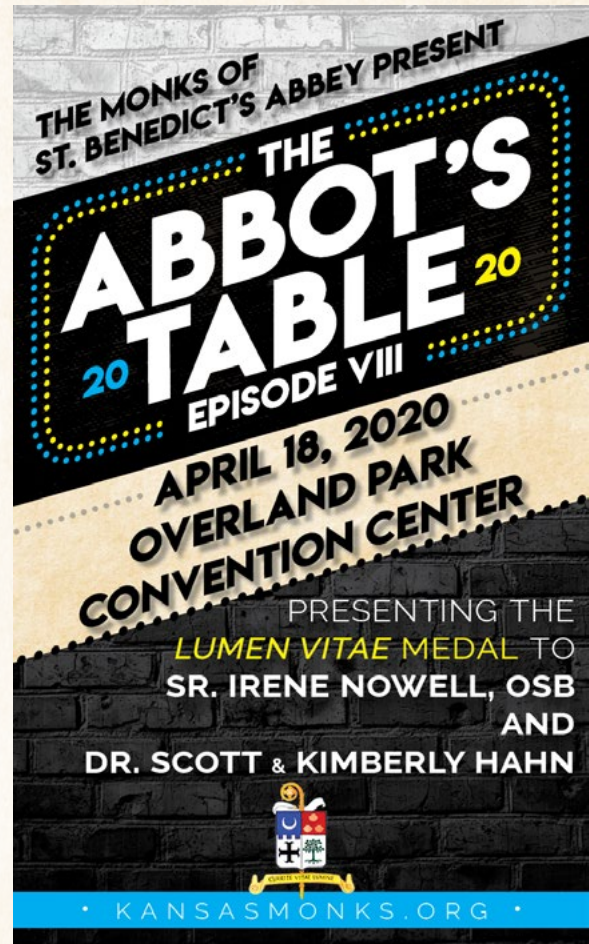
THINKING DIFFERENTLY

In 2012 (and every year since) I was challenged to create the program and advertising materials for a fundraising dinner: The Abbot's Table. Benefit dinners are nearly all the same, so the question was, how do we make this a *unique* experience? The answer was a fresh take on monastic life through a rhythmic interplay of humorous and moving videos seeking to keep the audience on their toes and the conversation about the event itself. This event has grown each year in attendance hosting more than 900 guests and raising over \$800,000 annually.

2019 Promotional Graphic:



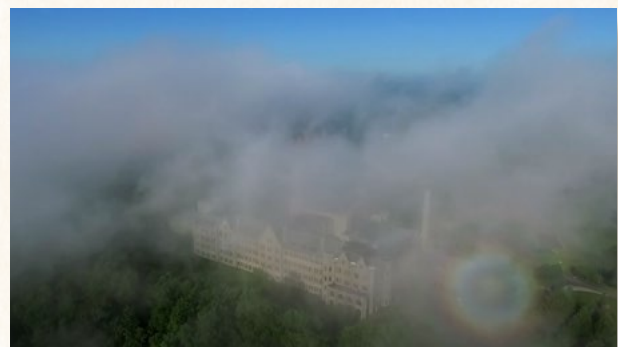
2020 Promotional Magnet:



The videos below were produced for The Abbot's Table; I am responsible for all aspects of production: scripting, shooting, and editing. - *Click image to view on Youtube* -



The Abbot's Table 2019 - 8:07



Where does this Love Begin? - 1:05



The Rule "Made for TV" - 0:49



Ora et Labora: A History - 4:10

SOCIAL MEDIA & EVENTS

Social media, the monster that is always hungry (has anyone ever found the bottom?) These platforms provide an opportunity to be creative and funny that normal media doesn't afford – and that's the best part – it's the only way I could get a monk to [go to McDonald's](#) or [spoof SportsCenter](#).

COVID-19 created a unique opportunity – we implemented online live events to engage audiences across the globe generating 2,000 new Youtube subscribers, 1,600 new e-mail subscribers, and over 400 new donors.

Through social media I was also able to generate new media partnerships, giving the monks a presence on national television and radio outlets.

Giving Day Promotion:



Weekly Video Series:



Live event graphics:
I am responsible for creation, programming, and promotion.

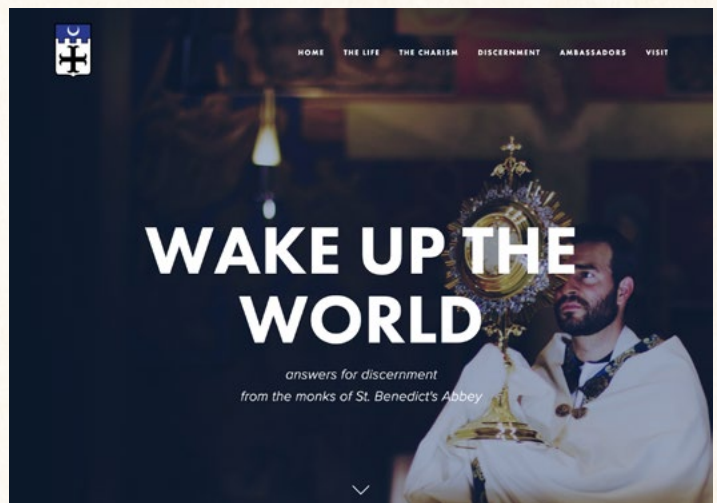


I am responsible for the design and maintenance of the Abbey's websites.
- Click image to view in browser -

Kansasmonks.org

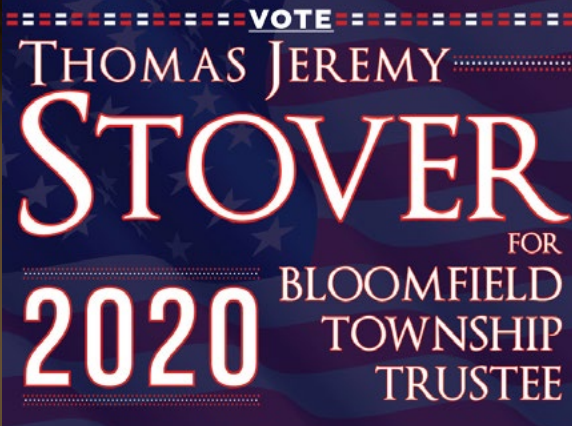


MonkVocations.org



OTHER DESIGN

Whether it's designing labels for my own homebrew, campaign flyers for friends, or my family's calendar, I am constantly trying to come up with engaging, fun, and creative ways to convey a message.



RESUME

johndbenning@gmail.com • 913.370.1705
See more examples of my work at benninggraphics.com

I live to create – it's in my bones. From writing music to graphic design, nearly all of my time is wrapped up in some creative pursuit. I have been fortunate to meet a lot of amazing people and help fill their media needs, primarily in the non-profit sector, designing web and print graphics, writing copy, producing videos, and more to raise funds and awareness for a variety of projects. I would love to discuss your project, and how we can work together!

QUALIFICATIONS

- Excellent written and verbal communication skills
- Expertise with Final Cut Pro X
- Expertise with Adobe CS Products
- Extensive experience as videographer and photographer (studio & live-events)
- Outstanding computer skills
- Extensive experience writing press releases, columns, articles, and appeal letters

SELECTED ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Produce and execute programs for major fundraising events
- Keynote speaker at 2017 & 2019 Benedictine Development Symposium
- Editor & designer of award-winning *Kansas Monks* magazine
- Execution of annual direct-mail campaigns generating over \$500,000 annually
- Founder & leader of "Young donor society" growing support to more than 130 members
- Generated media partnerships with multiple outlets to give Abbey a wider audience

WORK EXPERIENCE

Director of Communications - St. Benedict's Abbey, Atchison, Kansas

October 2012-

- Editor of *Kansas Monks* magazine (see 'publications' at benninggraphics.com)
- Create and execute program for Abbot's Table banquet
- Create and execute direct-mail fundraising campaigns
- Creation and management of Kansasmonks.org
- Manage all *Kansas Monks* social media platforms
(Responsible for initial creation and audience growth)
- Manage St. Benedict's Abbey Internship program (1-4 interns annually)

Independent Contractor

2004-

- Produce and edit videos for a variety of organizations
- Design of print promotional material (e.g. posters, brochures, etc.)
- Design websites for foundations, companies, or individuals

RESUME & REFERENCES

Art Director - St. Benedict's Abbey, Atchison, Kansas

August 2008 - October 2012

- In charge of layout & design for Kansas Monks and all other Abbey print material
- Creation of first Abbey website and social media channels
- Photographer and videographer for all events
- Received 1st place (2009) and 3rd place (2010) for General Excellence from Catholic Press Association

Asst. Residency Director - Maur Hill-Mount Academy

2004-2008

- Began as dorm prefect in 2004, supervising a floor of high school boarding freshman
- Promoted to Asst. Residency Director in 2006, supervising male dorm staff

Director - Camp St. Maur

2001-2006

- Started as counselor in 2001; promoted to Asst. Camp Director 2003-2005, put in charge of camp operation in 2006
- Supervised 12 Staff Members and 48 campers weekly each summer
- Creation of camp marketing materials, website, and video

EDUCATION

Benedictine College - Graduated 2008

- Earned Bachelor of Arts in Mass Communications
- Creation of Videos for Scholarship Ball fundraising event
- Post-Graduate Video Internship with *Life Teen* in Prescott, Arizona

REFERENCES

Matt Kemnitz

Mattkemnitz@yahoo.com

785.218.5936

Ben McAnany

Benm@mcananyconstruction.com

479.438.1165

Sr. Mary Agnes Patterson, OSB

patterson@mountosb.org

913.360.6200

Dan Madden

dmadden@srcharities.org

707-787-7013

Additional references available upon request