

N.A.P.P.



VOLUME XLIX

APRIL 2012

NO 5



THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Happy Easter to everyone! By now hopefully all of you have had a chance for a little R&R following the demanding season of Lent and Holy Week. Now many of us push on to First Communions and Confirmations. Liturgically it is surely one of the most beautiful times of the year.

It is also a great time of the year for flying. My flying partner, Dr. Myron "Ron" Bodman, D.P.M. and I have been training intently for several weeks, taking turns as PIC and safety pilot. The awesome spring weather has enabled us to get back up to maximum IFR proficiency much earlier in the flying season.

There has been a little excitement at our home airport, Medina Muni (1G5) as one of the area hospital's helicopter services is setting up a base at the far end of the hanger.

I hope everyone is beginning to make plans for the national convention in Elmira, N.Y. on July 10 and 11. As much as I enjoyed the lengthy trip from Medina to Clear Lake last year it will be nice to have a nonstop flight this year. I'm pretty sure my friend Father Bob Kropac will be able to come along this year

Speaking of helpful internet sites, I hope everyone has had a chance to check out www.catholicweddingplanner.com as an upgrade from the popular little booklet with the familiar tear-out sheet. Catholic wedding planner is so much easier for our wedding couples to use. Fully approved by the USCCB and ICEL, I find that this resource saves time that I put to better use maintaining my IFR proficiency!

Finally, Ron Bodman and I figured out a cool way to do our commercial cross country flight. What we were thinking was for us to use both the airplane and the car. The first pilot would fly to a distant airport, and the other pilot would take the vehicle. We'd rent a couple hotels rooms, have dinner, and then return in the other direction, this time with the other pilot flying and his partner pilot taking the car. We're still thinking of interesting destinations from 1G5 that would meet the requirements, so if anyone has any interesting suggestions, I would really appreciate hearing them.

Meanwhile, happy flying, everyone!
Sincerely,
Allen Corrigan / N6172D / 1G5 (Medina Muni, Ohio)



We begin this issue with two sad notes. Word has just come to us that Jerry Wightman died just before Christmas in Phoenix, AZ. He had a brain tumor removed several years ago and recently suffered a stroke.

On February 16, 2012 Ed Higgin's Parkinson disease finally caught up with him and he entered into his eternal reward on that day.

Please keep them and their families in prayer.

This letter contains thank you notes from NAPP recipients

1. San Martin Flying Mission
2. Archdiocese of Anchorage
3. Sacred Heart Parish, Wasilla, AK
4. Homily for Ed Higgins funeral
5. Article from Miles Barrett and inflight electrical failure
6. Names/Address of two new members

We have scheduled a Midwestern NAPP gathering in Davenport, IA May 7. Some of you received an earlier notification because of the tardiness of this newsletter. I am including a reservation form so that you can notify me if you plan on attending. On the other half of the sheet I hope to give the new member info and a couple of appropriate address corrections.

NAPP Convention host George Gratton informs me that the local pastor and his parish staff are hosting a happy hour at 6:00 p.m. on Sunday, July 9 at the Comfort Inn. A wine tasting at 6:00 p.m. on Monday, July 10 at a down town spot for those who are present at the time. You can get details when you get there.

Be sure and get those reservations in.

LOOKING AHEAD

The year 2013 will be the 50th anniversary of the founding of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF PRIEST PILOTS (NAPP) organization. Now is a good time to be thinking ahead and think about that special effort to attend next year's jubilee celebration. The dates will be July 9 – 10, 2013. Location will be announced later. Charter members are encouraged to make that 50th anniversary trip.

MEANWHILE

NAPP 2012 NATIONAL CONVENTION
Elmira, New York
July 10 – 11, 2012

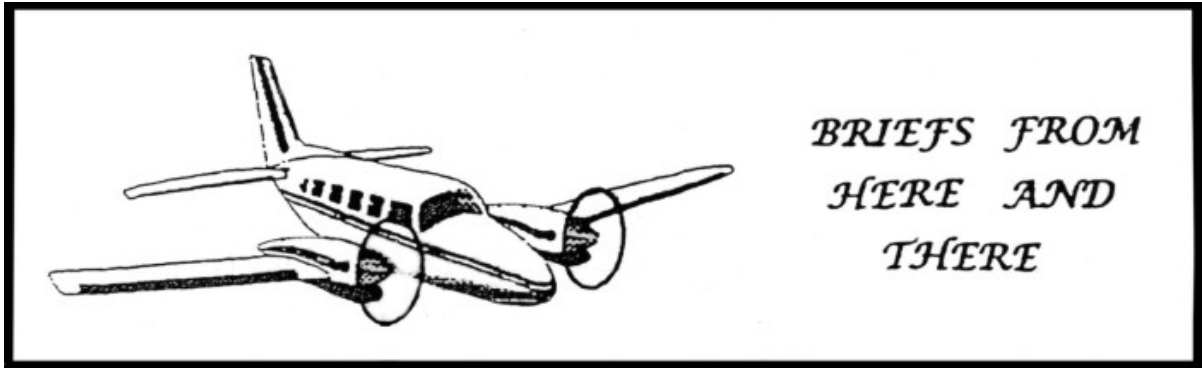
MIDWEST REGIONAL GATHERING
Davenport, Iowa
May 7, 2012

See enclosed registration forms for details and registration

ADDRESS ALL CORRESPONDENCE TO:

REV. MEL HEMANN
127 Kaspand Place
Cedar Falls, IA 50613-1683
319-266-3889
email: N298MH@cfu.net





NEW MEMBERS

Msgr. Jeffrey Steenson
 St. Mary's Seminary
 9845 Memorial Drive
 Houston, TX 77024
 steensj@stthom.edu

Jeffrey is head of the new Anglican ordinariate created for former Anglican parishes and individuals. CNS story says, "He will function as a bishop and will be a voting member of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, making him the only married member of that body"

Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston
 Seminarian: Matthew Giacomuzzi
 Holy Trinity Seminary
 PO Box 140309
 Irving, TX 75014-0309
 Cell: 281-415-8520
mrgiacomuzzi@yahoo.com

*With his dues Nick Rossello writes
 from New York*

Dear Mel,
 I hope and pray all is well. I'm doing OK..
 Just weak. I have felt better. I see the
 Convention is coming to Elmira. Sounds great.
 If things work out for me I will see you there.

Best to all with prayers.

Nick Rossello

Rev John T Walsh
 Sisters of St Joseph
 150 French Road
 Rochester, NY 14534
 H: 585-641-8322
 C: 583-747-0717
 Arch. Francis Hurley
 fhurley@caa-ak.org

MIDWEST REGIONAL MEETING

DAVENPORT, IOWA May 7, 2012 Meet at FBO at airport about 10:30-11:00
11:30 ----- Lunch
1:00 ----- Tour Quad City Ultralight Plant in Moline, IL
3:00 ----- Return to airport for hangar flying, future planning and departure

NAME _____
 ETA: _____ ETD: _____
 Arrival by Car: _____ Pvt Plane: N _____

COMMUNICATE ABOVE INFORMATION TO ME by May 1

Mel Hemann 127 Kaspand Pl Cedar Falls, IA 50613
 Email: n298mh@cfu.net Phone: Home: 319-266-3889 Cell: 319-230-4957

TOTAL ELECTRICAL FAILURE AT 2500 FEET....NOT A PROBLEM

By MILES J. BARRETT

iPad and ForeFlight were a big help during my emergency situation.

ATC Atlantic City had given me a squawk code and I was done flying the photo op under their class C airspace. Climbing to 2000'. I radioed ATC 'Arrow 42 Papa Gulf leaving 1200' to 2000' heading 280 direct to Millville.' ATC was busy yet calmly worked in a confirming reply as I remained outside of Class C's airspace in VFR conditions. My two friends had been having a relaxing scenic flight over the historical Cape May NJ light house, US Coast Guard Training Center (The Birthplace of the U.S. Coast Guard Enlisted Corps), up the shoreline past Wildwood's Amusement Park on the Board Walk and under Atlantic City class Charlie airspace for some beautiful shoreline views & photos. It was one of those short fun scenic hops with friends on a beautiful cool Sunday afternoon in a severe clear blue sky day.

The wife in front was talking out every flight control movement as she processed the idea more and more about starting flight lessons. When her husband heard the headsets go quiet he smiled and thought I was just tired of the talking.

All electrical went down hard at the same time. Not a flicker - just off. No navigation GPS, VOR or Communication ...black lights and screens on the STEC-30, JPI 700 & 450. Only the Apsen 1000 had back-power and that was a 45 minute battery. I reached across and checked the circuit breakers and all seemed to be in. I recycled the red battery/alternator rocker switches in denial that all electrical was off. First time in 30 years such happened for real instead of practice and during check-rides. First lesson was 'fly the plane!'

Turning south and increasing power from our leisurely 2100MP to 32MP & 2450 RPM we descended to Cape May airport with that quick turbo speed on our side. Over the Delaware Bay shoreline we flew just in case any more things were going to happen. The ELT switch at my side had its own battery; and

the 406Hz GPS signal would have Coast Guard from Atlantic City over us in minutes if needed. But we were fine flying along within sight of home.

Rising concern of an inflight fire grew as the husband smelled the forward moving odor of melting hot plastic and the wife in front whole heartedly concurred. It was a pungent odor from the rear behind him getting worse. Was it an electrical fire? That little red fire extinguisher under the pilot's seat was ready but not needed.

I'm sure the kind Atlantic City ATC controller was not amused as I turned south and did not reply on the radio when my squawk code suddenly disappeared. I felt lucky this didn't happen 6 flight hours ago while in the D.C. SFRA. Fortunately it was in VFR conditions. But it could have just as easily been in solid clouds, on top or in IMC in a busy class Bravo airspace like D.C. SFRA & Baltimore airspace where only 6 flight hours prior I was flying. I had Labor Day weekend and 9-11 weekend IFR flights in solid IMC through D.C. SFRA to attend a workshop in D.C. - had this happened then it might have been a hand full or a little more paper work on the ground. Heightened security that tenth anniversary of 9-11 weekend over D.C. would have noticed a small aircraft turning off its transponder and not communicating I'm sure.

What happened? In less than 25 hours after an annual a small connecting relay (\$500.00) on the Piper stainless steel battery box burnt up. Could have been due to a loose connection that caused more amperage load on the one terminal and increased resistance on the other terminal which heated up the solenoid, it lost magnetic power and dropped the load. Dead! Zap! That fast. It was the first time in 32 years flying that I lost all electrical power.

What was working? Had only I remembered the handheld radio on board like it

has been on all cross country flights, I would not have lost communication. The Continental 201T engine was running just fine. Vacuum gauges all worked and air pressure gauges worked fine. The Aspen 1000 was working with a clear Directional Gyro, Attitude Indicator, Airspeed, Altimeter for another 45 minutes; so a nearest airport would have been quite feasible. The iPad showed N42PG approaching KIMBA intersection and 1700' which put us on the VASI glide slope to runway 19. ForeFlight was showing on the iPad my location on the RNAV 19 approach plate, giving me the moving map as a little blue plane on the plate, ground speed 120 knots, track 185 degrees and altitude 1700'. Had it been IMC this was CRM, Crew Resource Management: aid for a pilot to use all available resources. Piper Arrow's auto-extending gear activated fine as power was backed down and airspeed settled to 90kts - I pulled the wheels-down-lever as normal - without electric there were three green lights missing but the wheels locked down in place. This Naval Air Station Museum airport has a history of far more interesting landings during WWII dive bomber pilot training. So much was working it made for an uneventful landing and reminded me of the recent online safety course I'd taken as part of the Wings Program.

Flight Safety in the Wings program by Eugene M. Benson has a great online course, **BRIGHTSPOT-CD-CFIT-VFR/IFR- How Not To Hit Stuff! Part 2 - Avoiding CFIT Course**, that notes 17% of aviation accidents come from pilots making a controlled flight into terrain - CFIT. Due to risk factors of: omission, flight handling, poor professional judgment (like complacency on a short local scenic flight that left a hand held radio in the car), get-there-itis and position awareness - CFIT happens.

Gene Benson's course covered Threat Error Management – TEM avoids the error, traps the error and mitigates the error. The electrical meltdown was an extended risk factor which was a distraction by a flight related item that took away navigation and communication. One mitigates the distraction by flying the

plane or proper flight handling. The iPad device with ForeFlight secured position awareness and terrain awareness. Feeling of get-home-itis – pressing on instead or accepting an inconvenient safe landing in one piece was not an issue being north of my home airport on a familiar approach. I wanted to land ASAP and my passengers were quiet & said I seemed so calm; but catching I wanted a 'sterile cockpit' they let me fly the plane. I felt blessed to have had so many available resources and only \$500.00 'tuition' for the part and lesson.

Lessons learned? The handheld radio is back in the side pocket where it belongs fully charged on all flights. Passengers pre-briefed are a support towards the safety and join the team effort as valuable members of the flight crew. Reviewed emergencies online and on the ground prior to flight help the pilot and passengers stay calm. Don't imagine it can't happen today.

Have you noticed how the art of flying keeps teaching another lesson during each sortie no matter how long or how far you fly? What, when and where is your next inflight emergency going to happen?

Miles J. Barrett, 1000+ hours Commercial SEL/MEL Instrument airplane, PA28R-201T 1977 Piper Turbo Arrow III, N42PG home based Cape May NJ KWWD, Active in EAA Chapter 287 and Civil Air Patrol Composite Squadron Cape May NJ.
252-571-3168 Email: Miles4724@netzero.com



Piper Arrow 42PG

SAN MARTIN FLYING MISSION

P.O. Box 51263, Albuquerque, New Mexico 87181-1263

January 30th, 2012

Dear Mel and NAPP,

We here at San Martin Flying Mission want to thank you personally for the generous contribution of \$ 250.00, that you have made to our continuing effort to help and support people who rely on our assistance. As you know our mission is one of constant need and support from people such as yourself.

This year we have plans to add a new school to our School Bucks program which has been in effect for over 5 years. This helps our underprivileged children in our community with school supplies and clothes.

Continuing efforts to help support the indigenous people of Mexico (both old and young) is a constant battle with local government and institutions. But our persistent presence is a ray of light on the horizon for those in need and who rely on our help.

Once again, on behalf of the Board of Directors for the San Martin Flying Mission we thank you for your support and we look forward to many more years of service.

Don't forget, your contributions are tax deductible. If you would like a Form 1040, SCHEDULE A SUPPLEMENT for your records please contact Edwina Tabares at (505) 836-5914 and we will send one out to you.

Yours Sincerely,



Edwina O. Tabares CEO
San Martin Flying Mission



Archdiocese of Anchorage

225 Cordova Street • Anchorage, Alaska 99501-2409
www.archdioceseofanchorage.org
907-297-7700 • fax: 907-279-3885

Office of the Archbishop

February 24, 2012

Reverend Mel Hemann
National Association of Priest Pilots
127 Kaspand Place
Cedar Falls, IA 50613-1683

Dear Father Hemann:

Please accept my thanks for the generosity of the National Association of Priest Pilots. I am very grateful to you for the funds to help us in reaching the far corners of our Archdiocese.

As I mentioned to you, Father Garrett is now in Wasilla, Alaska where he not only has a large parish and a school, but is also canonical pastor of several missions along the highway up to Denali National Park. He has his airplane with him and wants to use it to have better access to these other faith communities. Your generous donation will be a big help in this process.

May god's blessings be with you as we begin this penitential season of Lent.

Sincerely yours in Christ and Mary,

†Roger L. Schwietz, OMI
Archbishop of Anchorage

cc: Father Scott Garrett

NAPP CONVENTION SCHEDULE

July 9 – 12, 2012

Elmira, New York

9 July - Monday

Arrival

Corning-Painted Post – **7N1 - FBO:** Costa Flying Service

Elmira – **KELM** For commercial and IFR arrivals.

(**ROC** and **SYR** are also close by)

6:00 PM Hospitality room Official welcome. Pizza and all the trimmings.

COMFORT INN 66 W Pulleney St. Corning, NY 14830 (866-611-6301)

(Make your own room reservations. NAPP rate is \$104.97 with breakfast)

10 July - Tuesday

9:30 AM Arrival at Corning Museum of Glass

10:00 AM Sand Blast – hands on glass working class

11:00 to 1:00 PM Guided tour with our docent

1:00 PM Lunch

2:30 PM Tour of Rockwell Art Museum (or Free Time)

5:30 P.M Dinner on your own. **EVENING FREE**

11 July - Wednesday

9:00 AM Harris Hill Soaring Museum

Glenn Curtiss Museum

Annual Meeting

Mass **EVENING FREE**

12 July -Thursday

DEPARTURE

Further suggestions from host George Gratton:

Make this a **CON-VACATION** – A Convention and Vacation together in one week

Some suggestions:

1. Wings of Eagles WW II Museum, Elmira, NY
2. Rip Van Winkle River Cruises, Kingston, NY
3. Cole Palen's Old Rhinebeck Aerodrome and Museum – WW 1 airshow

The Holiday Inn Kingston, NY offers a special NAPP rate the nights of 12, 13 and 14 of July. George is going and has a hospitality room. Kingston-Ulster Airport (**20N**)

For details contact:

George Gratton 11 Green Iris Ct Savannah, GA 31419

Office: 912-925-1732 Cell: 912-435-3330

Email: ggratton@gmail.com



Sacred Heart Parish

Reverend Mel Hemann
National Assotiation of Priest Pilots
127 Kaspand Place
Cedar Falls, IA 50613-1683

March 20, 2012

Dear Father Hemann:

Thank you very much for your donation of \$1,000 to our Alaskan Flying mission. Your money has enabled me to pay for fuel, parking, electricity, and maintenance for our Cherokee Warrior II Aircraft, (N81809). Your kindness is greatly appreciated.

After moving from the Dillingham Saint Paul Mission I am currently the pastor of Sacred Heart Wasilla and the canonical pastor for six other nearby parishes. The airplane enables me to fly to Our Lady of the Lake in Big Lake, Alaska, and small village churches in Talkeetna and Trapper creek. The last time I flew to Trapper Creek I had to turn around because the valley in which the village is located was fogged in.

Thank you again for your thoughtful gift. It is people like you who make it possible to administer the sacraments to those at the "Ends of the Earth." Have a wonderful day.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "REV. Scott J. Garrett". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Reverend Scott Joseph Garrett
Pastor.

NAPP NATIONAL CONVENTION

July 10 – 11, 2012

ELMIRA, NEW YORK

VFR Flyins: Corning-Painted Post (7N1) Host airport

FBO: Costa Flying Service

IFR & Commercial Flyins: Elmira (KELM)

HOST: GEORGE GRATTON

Please phone, e-mail or mail RSVP by Friday, June 29, 2012

NAME _____

CELL PHONE _____ **EMAIL** _____

ARRIVAL DATE _____

By: *Pvt Plane* N _____ -**ETA:** _____

By: *Car* _____ **ETA** _____

By: *Commercial Flight* _____

DEPARTURE: _____

RESERVATIONS TO:

George Gratton

11 Green Iris Ct

Savannah, GA 31419

Email: ggratton@gmail.com (O) 1-912-925-1732 (C) 1-912-433-3330

YOUR HOME AWAY FROM HOME

COMFORT INN

66 W Pulleney St

Corning, NY 14830

Phone: 1-866-611-6301

BOOK YOUR OWN ROOM

Mention NAPP for special Convention Rate when making your reservation.

NB: If you're taking part in CON-VACATION contact George earlier to finalize plans

FULL HOMILY TEXT FROM FUNERAL MASS FOR MSGR. E. EDWARD HIGGINS

Editor: The Catholic Diocese of Peoria, IL

Following is the full text from the homily given at the Feb. 21 funeral Mass at St. Mary's Cathedral in Peoria for Msgr. E. Edward Higgins, 80, a senior priest of the diocese who died Feb. 16. The homilist was Father Thomas Taylor, parochial vicar at St. Thomas the Apostle Parish in Peoria Heights.

I want to begin today by thanking all of you on behalf of Father Ed's family for joining in our prayer for him today. In the visitation last night, the gathering after our Mass today, and tomorrow in Ottawa we start to see a small fraction of the lives he touched in 55 years of priesthood. As we offer this Mass for him today, we thank God for the 20,000 or so Masses he offered for us over the years.

Ed was born to Emmett and Mercedes Higgins on Aug. 24, 1931 in Ottawa. He was a true Irishman. A visit with Ed was to hear story after story, many of them even true. They were all accompanied with a twinkle in his eye at no extra charge.

He was older brother to Ann, who was the subject of some of his first teaching attempts. These included how to play baseball and the Latin responses to the Mass (which was really to help him get them down in order to become a Mass server). He attended Ottawa High School, excelling in his studies and having fun. To be around Ed meant that he was up for any adventure, so you had to be also.

His vocation goes back to the summer after graduation. Some people think that priests must just be born with a priest's gene. But their talents and abilities, likes and dislikes, cover the whole human spectrum. They are representatives of the universal priesthood of the faithful we all share in by our baptism, because this is who will be served by them.

At some point a call comes to him and it must be answered. After high school Ed had planned to go to Creighton and study to become a pharmacist. During that summer, he decided that he wanted to become a priest. There were two problems: 1) His dad had already sent in a \$50 non-refundable deposit to Creighton (\$50 was a lot money back then), and 2) It was a sign of indecisiveness to his father at time when you were supposed to know what you were going to do. But when his father looked into his eyes, he realized that this meant everything to Ed.

The next hurdle was his interview with the bishop before being accepted as a seminarian. He worried that the bishop would ask why he went to the public high school rather than Marquette. And sure enough, during the interview, Bishop Schlarman said, "You're from Ottawa, so you went to Marquette?"

Without batting an eye Ed fired back, "Lived right across the street."

He was sent to St. Ambrose College for his undergraduate studies. While there he met Jim Campbell, who was one of the day students. Jim was later accepted for the seminary for the diocese despite some health concerns and they became classmates at St. Paul's Seminary. Ed would sometimes refer to our future vicar general as "Grandpa," because he had served in World War II and was older than the rest of them.

After ordination , Jim asked him once to go to the opera with him. Ed thought, “Opera?,” but as I said Ed was always up for anything. He went and enjoyed it so much he wound up getting season tickets to the Lyric Opera for the next 40 years.

Father Ed’s first assignment was at St. Mark’s Church here in Peoria. He was the third assistant to Father Fitzgerald and always used to claim he was a 65th birthday present to him from the bishop.

Father Fitz had his own ways of doing things and wasn’t too receptive to change. One of the ways Ed and Father Dale Maloy tried to loosen him up was pre-planning dinner conversations. They would begin arguing a theological point. (Ed would always take the liberal side and Father Maloy the conservative.) They would go at it until it seemed like they were coming to blows when Father Fitz would step in and be the reconciler. And they would thank him.

In addition to his one Sunday Mass each week he would teach in the school and coach basketball. Once while he was at St. Mary’s one of the classmates asked him what his day off was. When Ed said he didn’t get one, the classmate got irate until he learned of all the afternoons he went golfing with Fitz and the season tickets to Bradley’s basketball games.

After the Vatican Council, he helped Father Fitzgerald adjust to the changes. By the end of their 16 years together, he was the only assistant and took care of him till his death. Ed always retained a place in his heart for his heart for his first and only pastor. . Years later, when someone gave him a dog, he even named it “Fitz.”

In 1973 , he became pastor in Monticello and over the years served parishes in Streator, Pontiac, Lincoln, Atlanta, and Mason City. By then a bit of Father Fitz had rubbed off on him, because he was able to make the tough decisions that sometimes needed to be made. As a pastor, he succeeded because the Mass was the center of who he was as a priest and because he truly loved people.

Our gospel this morning was chosen because it reflects who Ed was. Two disciples are walking the seven miles from Jerusalem to Emmaus on the original Easter morning, trying to make sense of what had happened over the past three days. When Jesus meets up and walks with them, they have the marvelous opportunity to listen to him for the couple of hours needed to get there (although they are prevented from knowing who he is). When they arrive, he pretends he is going farther but is persuaded to stay and eat with them. It is not until he says the blessing and breaks the bread that their eyes are opened to his identity.

Many of our fondest memories of Father Ed are nice leisurely meals shared with him. Meals with plenty of time to listen to his stories and maybe get in a few of our own. But no matter how many stories you shared, you didn’t know him until you were able to pray with him at the Mass and see the faith that made him who he was.

Anyone who offers the Eucharist for others can’t help but be moved by it. It is the sign and the summit of the vocation a priest is called to. It is a living reminder, with each celebration, of our call to feed Christ’s sheep, with our lives in whatever ways we are able.

Our second reading from St. Paul was chosen because it was one of the ordination readings.

One of the great joys for Father Ed was watching his sister's family grow and becoming their "Uncle Eddie." How cool is it to have an uncle who is not only a priest but can fly you in his airplane? Over the years he baptized his nephews and nieces, officiated at their weddings, baptized their children. The picture on the program is of Ed and most of the great nephews and nieces he baptized. You were all loved by him and the subjects of many of his stories.

Having mentioned flying, I need to add that he was a longtime member of the Priest Pilots Association. He and Father Remm went to many of their conventions together, even after Ed didn't recertify his license after his heart surgery. He loved flying for its own sake rather than just to get from point to point. Having said that, he once flew the parents of a couple whose ceremony he was going to perform to the wedding when they weren't otherwise able to get there. Why weren't they able to get there? Because commercial flights weren't flying because of the weather.

You've got time for a few more stories, don't you? OK

Once while he was in Streator he had a priest assigned there to help with Hispanic ministry in the area. A Father Javier Cuevas showed up at his door with very limited English and asking for Padre Higgins. From that first afternoon of communicating mostly through sign language, Ed taught him enough English to get by and picked up some Spanish along the way. In their years together, Ed learned about Mexican culture and was enriched by it.

During his years in Pontiac he got to know Father Jonas Callahan, a longtime chaplain at Pontiac Corrections Center, and was inspired by his work at the prison. Father Callahan's descriptions of his work there, especially praying with inmates before their executions, had a profound effect upon him. They became golfing buddies and friends for life.

Years ago Father Ed helped Father Campbell get Beginning Experience started in our diocese. At one of the weekends for divorced and widowed he was wearing a name tag with "Fr. Ed" in big block letters. One of the participants missed the period and called him "Fred," and from that moment he was Fred to everyone on the weekend and for many weekends thereafter.

By now I hope you realize Ed was a priest's priest and a people person. You've heard of the six degrees of separation? That everyone on earth is connected to everyone else on earth by no more than six intermediaries? For Ed it was more like one degree of separation. He could walk up to a total stranger and after a while they would come up with someone they both knew. And then he could start into his stories about him or her.

Father Ed's last assignment was to Lincoln. He had been at Pontiac for 12 years and it was starting to look like the parish he would retire from. When he received a call from Msgr. Campbell that Bishop Myers wanted him to go to Lincoln, he asked for the weekend to think it over. But he knew as soon as he hung up that he would say "yes." He was a healing presence there for six years, even after he had passed retirement age and his Parkinson's disease was starting to manifest its early stages.

After leaving Lincoln, he still couldn't just sit around and so he helped Father LeClercq, with whom he had served at St. Mark's. He took up residence in Hennepin and served the people there for three years. By that time his voice was at times barely more than a whisper, but it proclaimed the Gospel in other ways. They and all the parishioners he served saw a priest whose life had become the service he could render to them. They understood the sacrifice of the Mass as clearly as if they had been able to witness Christ carrying his cross to Calvary.

The last priestly service that Msgr. Higgins offered was on the Friday before he died. One of his fellow residents at St. Clare's was a former parishioner at St. Mark's who was celebrating her 100th birthday and she insisted that Monsignor come to her party. It took all his effort, but with both hands he gave her a blessing.

We have gathered today to commend this man – Monsignor, Father Ed, Emmett, Fred, Padre Higgins, Uncle Eddie, or whoever he was to you –to our Father in

heaven. We are able to do so because of the faith he had in the resurrection – a faith he shared with so many people over the years. We ask that any sins he committed be forgiven because of his faith and the love with which he answered God's call.

I think that Ed would be pleased that his funeral is on Fat Tuesday. I hope all of you can join us in the pastoral center after Mass. I've tried to share as many stories as I could reasonably fit in, but there we'll have plenty of time to get to the rest of them.

I shouldn't do this because I will leave someone out, but I want to thank Julie Ensenberger, Angela Kenney, Jack and Ann, Patty and Ed's family, the staff at St. Clare's, his cousin Don, and all who visited him these past years for your care and being there for him. Your love and kindness was always appreciated by him and his maker. We will continue to be united to Father Ed each time we gather around the Lord's table and receive food for our journey.