

N.A.P.P.

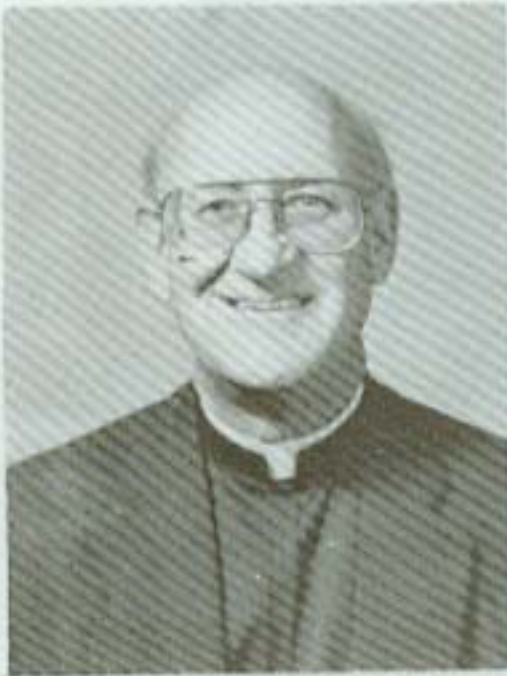


VOLUME XXV

DECEMBER

1987

THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Dear Brothers and Sisters NAPPers and FOPPers)

I hope this letter finds you well as we enter the season of the celebration of Christ's birth. This is a wonderful time in the best sense of the word, a time filled with wonder, wonder that the Creator of the universe would become one of us, but He has! And He called many of us to serve Him as priests.

Both as priests and as pilots we can identify with the Holy Family as they made their way to Bethlehem. It was an adventure. There were some risks involved. They needed a place to stay, just as we need a place to land. They had to accept an alternative when there was no room in the inn. Sometimes we do too, especially if the weather is not hospitable.

Speaking of room in the inn, there is an article in the current LIGUORIAN about a program in St. Louis which provides shelter in church facilities for the homeless. The same type program began in our city last year and is growing. It is a good opportunity for people of all faiths to work together.

A bit of nostalgia -- I and an associate had the pleasure of celebrating Mass with Father Ed Malloy, CSC, after the Alabama-Notre Dame game recently. In his homily, Dr. Malloy recalled his exhilaration on making his first unassisted ride on a bicycle as a boy. I could not help but recall a similar exhilaration in my first solo flight, which took place many years ago in South Bend. It was the greatest thrill of my life -- until the day of ordination.

God bless you all,

Bill

Bill Bevington



1. You will find enclosed with this newsletter the annual renewal envelope. At last July's annual meeting the membership voted to increase our annual dues from \$10 U.S. to \$15. Since this is the first increase in 25 years it would appear that NAPP has done a pretty good job of being fiscally responsible.

Needless to say the prompt return of your dues envelope will be most appreciated. REMEMBER!!! It's 15 bucks now!!!

2. Pres. Bill Bevington and I have talked about having a special 25th anniversary directory made up this year. It has been the custom to put out the directory in April each year. Every other year we made it a pictorial directory. So I am coming begging again for that.

A few years ago the printer told me the pictures we were using had seen their better days and disposed of them. A few sent me new pictures the last time ... a very few. For this very special occasion would it be possible for you to include a picture of yourself? With the technological advances made it is no longer necessary that they be black or white. Just send in a picture. We'll take it from there. Polaroid or whatever. Just send it with your \$15 dues.

One of the things I hope to do is go back through the 25 years of NAPP and have a special memento for those members who have passed on during these years.

3. The 1988 July convention should be a very special one and all of hope that as many of you will be there to join in the stories of these past 25 years and also help to spring NAPP into the next 25.

4. I think you will find the BRIEFS section interesting this time. I have taken the liberty of taking an article from the AOPA newsletter on Fr. Leo McGee. I thought for a long time I was the only ATP among the padres. It's good to know I'm not alone. Following that I have Leo's letter to me. (Incidentally, he is our latest new member).

Because of this article by Max Karant I have written to Max and told him a little bit about NAPP and our 25th convention in July. Maybe that will get us a mention of some sort and bring our existence to the attention of others.

We also extend our congratulations to one of our members who moved from the ranks of seminarian to priest. His letter is also in the BRIEFS.

While we gained one priest another went on to his eternal reward. The envelope in which Aloysius Sinsky's newsletter was mailed the last time came back with the following written on it. Expired 9-3-87. Now deceased! Please remove his name from your records.

I don't know any more but presumably it must have been from natural causes. If he had died in a plane crash it certainly would have made the news. Incidentally, his last address was Lemont, Illinois.

From John E. Bellon, C.S.S.R., Midland, Michigan:

Ray surprised me with a short visit on 14 November to this area. He was with a friend who is the father of one of our Redemptorist - the man of the left - lives in Detroit.

The man on the right is Father Zygmunt Gai (pronounced GUY). Ray and Zygmunt were at Dachau prison camp during the war - liberated in 1945 - was the last time they saw each other until 42 years later in Bay City, Michigan where Gai is retired from Gavlord diocese.

You can imagine what memories this meeting brought back and the people they both knew and some that are still living.

I thought this would be an item for NAPP news.

I most likely will be driving to Kentucky since Dick is not certain as yet. He is having Associate problems - the lack of them that is and may have difficulty in getting away.

Hi to all. As ever in Christ.

John E. Bellon
C.S.S.R.



Fr. Ray Radzieta, NAPP

Mr. Broniak

Fr. Zygmunt Gai

briefs from here and there

This letter, dated 15 September, 1987, comes from Pat Patten in Arusha, Tanzania.

Hi Mel!

Just received the February '87 MAPP Newsletter today. Typical lag for surface mail to these parts.

Hope you are well. The NFFT Experience brochure was a nice enclosure. I remembered your talking about the program when you came to visit me several years ago. It looks good. The problems of single people here in East Africa are somewhat different from those encountered in the States. Still, it would be very interesting to see what kind of impact such a weekend would have in a cross-cultural setting. There has been some success here in AA, Marriage Encounter, and the like. And the need is certainly there. While I can't come up with basic requisites of covering Teams transportation costs, I would be interested in talking more with you about it whenever I manage to get back to the States.

I have a horrible cold on a nice warm African day. And to the surprise of many people in this area, I have lost my voice for the last two days! A good chance to catch up on some desk work. This morning, I was barely able to make myself understood on the radiocall. And of all days for it to happen, there was an emergency call. I was asked to evacuate a Maasai warrior who was badly injured by a lion some 70 miles from here. As you know, Arusha airport is in the terminal control area of Kilimanjaro International Airport. While there are rarely more than ten flights thru this area each day, I have to call on take off and before landing. Made for very interesting conversation this morning. Fortunately the controller knows me well, and there was no problem in the end.

The warrior was protecting his cattle when the lion attacked. He killed the lion with his spear. But the lion managed to almost tear off the warrior's left ear and cheek with a swipe of a paw, and did some pretty bad damage to the ribs and left leg before she died.

Our new aircraft, N70807, another very well equipped 1973 Cessna 206, has been in full operation since February of this year after the crash of N60243 in August 1986. It's overworked; and we're hoping to add a second plane to the Flying Medical Service next year.

You may remember from a previous letter that when the former plane crashed, the Bishop of Arusha, the oldest priest of the Diocese, the Religious Superior of the Medical Missionaries of Mary for Tanzania, and a former and pioneering Missionary to the Maasi were on board. This latest mentioned person is a priest in his mid-eighties who had come back to visit. On his return flight back to England several weeks after the accident (he was unhurt) he had to make a connection in Brussels. When they saw that he was a priest, the counter people seated him next to a European Bishop on the same flight. When he sat down and greeted the Bishop, he said -- in his typically English humor - "I don't know about this seating arrangement. The last time I sat next to a Bishop the plane crashed."

Mel, all the best. Hope you enjoyed your summer.

Pat

From Rev. Michael J. Kloton, St. Boniface Church, Williamsport, PA.

Just a short note to let you know of a few changes in my life recently. I was ordained on September 5 for the Scranton Diocese. Bishop Timlin - also a member of the MAPP - has stationed me here in Williamsport, PA. as Assistant at St. Boniface Parish and Chaplain at Divine Providence Hospital. Williamsport is not only the Little League Capitol of the world, but also is in Lycoming County - Lycoming engine.

Hope all is well with the MAPP. Looking forward to continued mailings.

Rev. Michael J. Kloton

From St. Mary's Church, Snow Shoe, PA. November 10, 1987

Dear Mel,

As of September 15 of this year I have a new address: I am now Pastor of St. Mary's Church in Snow Shoe, Pennsylvania. (Yes, the name is for the Snow Shoe rabbit, but it's also doing the other kind of snowing here right now too!). Please change the address on the newsletter so I can keep in touch. We haven't met yet, I hope to remedy this at sometime in the future. Happy flying, and best regards!

In His Peace,

Joe

Rev. Joseph W. Fleming
P.O. Box 20, R.D. 1
Snow Shoe, PA 16874

ALMOST FORGOT

Please fill out the data sheet on the informational brochure. We will use that information on the special SILVER JUBILEE Directory next Spring.

Thanks for your prompt attention

The Wayflyer by Max Karant AOPA 18

What's a Catholic priest doing with an Air Transport Pilot rating?

I'd flown up to North Philadelphia airport to interview Father Leo McGee at the St. John Neumann Nursing Home in Philadelphia where he's chaplain. I was just going to interview a personable Catholic priest who liked to fly. Instead, here I was with a man of the cloth who had taken on the appearance of a Superman. An ATP, lots of hours, and he was taking the sting out of my reputation as an acupuncture interviewer.

The nursing home sits right on the edge of North Philadelphia Airport, and Father McGee's Mooney is parked just outside.

I've known Father McGee for many years, but I didn't know about his impressive aviation credentials until I cornered him for this "Wayflyer" interview. I'd asked him something about how difficult was it for him to get his private license. He grinned, then reached in his pocket.

"I'm glad you asked," he said, handing me his wallet with the pilot's license in the front window. "I think I may be the only priest in the world who has this ATP, and I'm also type-rated in a Martin 202 and 404."

"Come on, Padre, how did all this come about?" I now was baffled.

He considers Bill Whitesell the fountainhead of his aviation career. He met Bill at just about the time Whitesell started the Flying W Ranch at Medford, N.J.

"Meeting Bill was one of the most fortuitous happenings in my life," Father McGee says. "We hit it off. We became very close friends. It was through Bill that I was exposed to the broader aspects of aviation. I decided 'why not go on?'"

So he kept pushing. He didn't have the money for a formal training course, but he knew a lot of professionals, and they helped him dispel a lot of myths we all have.

"The first time I got into an Aztec I thought it was the biggest plane in the world. Now I can get into a 747 and feel quite comfortable. I used to think of a commercial license as a huge step up the ladder. But now I don't."

"Of course not, now that you have your ATP," I commented. "I reacted similarly when I got my instrument and multi-engine ratings. It's a form of snobbery."

"How much time have you built up?"

"About 4,000 hours. I don't fly

as much as I used to, but I still fly to visit friends or family in Washington, Baltimore, Binghamton, Tucson, and Wichita. I manage to keep my hand in. I make it a mandatory point to fly my Mooney once a week, in self-defense. I've found over the years that if you do make it a point to fly the plane once a week, nothing breaks. If you don't do that, something breaks, and it usually costs more to fix the break than it does to fly the plane."

"I was part owner of two Tri-Pacers, and had to sell my interest in both of them because I couldn't afford them. I went without a plane for



Father Leo McGee

a couple of years and finally couldn't resist it any longer; I bought a used Bonanza."

"How long did you have that?"

"About three or four years, and then I had to sell it, too. Again, I was deprived, until about 1970, when I bought my Mooney 20."

"What does a chaplain do with an airplane?"

"I use it for personal travel."

"I don't know how many hundreds of young people I've taken for their first plane rides. They included fascinated kids from my parish in Coaldale, Pa., my first assignment after being ordained in 1957. Then I was transferred to the Cardinal Dougherty High School in Philadelphia, where I taught for 22 years. Lots of those kids flew with me."

"Just the other day I was at North Philadelphia Airport when a corporate Navajo landed, taxied up, and stopped. The pilot climbed out."

"Are you Father McGee?"

"Yes. I am."

"I thought I recognized you. You took me for my first airplane ride in 1958, and I've been flying ever since."

"On another occasion," the priest reminisced, "I got a phone call out of the blue. That was about six months ago. 'You probably don't remember me,' the man said. 'I'm now a captain for Piedmont. I was coming in to Philadelphia International one day not long ago and ATC gave me a hold out over New Jersey. We circled for some time. I told my co-pilot that Father McGee took me for my first plane ride there in the 60s. After I got home in Norfolk, I told my wife about it, and she wondered what ever had happened to you. I promised her I'd find out. And Father, I spent two days on the phone before I located you. I just wanted to call and say hello.'"

"Did you do your earliest flying at the Flying W?" I asked the Padre.

"No, I started flying at Wings Field in Ambler, Pa. Then, when I got to Coaldale I found the little 1,200-foot grass strip at Lehighton. It's since been closed, but that's where I got my license in December 1957."

"How much IFR flying do you do?"

"I'll file IFR just to stay current, but usually not for a local flight, and my benevolent government has used its various methods to force me to equip my plane with a number of goodies, so I might as well use them."

"But I will not fly thunderstorms or ice, and pilots who do by trusting to blind luck are crazy."

"I've found that the majority of controllers in the centers and approach-control facilities seem to assume everyone is in the airliner category and has radar. When I come along and don't have radar, they don't always give me a lot of the help they could."

"I was flying home from Daytona Beach IFR one day, in the clear. But up ahead was this towering thunderstorm. I heard all the other planes on the frequency getting diversions, and describing the storm. But naively I said nothing. Shortly, I was on solid instruments and as I approached Wilmington, N.C., the radar controller vectored me right into the storm. About one minute into the storm I yelled into the mike, 'get me out of this damned storm right now.' He did, apologizing profusely."

Forgive him, Lord!

ST. JOHN NEUMANN NURSING HOME

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November 22, 1987

Dear Mel,

Received your very kind letter. Max always did exaggerate a bit. We've been friends over the years and I agreed to the interview only because I really appreciate all Max and AOPA have done for us over many difficult years.

Thank you for the invitation to join the NAPP and my application is enclosed. Vaguely I recall hearing of the association years ago, but there aren't many of us back East. Especially in the Philadelphia area. You know when the history of our archdiocese is finally written, it will be published in three volumes: vol. I will be entitled, "It Probably Won't Work Anyway," vol. II will be, "It's Never Been Done Before," and vol. III will be, "What Will People Say." Other than that, it's a great place!

Looking forward to your newsletter and perhaps the good fortune to meet your people one day. I do get around a bit. Matter of fact, your letter came while I was in Florida. I ferried the Mooney down to Fort Lauderdale last week to have the fuel tanks modified to carry 36 more gallons. When it's done, I'll have better than 8 hours range. I have a sister in Santa Monica who is long overdue for a visit. When and if, I'll plan a visit also in Iowa. Last time I was there was in 1971. I stayed overnight in Des Moines on my way back from Victoria, B.C. in a Bonanza.

If you ever get to Philly, please get in touch. I'm right across the street from Northeast Phila. airport. Keep me in your good prayers.

In Christ,



P.S. I've received letters since the article was published from Father Alvin Werth in Oakley, Kansas and from Father Frank Nemmers in Carroll, Iowa. Also, please remember my Mom in your prayers. It was her Mooney.

MERRY

CHRISTMAS

HAPPY NEW

YEAR TO ALL