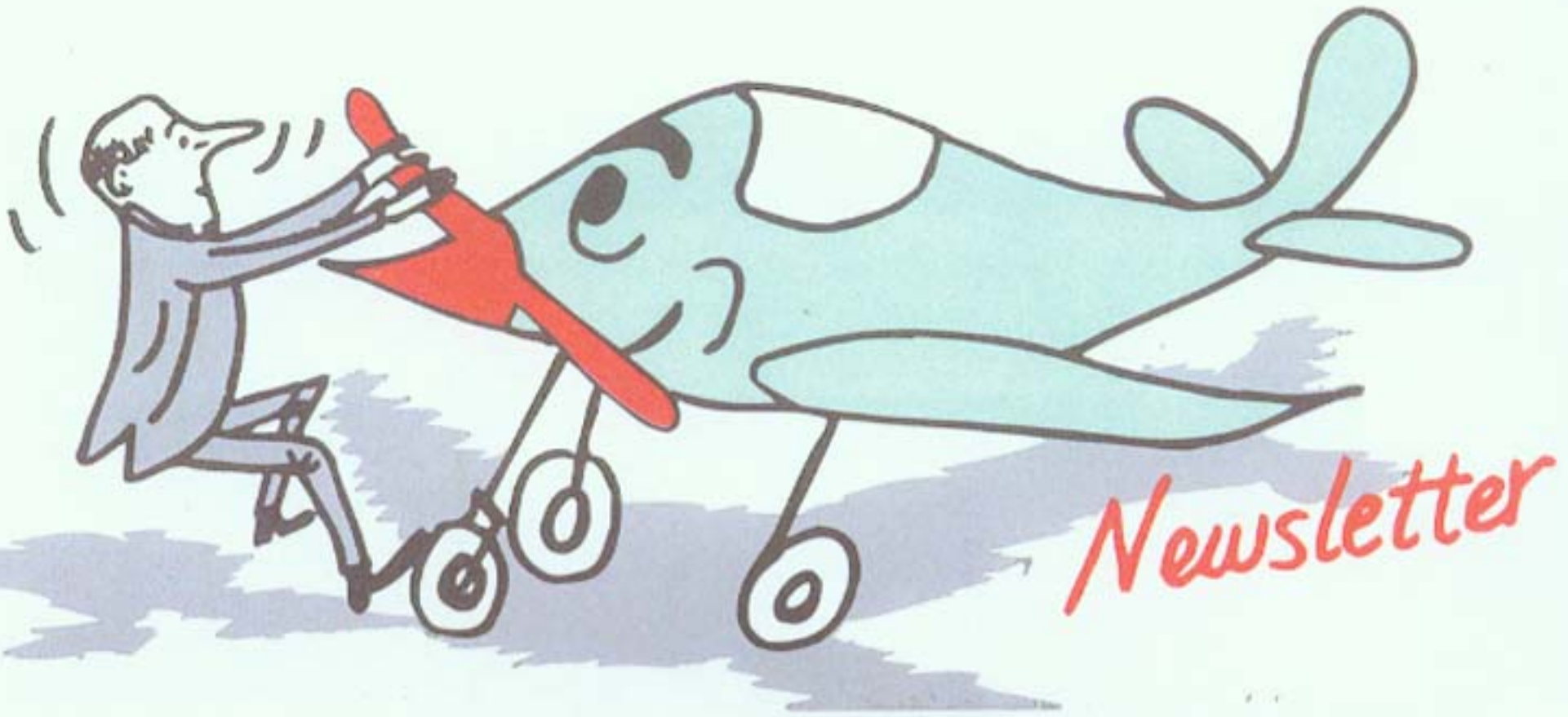


N.A.P.P.



VOLUME XLIII      OCTOBER 2005      NO. 2



**FROM THE PRESIDENT**

Charter member, **Bob Pool**, died on Sunday, September 4th at a hospice in Topeka, KS. At his bedside was long-time friend, Fr. Rick Storey, pastor of St. Patrick Church, Osage, KS.

Bob discovered - too late - that he had contracted lung cancer. Radiation treatments supposedly shrunk the tumor by one-half, but to no avail. He was in the hospice only 3 weeks.

I had a wonderful conversation with his sister, **Ramona Goracke**, who just celebrated her 75th birthday on September 19th in Hope, KS. She said Bob was five years older than she.

Ramona's address is 469 Oat Rd, 67451. She has been playing the organ for her church since 1961. Her husband died in 2003. - Bob's brother, Max, lives in Texas.

Attending Bob's funeral Mass at St. Patrick's in Osage City were 50 priests and 30-40 Knights of Columbus. He was buried at St. Phillips Cemetery at Hope. In the cemetery - get this - Bob is not going to have an ordinary monument. He wants a **sundial** so that visitors to the cemetery during the day might find out what time it is! How about that!

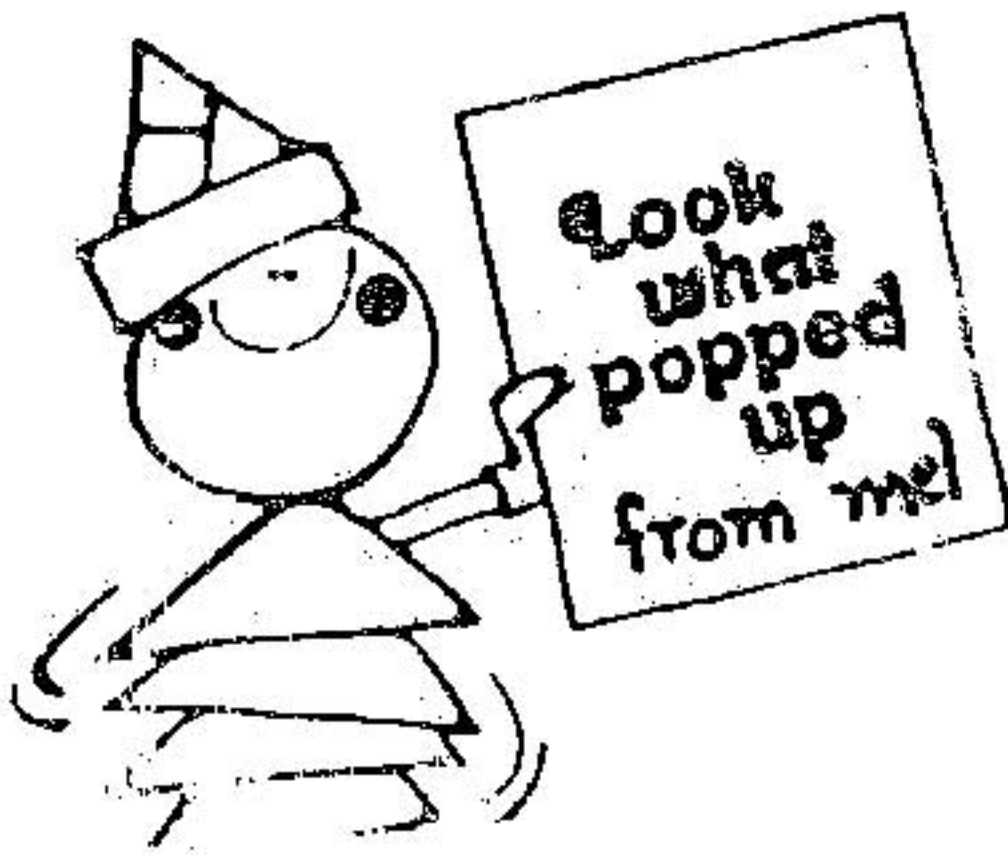
Bob hosted one of our earlier conventions - probably #9 at Emporia. Al Werth knew Bob when he started high school seminary at Conception, MO. Rest in peace, Bob.

I got a really nice letter from Archbishop Frank Hurley, which I will share with you in the next newsletter. Best wishes to everybody.

Sincerely and fraternally,

*Charles B Teufel*

Charles B Teufel



President Charlie stole my thunder in his remarks about charter member, Bob Pool, who passed away recently. Bob was a frequent attendee in the early NAPP years but less flying as the years went on did not make the annual NAPP convention a high priority. It was nice to renew a long lost friendship and the camaraderie of his presence in several gatherings in recent years.

May you rest in peace Bob

Quite a number returned their dues envelope since the last mailing. Your new membership card is included with this newsletter. The rest of you will find another "reminder." A quick response will be greatly appreciated.

I am definitely going to put out a BRAND NEW ANNUAL directory after the first of the year. I've really been negligent in that area the past two years but difficulties on the computer seem to be improving in that area. Hope does spring eternal.

All those who've paid up by early January will be included in the directory, along with changes I know of by that date.

Sorry for the delay.

We're also continuing to work on the web site. Hopefully before long we'll finally have that up and running.

When - and if - that happens we'll be able to send the newsletter to you electronically. That means colored pictures and the whole works. It will reduce greatly the number we will have to send via snail mail and make it possible for us to give a few more bucks to our brothers who can use our financial help.

It's coming!!!

Due to inclement weather some of the usual attendees at our regional gathering in September weren't able to make it. Though the numbers were down a bit the day was informative, pleasant and well spent.

See below for the next dates.

### **MIDWEST REGIONAL MEETING**

May 1, 2006

Mexico, Missouri

Fr. John Schmitz will be our host. More details will be coming in the future. For now, put the date on your calendar.

After all, how many times is it so convenient to go to Mexico?

### **EARLY REMINDER**

#### **2006 NATIONAL CONFERENCE**

July 12-13, 2006  
Oshkosh, Wisconsin

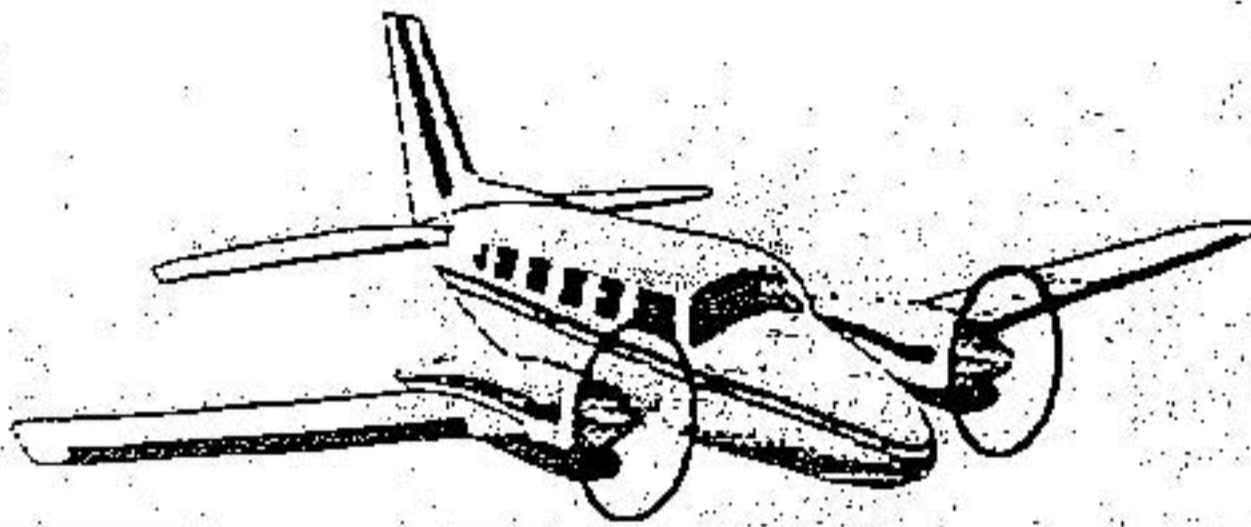
Arrangements are being made and programs being planned even as we type.

## **ADDRESS ALL CORRESPONDENCE TO:**

**REV. MEL HEMANN**

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Cedar Falls, IA 50613-1683  
319-266-3889  
Email: n298mh@cfu.net





## BRIEFS FROM HERE AND THERE

### PRIEST, TEACHER, PILOT

Alaska's 'Father Clem' takes flying honors as this year's LUMEN CHRISTI awardee

Reprinted with permission from EXTENSION  
Magazine of Catholic Missionary Work in America September 2005

It's Sunday morning in Clarks Point, Alaska (pop 65), and Marita Gardiner waits on her all-terrain vehicle alongside the gravel airstrip, checking her VHF radio and scanning the horizon.

A few moments later, a tiny Piper Saratoga, like a determined seabird, swings wide over Nushagak Bay. Its wings seesaw precariously in the crosswind before it steadies and begins a downward glide toward *terra firma*, pulling up short of the orange traffic cone at the runway's end.

The Yup'ik woman, bundled in a parka, breaks out in a broad smile as Father LeRoy Clementich, CSC, clambers out of the little plane with his duffel bag and Mass kit, a baseball cap perched jauntily on his head. The 80-year old priest stows his gear aboard Gardiner's ATV, climbs on, and the pair roar off over the rutted road toward St. Peter the Fisherman Church, where a handful of the faithful are waiting for Mass.

This is the second Mass of the day for "Father Clem," as he's affectionately known here. He began his day with a 10 a.m. Mass at St. Theresa Mission in Naknek and will end with a 5 p.m. liturgy at Holy Rosary in Dillingham, covering more than 600 nautical miles in the process.

It's a schedule that would exhaust many people half the age of the Holy Cross priest, who shows no signs of slowing down. And it's

part of the reason that Father Clementich was selected to receive Catholic Extension's Lumen Christi Award this year.

The award recognizes individuals who have carried out outstanding missionary service in the U.S. That certainly applies here where some of the toughest ministry in America is carried out by Alaska's so-called "supply priests," a handful of hardy clergy assigned to travel around to remote parishes and missions that wouldn't otherwise ever see a priest. The Archdiocese of Anchorage, covering nearly 140,000 square miles, has three such priests remaining on the circuit. Father Clementich, who has been serving since 1993, is the senior member.

#### Waiting for the priest

The affable Father Clementich knows what it's like to wait for the priest to arrive. The eldest of eight children, he grew up on a farm north of Minot, N.D., about 12 miles from the church. On many Sundays, he and his father would drive the priest from St. Mary's in Foxholm to St. Henry's in Carpio in their Model A Ford.

In winter they might use a horse-drawn sleigh, "sitting on straw with blankets over us," says Father. The North Dakota snows could be mighty, and he recalls how disappointed folks were when the priest couldn't make it.

"Here I am doing exactly what that priest 75 years ago was doing!" he marvels, though he's understating the case a bit. Priests in the

"Lower 48" don't have to cope with flying small planes through treacherous mountain passes, landing on unlighted airstrips bounded by mountains, water (or both), or coping with winter days that offer less than six hours of daylight.

Father Clementich credits his mother with putting him on the path to the priesthood, however indirectly. His first eight years of education came in a one-room schoolhouse that's still on his family's property. After that, he expected to be going to public school "with my buddies," but his mother sent him to the Catholic high school in Minot, where he boarded with a local family.

He came to appreciate the school and its "Catholic sense of things," he recalls. "I got to like Catholic life, got to like what priests do. If my mother hadn't sent me there, my life would have been totally different."

Upon graduation he enlisted in the Army in 1945 and was assigned to the Army Postal Service in Berlin. There he became an assistant to the base chaplain, Holy Cross Father Maurice Powers. As the young soldier was preparing to return to the farm, however, Father Powers raised the prospect of the priesthood and suggested that he contact the Holy Cross Fathers at the University of Notre Dame. The young man thought he would give it a try.

The seminary studies sparked a love of Sacred Scripture. He especially liked the story of Elijah in his cave, "waiting for a word from God about his future career." The prophet endures violent wind, then an earthquake, then fire, all the while waiting to receive some sign from God. It's only when Elijah hears "a tiny whispering sound" that he recognizes what he's looking for. Father says that he, too, has found God's direction in everyday events.

Ordained in 1957, Father Clementich began a teaching career. He picked up master's degrees in liturgy and sacred theology plus a diploma in religious education from the International Catechetical Institute in Brussels. But he was continually drawn to the great outdoors, perhaps because that's where he could better listen for that "tiny whispering sound" in his life.

While teaching at St. Edward's University in Texas, he learned to fly a plane: a practical skill for covering the wide-open spaces. It was a skill that would eventually point him northward to the Archdiocese of Anchorage.

### Boning up on bush flying

Besides Scripture, Father's other great passion is fishing, and he began "following the salmon" in Alaska. He started coming up for a week in summers and helped out in local parishes on weekends. In 1993, then-Archbishop Francis Hurley invited him to serve in the archdiocese permanently, an invitation he cleared with his provincial and happily accepted.

Almost immediately, Father realized he had to sharpen his flying skills. "You just don't get in an airplane up here and start flying around." Unpredictable winds and heavy fog are year-round hazard, and icing is treacherous for any aircraft, but especially a small one. Even a slight build-up on its wings can drop it out of the sky like an express elevator to the basement.

Nonetheless, within a year Father Clementich, then nearly 70, was flying around to towns in south central Alaska in a Piper Cherokee owned by his order.

A couple of times the weather tricked him, his friends relate. Heavy snow once forced him to leave the plane in Talkeetna and borrow a car to drive the two-and-a-half hours back to Anchorage. (He retrieved the plane later).

Though Father Clementich has logged more than 1,600 flight hours, he's wise enough to know his limits. He's not instrument-rated - that is, certified to fly in bad weather by means of instruments alone.

"I figure if I can't get to where I need to by looking at the ground," he chuckles, "I'll take commercial transportation or get in the car."

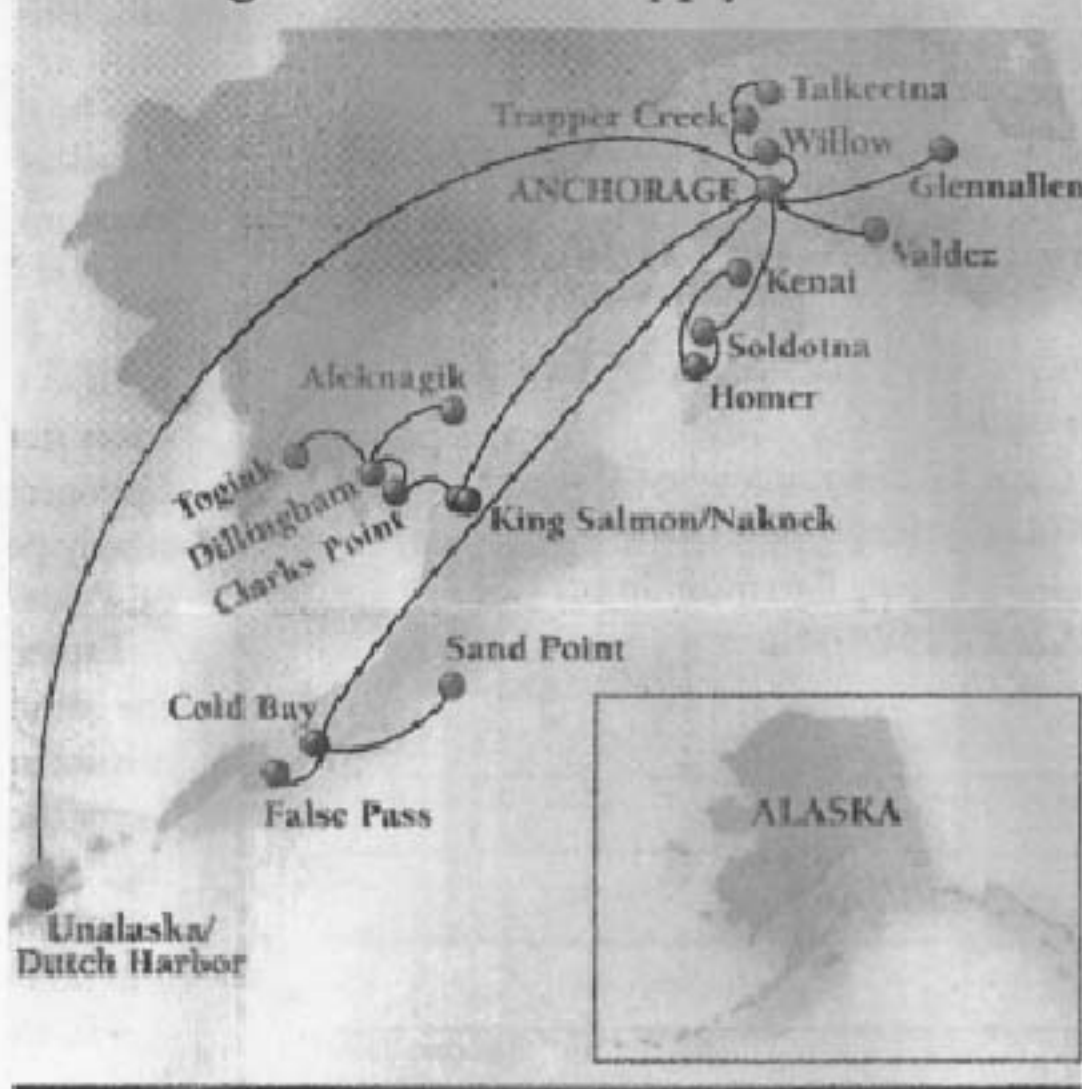
Winter temperatures in Alaska can drop to 40 below zero, freezing the ground so solid, Father Clementich says, that the natives at some of the far outposts build fires on the ground to thaw it enough to bury their dead.

Especially in winter, "the loneliness and isolation get to some people," Father acknowledges, but the Holy Cross priest adds that he also feels "fortunate" to split his time between the rural villages and the city of Anchorage, where he lives in a modest apartment.

From his office in the Archdiocesan Pastoral Center, Father Clementich serves as coordinator of rural ministry and "canonical pastor" of many of the parishes without a resident priest. He also writes an award-winning column for the archdiocesan newspaper, the Catholic Anchor, which thoughtfully weaves together Scripture, current events and homespun stories of growing

up on a farm.

## Anchorage Archdiocese Supply Priest Routes



On weekends, Father Clementich is back on the road. For more than two years, he followed a circuit to Naknek, Clarks Point and Dillingham two Sundays a month and flew himself to scattered villages like Cold Bay, False Pass and Koliganek on the Sundays in between. In August he began a new route, covering St. Christopher by the Sea in Dutch Harbor two Sundays a month and the missions between Talkeetna in the north and the Kenai Peninsula in the south on the other two.

What's his greatest challenge now? "Age," he jokes, though he cheats Father Time by rising daily at 4 a.m. to spend an hour on the treadmill at a local gym. He keeps his weight at nearly what it was in his seminary days, and he eats salmon "almost every day."

### Priest and pilot

"Morning, Father!" the pilots, gate agents and ramp crews at Ted Stevens International Airport in Anchorage warmly greet the smiling priest in his pilot cap. He's flown with so many of them over the years that they all know him well.

The flight this day takes him to the village of King Salmon. From there, it's a short hop by car to St. Theresa Mission, a lovely church painted the same blueberry color as the sky. The

worn leather boots standing guard by the altar belonged to Father Jim Kelley, the supply priest whose plane crashed on Palm Sunday in 2002.

Father Kelley's death devastated the community but didn't shake its missionaries' resolve. "I don't think I ever thought twice about serving," says Father Clementich. "I just thought, 'I'll try to stay safe and do the best I can.'"

His close friends relate that they had to talk Father out of getting into his own plane to carry on that ministry. Within weeks, he took up part of Father Kelley's route but flew by charter or commercial flights.

"I knew I was stepping into the shoes of a giant," he says of his predecessor, "and that the people were in mourning." However, the courtly priest with a strong baritone and gentle manner was just the balm those wounded souls needed. It proved that the Church would go on.

Lotta Hines and her daughter Victoria had taken RCIA classes from Father Kelley - months of instruction, much of it by phone - and were looking forward to joining the Church. "When Father Kelley died, I thought, 'What will happen?'" she recalls. "Then Father Clem came. We got it done."

With limited time and unlimited heart, Father Clementich has "gotten it done" a lot of places. He prepared youngsters for their First Eucharist at Naknek, supported efforts by the parishioners of St. Christopher Church in Willow to build a new church (with Catholic Extension's aid) and helped furnish the tiny mission at Clark's Point with donations from a Confirmation class in Winnetka, IL.

This former teacher frets that the young people in Alaska's missions don't have as much of a chance for religious education as those in the big cities. So before Mass begins, Father Clementich calls the children around the baptismal font to preview the day's Gospel, sharing his love of Scripture.

In June cancer claimed the life of Monsignor Richard Allen, another of the Archdiocese's veteran circuit riders. "Every Christian who comes through our lives leaves the mark of Christ's name upon it," Father Clementich said in the homily at his fellow missionary's funeral.

Without a doubt, the beloved "Father Clem" has left the mark of Christ on the Catholics scattered throughout Alaska's missions, too.

Editor's Note: Fr. LeRoy Clementich is a member of NAPP. He was in Chicago the weekend of September 24-25 to receive the Catholic Extension's Society LUMEN CHRISTI award. Congratulations Fr. Clem

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Mike Kerin from Winfield, AL included the following note with his dues payment.

Hi Mel,

I just got my instrument rating in January. It was worth the effort!



Mike K

-----  
Mike Marsh from Anchorage mailed his annual dues earlier this year. After the decision to increase the dues by \$5.00 he sent the following.

Hi, Mel,

Here's the additional \$5 for my NAPP dues.

Fairbanks Diocese is publishing a new history book "Alaskana Catholica." Will be interesting to see what it says about flying.

Cheers,

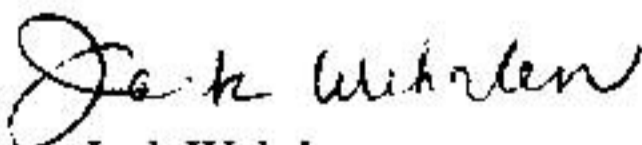
*MIKE MARSH*

Mike Marsh

-----  
Jack Wehrlen included with his dues.

Dear Mel,

Please note that I have a new address. I now have more time to fly. I hope to see you in Oshkosh.



Jack Wehrlen  
11 8th Ave  
Seaside Park, NJ 08752

Editor's Note: Jack, I didn't make it to OSH. Try next year's NAPP convention.

Robert Vater's address has changed:

Robert Vater  
26 E Villa Pl  
Ft Thomas, KY 41075-2223

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Pat Patten from Arusha, Tanzania called me a few nights ago from his home in the Detroit area. He informed me that August 15 he was enroute for his home visit and about 3 hours from Chicago. A restroom visit showed some blood. About half hour later the same thing but no apparent difficulties. 45 minutes later he began experiencing abdominal pains. On landing, a hospital visit indicated some kidney problems. His sister took him to Detroit where he underwent surgery for the removal of a cancerous kidney. His recovery is going well and he plans to return to East Africa the middle of October.

Fr. Pat and Fr. Jacek now have two well equipped Cessna 206s. Flying Medical Service is the only flight operation officially authorized for single engine night flight in Tanzania. The planes are equipped with lighting and equipment that makes night flight unbelievable. The only problem is our Homeland Security has squelched any possibility of obtaining the needed goggles to complete the picture.

Does anyone know how to get around that beauracratc road block?

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*After our July convention I wrote Bishop Donald Kettler to inform him that he would be receiving \$1000.00 after the first of the year.*

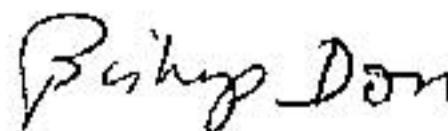
Dear Fr. Mel,

Your letter made my day. Yes, your \$1000 gift will greatly assist our air travel demands. 40 parishes can only be reached by plane or boat.

We now have a chieftan. So, you'll help us even more.

Thanks again for the gifts. I do hope you can visit us here in northern Alaska.

God bless you,



Bishop Don

## NAPP MIDWEST REGIONAL MEETING DENISON, IOWA — SEPTEMBER 26, 2005

Fr. Ed Murray, pastor of the new St. Rose of Lima Church in Denison, Iowa was the host and site of the NAPP Fall midwest regional gathering. 5 planes and 1 car brought the 11 members and guests from Iowa and Wisconsin to Denison to view the new church.



The main event of the afternoon was a presentation from local historian Merle Luvass. Denison is among other claims to fame the home town of movie star Academy Award winner Donna Reed. He shared stories of her and the family as they grew up in Denison.



Merle's stories of local aviator Clarence D. Chamberlin were the highlight of the day to the assembled airmen.

Clarence was born in Denison Nov. 11, 1893. The home at 1434 2nd Avenue South is designated as a **National Historic Site, boyhood home of CLARENCE D. CHAMBERLIN, pilot of 1st trans-Atlantic Passenger Flight, June 4-6, 1927, New York to Germany.** The passenger was Charles Levine, the owner of the plane.

The night before the start of Lindbergh's flight, Chamberlin and Lindbergh met and studied the weather charts that had been prepared for Chamberlin. Due to a law suit against Levine his airplane, *Miss Columbia*, was grounded so Chamberlin gave Lindbergh his charts. The day Lindbergh departed the law suit was dropped, too late for Chamberlin to have a chance to win the \$25,000 prize for the first New York-Paris flight.

Two weeks after Lindbergh's flight to Paris, *Miss Columbia* was refueled with 385 gallons in the tank with an additional 13 five-gallon cans of fuel in the plane to supplement that in the tank. Their destination was not Paris, but even further

into Europe if the fuel held out.

On June 4, 1927 Clarence Chamberlin and his passenger took off from Roosevelt Field in New York. On Monday, June 6, the Wright Whirlwind engine inhaled the last drop of fuel after being in the air for 43 hours and flying 3,905 miles, 300 miles further than the New York-Paris flight. A rough landing was made in a wheat field near Mansfeldt, a new non-stop trans-Atlantic record. A truck arrived with 90 litres, or 20 gallons of fuel.

With no funnel available, a farm woman offered a coffee pot to transfer the fuel. About 100 trips between the truck and the plane were needed to transfer the fuel as the pot held only about 1 litre or less.

Having lost their map, the two took off in the direction of Berlin. About 1 1/2 hours later they were again low on fuel and landed in COTTBUS, southeast of Berlin. A Luft-Hansa plane flew them to Berlin where between 150,000 to 250,000 greeted them at Templehoff.



Admiral Byrd, after unsuccessfully making a non-stop Atlantic flight in a Fokker trimotor, and Chamberlin came back to the U.S. on the same ship. The discussion arose about the possibility of flying a plane off a ship. Chamberlin agreed to do it. On August 1 Chamberlin took off on a ship equipped with a ramp built to his specifications and flew to Teterboro Airport. He became the first to deliver the "first ship-to-shore mail."

At this time Clarence Chamberlin was as well known as Charles Lindbergh. Lindbergh's plane was put in the Smithsonian; Chamberlin's in a hangar in N.J. waiting to be placed beside The Spirit of St. Louis. Two weeks before the move to the museum a fire destroyed the hangar and the plane.

Arusha

15 September, 2005

Dear Mel,

How are you doing? I hope everything is OK and you fly high as usual.

I still miss this wonderful time in America. Can you imagine I had my first in life BFR!!! Time is passing so fast. Thanks for all your help. Thank you very much for the NAPP Newsletter. It is always a great joy to read it. Pat is now in the US but as soon as he'll be back we will have a Regional Meeting or NAPP East African Convention! It is easy to organize --- there are only two of us here! But --- flying high, or low every day.

Mel, you know what happened to me a few weeks ago...??? I got an emergency call at 1 AM Sunday ...

We had a RUGBY TOURNAMENT in Arusha and one of the Rwandan players was very seriously injured. They tried to help him in one of our hospitals but it was very serious so they called me at night to bring him to Nairobi for immediate surgery ... I went to the airport (we don't have lights!!!), set some torches on 09 runway and took off about 2 AM. Everything would be OK but we need a clearance to go to Kenya and of course no way to organize it at 2 AM Sunday! So I called Kilimanjaro Approach and they switched me to Nairobi Radar. Here single engine operations are not allowed at night (and our 206 has only one engine!

At least it had only one engine when I saw it yesterday!)... But this is a medical emergency ... no problem. I am flying for some time and the controller is calling me. "- N36MS, do you have a clearance to land in Kenya?" So I answered, "Negative Sir! But this is a medical emergency."

QUIET. After 5 minutes he called me and said we are allowed to land but we can't leave the plane before security comes. "Thank you very much for your help Sir," I said. So I shoot an ILS to 05 at Nairobi International Airport, and am taxiing and then I saw it --- like in the movies! Police cars with flashing lights --- a lot of people! I stopped the plane and shut off the engine and I noticed that we were surrounded by 20 policemen with guns ready to shoot! hmmm---- I went out and asked who is in charge here?--- After some time, when they saw the patient everything was OK. They were very helpful. The patient got on time to the hospital. BUT--- here I am --- INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT KENYA, no clearance. 6 o'clock in the morning, SUNDAY!!! It means about 5000 people will be waiting for me in our church in Arusha! After calling top guys from Aviation Authority (Sunday morning --- uppss ---) I got a clearance and left Kenya at 6 AM. And I made it for second, third and 4th Masses in our church.

This is what I mean PRIEST, PILOT!!!  
Mel, one more time thanks for everything.  
Greet everyone there! God bless,

*Yours (Jack)*

