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**VOLUME XLVIII**

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### **AN IDENTITY PROBLEM**

Yesterday, October 6th at 4 PM, Father Ed Murray graduated from his beloved 1947 Piper Super Cruiser to a new low maintenance set of gossamer wings. He was 66 years old and the youngest of Clare and Mary Murray's nine children and my youngest brother. He and I called each other "Murph". Bishop Nickless asked me yesterday why we called each other Murph. I suppose the answer is, it started as an identity problem. People who didn't know us very well would often come up to us and ask "Which Fr. Murray are you, Ed or Gene"? Back in the seventies Ed's solution was to grow a beard and for awhile he was called "Furry Murray" and I who was clean shaven was called "Clean Gene". But then, he shaved his beard. Often we would just play with the question of which one are you. We might answer, "He is the good

looking one, I'm the smart one or I'm the good golfer, he's the duffer." Sometimes it was irritating but most of the time we would joke about it with each other. I suppose it was only natural that people would confuse us. We were both Murrays, we were both priests, we both liked the same things, flying, fishing and flailing (golfing) and we liked being together. So it was no big mystery why people would confuse us. But how did that problem morph into the "Murph" moniker?

Early on in our priesthood, someone called me Father Murphy, I corrected him and said it was Murray not Murphy. Then his reply was, "Murray or Murphy it's all Irish isn't it?" I used to complain about that in a joking way with my priest friends. Sometime later my photo was displayed in the diocesan newspaper and I was identified as Father Eugene Murphy! One of my priest friends saw it, circled the picture in red and sent it to me for a joke. Ever after that I became known as "Big Murph" and Ed became known as "Little Murph". Rather than fight City Hall, we went with the flow and began calling each other just MURPH. I never minded being confused with my brother because his accomplishments were many and varied. He was a good priest and pastor who was well loved and respected by his brother priests and the people he served for the last 40 years. He was a teacher and an artist, a pretty fine golfer and a safe pilot. Best of all he never had an ego problem. If you are to have an identity

problem with someone, it was good to have one with Murph. When I remember him in prayer I will simply refer to him as Murph and let the Lord sort it out.

I am sure He knows well who I am talking about and that is really all that matters at this point. *Requiscat in pace.*

*Gene*

Gene



**UPCOMING EVENTS**

Midwest Regional Meeting

*Monday, April 26, 2010*

**Waterloo, Iowa**

National NAPP Meeting

*Tuesday, Wednesday July 6 & 7, 2010*

**Altus AFB, Altus Oklahoma**

In addition to Ed's death, Allen Corrigan, our 2009 NAPP host, informed me his father died a couple of weeks ago.



The above picture of Fr. Ed, taken at Oshkosh 3 years ago, was sent to me by his nephew Tom. Tom is an Associate Member in the motel business in West Des Moines, IA. He has been instrumental in arranging motel accommodations for our NAPP conventions the past few years.

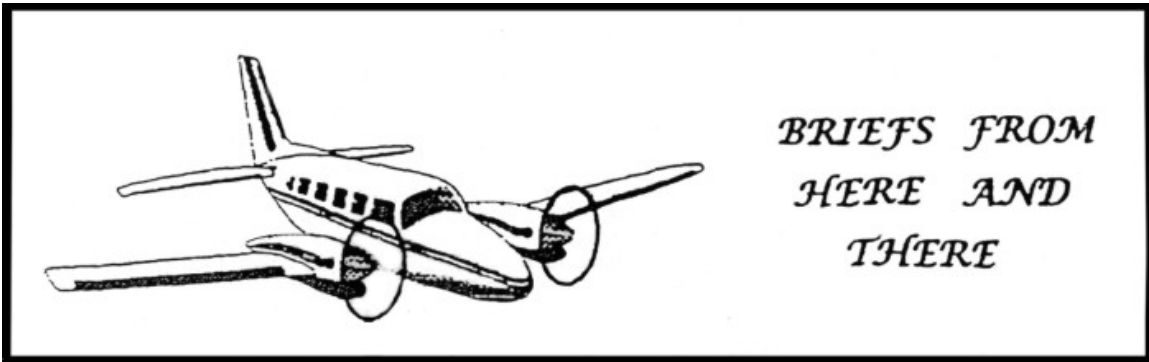
Thanks Tom for that wonderful service and an assurance of NAPP prayers for the Murray and Corrigan families.

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## **THE FLYING BISHOP**

*A boy's dream fulfilled; the Bishop is a "frequent flier"*

Fifty years ago, Bishop James C. Timlin accomplished a goal he had dreamed of since his boyhood days in North Scranton. He learned to fly a plane, received his pilot's license and took to the skies.

For as long as he can remember, flying and airplanes have fascinated the retired prelate. That interest goes back to his school days when he peddled his bicycle up the long and ever ascending Morgan Highway to reach the old Schutzville Airport where he could check-out the Pipers, Stinsons, Cessnas, Taylorcraft and other light aircraft that flew in and out of there every day and kibitz with the pilots.

"I was really enthralled with it," he reminisced one afternoon in early June at Scranton-Wilkes-Barre International Airport. He had just checked in from a short but demanding flight to Williamsport for a high school graduation and was preparing for a much longer one, to San Antonio.

During those bike journeys to Schutzville he often dreamed about learning to fly, but in those days such a fantasy was way out of reach for the son of a working class family.

### **TIME ALSO FLIES**

But, time does fly and before he realized it, his school days at Holy Rosary were at an end. College loomed. So did a decision on what he intended to do with his life.

Weighty matters. No matter, thoughts of the wild blue yonder still flickered in the far reaches of his young mind Someday maybe. Before he realized it, someday dawned.

Not long after being ordained in 1951 and becoming Father James Clifford Timlin, he managed the price of an airplane ride. After that there was no looking back. Flying proved beyond his wildest expectations.

He enrolled for lessons and pursued them diligently. Now his trips to Schutzville Airport were by car and he was there at every opportunity. In those days, you could rent a plane for \$5, so he was practicing his developing aviator skills at every chance he got.

By this time airport manager Harold Swank, who was also a Piper aircraft dealer, had become an old friend.

"So he always had newer planes," Bishop Timlin remembered.

Around that same time the future prelate crossed paths with three fellow priests and one of their brothers, aviators all. Between them they scraped together \$1,900 to buy their own plane. "It was a tail-dragger," the bishop said, "you know, one of those old ones that had a single rear wheel, right under the tail."

Still, it served the purpose, allowing them to fly frequently to hone their skills in the sky. One day they spotted a Piper Tri-Pacer on sale for \$3,500. They sold their first plane, bought the newer model and based it at Wyoming Valley Airport in Fort Forty for \$25 a month.

Countless flights and thousands of miles later, life took the five down separate paths. For the first time in his flying life, Father Timlin was without companions to share the skies...and the expense of a plane.

## **A BARGAIN COMES THEIR WAY**

It was back to renting until 1990 when a bargain too good to refuse came his way – a 1960 yellow and white Beechcraft Debonair four-seater with retractable landing gear, prop pitch, the works. He bought it and has been flying it ever since.



“A lot of people think I’m flying a jet and even have flight attendants,” he laughed. “This is not exactly top of the line, but it was a good bargain. Its top speed is 180 miles an hour ... I’ve been all over the place ... just get in and go ... Mostly to meetings on church business ... Canada, Florida, California, New Mexico ... Sometimes solo, sometimes passengers.”

Although the plane has four seats, there is a weight limit of 730 pounds. “So if you get four 200-pound guys aboard, you’re already overweight,” the bishop said with a smile.

## **A PILOT IS NEVER ALONE**

No matter the number of occupants, pilots and their passengers are never alone. Air traffic controllers keep vigilant track, through every mile of the flight, from start to finish, staying in voice contact frequently and never losing sight on the radar screen.

“They take good care of me,” he said. “They don’t know me but they know my

name, my flight plan, my plane’s name and number.”

Keeping air traffic under surveillance is just a small part of the FAA’s stringent program to insure the safety of those who venture into the skies and their planes, from the largest jetliner to the smallest two-seater.

Every two years the bishop, like all other private pilots, must undergo a rigorous physical by FAA doctors, top to bottom. Nothing is left to chance. Flying skills, too, are subjected to regular scrutiny by the government agency. Flight tests are mandated every two years to make sure the pilot and the Beechcraft are still airworthy. One glitch and they’re grounded.

Besides all of the mandated test and re-tests, pilots themselves constantly practice their skills, especially really crucial tasks like instrument landings and stalling.

## **INSTRUMENT LANDINGS**

An aviator must successfully complete six instrument landings every six months so they can keep their instrument rating that enables them to fly during poor weather. Just a week before this interview, Bishop Timlin completed two while on his round trip flight to Williamsport.

“The weather was very nasty,” he said, “and you have to know what you’re doing. You don’t get a second chance.”

Bishop Timlin usually makes it a habit not to stay in the air any longer than two hours at a clip, landing at regular intervals to stretch his legs and check out the plane. He does a “walk around” the plane to make sure there is no damage or other problems with the exterior.

“Never rely on anyone to do it for you,” he said in explaining the self check procedure.

He also keeps a close watch on the fuel gauge. “You never let it get down too far.”

His plane has a fuel capacity of 80 gallons and uses about 15 an hour.

When it comes to airports, the bishop usually looks for large, metropolitan ones.

“The large ones usually have every thing you might need – fuel, food, mechanical help if you need it. And, you can

usually find a ride back and forth to the town if you need one.”

## A MEMORABLE FLIGHT

Among his memorable flights is one that occurred in April 2008 when Pope Benedict visited the United States.

The Bishop’s first stop was Washington where he helped welcome the Holy Father. A little later that day he flew from Dulles International to Lancaster for a Confirmation.

The next day, he flew into New York’s La Guardia Airport – landing on instruments due to bad weather – so he could concelebrate with the Pontiff at Yankee Stadium. A few hours later the Beechcraft was safe and sound inside the hangar at First Flight in Avoca.

Planning a flight is done far in advance, mapping out the route, take offs and landings.

For his flight to San Antonio, the first leg took him to Pittsburgh. Then there were stops at Cincinnati, Memphis and Shreveport, La. before he reached the city famed as the site of the Alamo.

Though the Beechcraft is like David among Goliaths at the large airports and La Guardia, the bishop doesn’t let that bother him.

“The controllers treat us all pretty much as equals, though sometimes the small planes have to yield to the big boys, like the time the Beechcraft was number 32 on the waiting list.

“You don’t waste much fuel waiting like that. It’s mostly idling, but that’s one of the reasons I like to keep a frequent check on the fuel.”

Besides, before he knows it those magic words will sound in his headset:

“Cleared for takeoff.”

*The above is from GOOD TIMES FOR SENIORS, Scranton, PA. Knobby Walsh forwarded it to me after a friend sent him a copy)*

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**Editor’s Note:** I think you will find the above interview with Pat very interesting. A Caveat!! When you click the **violet colored Click here** above a message will appear that says **CTRL + click to follow link**. When you do that the AV Web page will come up. Scroll down on that and an icon for sound appears. (It looks some what like a mega phone. Click on that). That should bring up the 16 minute interview with Pat.

Enjoy the experiences of a fellow NAPPER.

## MIDWEST REGIONAL GATHERING

On Monday, September 28, Bob Lacey hosted the Midwest Regional gathering in Yankton, South Dakota. The eight NAPP members in attendance were Al Werth and John Wolesky from Kansas; Ev and Mel Hemann, Gene Murray, Jim Kiernan and John Vakulskas from Iowa and host Bob Lacey from South Dakota. When all had arrived at the airport Bob led everyone on a visit/tour of his parish, Sacred Heart Church. A noon luncheon followed at a local restaurant.

A short drive ended at the Freeman Company, the tour lined up for the afternoon. With the able assistance of a secretary, Doris, our guide gave a brief history of the Freeman Company. We were all beginning to wonder why he just didn't have Doris conduct the tour. About that time he said, "We are now coming to early 2001 and that is when I, Jim, came on the scene. It was then I, Jim Ritter, bought the company." What followed in the next 2 and a half hours we all agreed was one of the most fascinating tours we'd ever been part of. Jim has a varied past in the corporate world. He worked for several aircraft engine manufacturers, manufacturers involved in missile production and other aspects of space technology. In the Spring of 2001 he purchased Freeman Co. The company manufactures aircraft parts. Boeing is one of his major contractors. Every Boeing in the air has parts manufactured by the Freeman Co. The plant specializes in three different components and we received a very thorough demonstration and explanation of the high quality control demanded of each component manufactured. It wasn't until the end when Jim responded to a question about the high security level that he informed us that most of our military aircraft also have parts manufactured by the Freeman Company.

Thanks Bob and Jim for a very informative and pleasurable afternoon.

## ODDS AND ENDS

1. John Costello, SJ from Chicago registered Loyola Jesuit scholastic Cyril Pinchak. Cyril is a private pilot from Cleveland. Cyril, welcome to the NAPP family.
2. Ev and I will host next Spring's Midwest Regional meeting in Waterloo, Iowa on April 26. The major attraction for the day will be a self-conducted tour of the new interactive "The Sullivan Veterans Museum." The museum features exhibits on wars dating back to the Civil War and all conflicts since. The centerpiece of the new multi million dollar museum focuses on the Five Sullivan Brothers. The five brothers from St. Mary Parish in Waterloo were on the USS Juneau and lost their lives on November 13, 1942 when the ship blew up in a battle off Guadalcanal. One of the brothers was married. We will try to have granddaughter Kelly Sullivan Loughren, speak to us at the end of the tour. Put it on the calendar.

### 3. *From Nick Rossello in Lockport, NY*

Just a few lines to say "Hi" to you and our members. Sorry I didn't make the last convention. Just wasn't up to driving that far.

I turned 80 this August. Now I belong to the "octogenarians" as my uncle welcomed me to the group. How about that?

Presently I'm recuperating from lumbar spinal surgery. I do just fine but I'm uncomfortable - but progressing.

Enclosed my dues - \$25 - for membership. Do hope all is well with family and friends. It sure sounds like you've been busy.

Thanks for keeping our NAPP group together.

Yours in Christ,

Nick Rossello

# **GUIDELINES**

## **NAPP DUES PAYMENT**

Depending on how you get this, hard copy or the electronic version, the NAPP dues reminder notification is on the other side of this page or the next one on your computer screen. Our fiscal year began on July 1 so we are now in year 2010

*If you have already paid your dues I will note that in the envelope with your October issue of the NAPP newsletter.*

If you have paid your dues and receive the NAPP newsletter on line you will find a message attached to the notification that the newsletter is on line indicating you have **already paid** your dues.

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