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## NAPP featured on CatholicTV Network

Fr. Mel Hemann, one of the charter members of the National Association of Priest Pilots, was interviewed on the CatholicTV Network on October 9. The network did the interview via computer, with Mel appearing from his residence in Florida.

Talking with Mel from the set of the “This is the Day” program in suburban Boston were Bishop Robert Reed and senior producer Kevin Nelson.

[The interview with Mel can be seen at this link.](#)

To watch the full 30-minute program, which included other topics, click here: <http://www.catholicTV.org/shows/this-is-the-day/priest-pilots-ignatius-press>

NAPP member Fr. Ed Moran was contacted this summer by a staff person at the network who read his article in the newsletter about how a priest became a Certified Flight Instructor.

Mel was the longtime editor of the newsletter and continues to be the go-to resource for information about the history of NAPP, so it was fortunate that he was available to do the interview with CatholicTV.

During the conversation, it came out that Mel is celebrating his 90<sup>th</sup> birthday on October 15. Happy birthday and God’s blessings to you, Mel!



## Report from Tanzania: The story of Catherine and the Flying Medical Service

*Flying Medical Service is a non-profit, volunteer organization in Tanzania, East Africa. It provides preventative, curative and health-related education services. It also provides medical air transport. NAPP provides financial support for the organization. Fr. Pat Patten, an NAPP member, provided this update in September.*

Catherine was 29 years old when she died of cancer only a few weeks ago. I first met her when she came to our technical training school for physically handicapped adults. She was 23. She was paralyzed from the waist down and wheelchair bound; but no one could find the cause of the paralysis.

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# Flying Medical Service provides vocational training, medical air transport

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She was an excellent tailoring student. She was voted head of the women students at our center. All seemed to be going well for the first six months of our 18-month program till Catherine noticed she was starting to have a hard time breathing. Arusha, the nearest city to us, and with a million inhabitants, had just gotten its first CAT scanner. When we took Catherine there, they found four grapefruit-sized masses on her spine: three pressing on her lungs, and the fourth one, at the base of her spine, the cause of her paralysis.

She was inoperable anywhere here in Tanzania, a country of 55 million people and no neurosurgeon.

I flew her 140 miles north to Nairobi in our neighboring country of Kenya. We flew with Brian, a new Flying Medical Service pilot who was doing local training with us before being released on his own. The neurosurgeon at Kijabe mission hospital took a unit of blood from Brian and one from me and started a nine-hour surgery on Catherine. All four masses were cancerous with numerous metastases. He gave her three to six months to live, but said that at least she would be able to breathe easier. Here is her photo several months after surgery.



Instead of the forecast three to six months, Catherine lived for six more years. Two years ago, she started taking morphine for the pain. But she often didn't need it. She started her own tailoring school and taught both able-bodied and handicapped students of her own. A few months ago, she brought some of them to visit, and she gave me a blanket. You can see in the next photo (upper right), perhaps, that she looks more tired.

We have 32 students like Catherine now living here with us, all with one or more handicaps. Each student chooses one area of study: carpentry, masonry, tailoring, or a combination of agriculture and veterinary. At the end of their 18-month hands-on training, they receive all the tools they need to do the trade of their choice. They return to their villages where we visit them twice a year for three years to encourage them, an-



swer questions and help them get started in a trade that will make them self-supporting.

Olkokola Vocational Training Centre is part of what happens where we Flying Medical Service pilots live. We also have a small but quite busy dispensary for meeting the needs of the handicapped students and the local rural population. We do this in addition to our flying. This year, we will probably examine, treat, and vaccinate more than 25,000 patients, putting 50 hours each month on each of our Cessna U206Fs. A photo of one of our clinics is shown below.

We are most grateful, NAPP members, for your interest and consistent support over the years.

## Pat Patten and Crew

P.O. Box 508, Arusha, Tanzania, East Africa

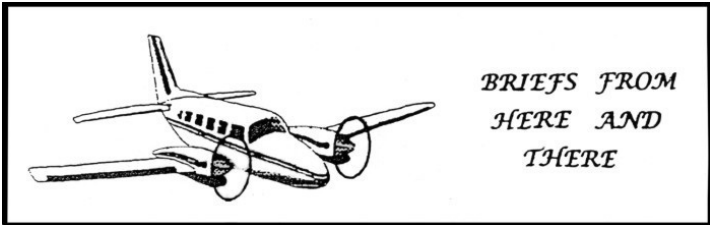
[www.flyingmedicalservice.org](http://www.flyingmedicalservice.org)

[fms@fms.or.tz](mailto:fms@fms.or.tz)

+255-759367367







**2019 NAPP Convention in Sioux Falls**

Save the dates for the 2019 NAPP Convention, which will be July 9-10 in Sioux Falls, South Dakota ([KFSD](#)).

Our host will be Fr. Bob Lacey. Plans include a tour of Earth Resources Observation and Science ([EROS](#)). Stay tuned for further details.

**Northeast Ohio Catholic features NAPP member**

The September/October edition of the Northeast Ohio Catholic magazine has two articles of interest.

Fr. Allen Corrigan, NAPP Secretary and host of the 2018 NAPP Convention, is featured on page 20. The article explores how Fr. Allen became interested in aviation and eventually became a private pilot. He also provides an overview of NAPP and how it supports the use of aviation for ministry-related work.

On page 12, there is an article about Cindy Farrell, who donated a portion of her liver for a young girl who was seriously ill. Cindy is a member of St. Victor Parish in Richfield, Ohio, where Fr. Allen is pastor.

The magazine can be viewed at:

<https://www.dioceseofcleveland.org/northeastohiocatholic/>

**Prayers for George Gratton:** He sent a note in early October to some NAPP friends and followed up with his permission to post an update in the newsletter.

“As per my previous message, I did become quite sick at Crazy Horse, ending up in a clinic in Storm Lake, Iowa. Upon arrival in Iowa, Irene and I were greeted by all kinds of kindness, offers of help, invitations and referrals to get the medical help needed. We will always be thankful to the Murrays, “Doc” Barber, Msgr. John Hemann, and the great folks (and medical facilities) in Iowa. I am now in Savannah and getting better. Yesterday was my first day with glucose levels in normal ranges. My vision has cleared up, registering 20/20 uncorrected. Excellent for an old guy. One more appointment next week and I expect to return to flight-ready status. Share with one and all, but especially share our THANKS!”

**Coming in the December issue:** Fr. Gene Murray writes about a trip last April from Arizona to Iowa in a Champ and a Pacer. His nephew, Dave McKenna, purchased a 7AC Champ and asked Gene to fly out in a Piper Pacer to retrieve the Champ

*Please send newsletter articles, notes and photos to: Tom Enwright, [napp.editor@gmail.com](mailto:napp.editor@gmail.com); 419 Chestnut St., Sauk City, WI 53583*

**Deadline for the December edition: November 30.**



*“It is with paternal satisfaction that the Holy Father views the efforts of the members of the National Association of Priest Pilots to encourage the use of air transportation to obtain ever more abundant spiritual fruits from their sacerdotal ministry and missionary apostolate.”*

*The Vatican, September 29, 1964*

**Your dues support the work of NAPP**

**NAPP Dues – U.S. \$25.00**  
**2019 fiscal year began July 1, 2018**

*Use this form to send your dues or use PayPal (go to [www.priestpilots.org](http://www.priestpilots.org) and click on PayPal).*

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Member:  Charter  Regular  Associate

**Mail to: Msgr. John Hemann, 481 N. Shore Dr., Apt. 301, Clear Lake, IA 50428-1368**

# Weather dampens turnout for Midwest Regional; spring meeting will come back to Missouri

*Msgr. John Hemann provided this report from the Midwest Fall Regional Meeting on October 1:*

Fr. John Schmitz hosted the gathering at his church, [St. Patrick](#), and the [National Shrine of Mary, Mother of the Church](#) in Laurie, Missouri. Nine reservations had been received and parish volunteers were in support of the gathering.

The WEATHER did not cooperate. John Hemann arrived by car and all others had to cancel (pilots make GOOD DECISIONS).

Our group of two priest pilots and the volunteers (three of whom are pilots) enjoyed the day.

**The meeting was a success:** John Schmitz and John Hemann decided to schedule the Midwest Spring Regional Meeting on **Monday, April 29, 2019**. Same place; same agenda; same support volunteers and we'll discuss final plans for the July 2019 NAPP Convention in Sioux Falls, South Dakota.

Put it on your calendar and



hopefully we'll see each other in Laurie, Missouri, in April.

**Notes from Fr. Schmitz:** *Helping with arrangements for the day were Jim Stoltz, Kevin Owen, Jim Gerke, Joe Brown, Bill Paul and Bob Raeth.*

*Msgr. John Hemann is pointing to the Mothers' Shrine on the grounds of St. Patrick Church.*

*Jim helped with the planning; Bill provided the tri-ton ride on the Lake of the Ozarks and was our pilot; Bill and his wife made us lunch; Joe took photos; Kevin offered us a look at his Piper Seneca at (KOZS) Camdenton airport.*





# CFI Corner: When is it time to stop flying solo?

By Fr. Ed Moran, CFI, CFII, AGI, AGII

*“As a CFI, when do you think that I should hang up flying?”*



This question got asked by two of our members at Medina last July. It’s a question that haunts all aviators sooner or later. As we all well know, there are serious consequences in the cockpit with single-pilot operations when we start to realize that we are not as fast or as accurate as we used to be.

We all know only too well the encroaching truth that age has a big effect on flying. We know from physiological studies and personal experience that fatigue, reaction time, spatial orientation, situational awareness and even “potty breaks” change as we get older. Of course, all these effects are certainly mitigated when flying with another pilot. But for the sake of this article, I am considering single-pilot operations in approaching the question of when to cease personally piloting an airplane.

Add to the effects of age, the arrival of the “latest-greatest” new digital technology and the need to stay current in its use, the added stress of operating in congested airspace, changing Federal Air Regulations, as well as the burgeoning cost of operating, maintaining and insuring an aircraft. With these factors, the cessation of flying sooner or later starts looking more “sooner” than “later.”

One way of assessing cessation comes from what we derive from those flight safety courses or biennial flight reviews that give us benchmarks of personal proficiency. In them, we learn about always knowing and updating our *personal flight safety margins*. While crucial for IFR flight planning especially regarding minimums at the time of approach, they are also important for VFR operations. Keeping track of these gives a true understanding concerning skills that can be sharpened with practice and the deterioration of the underlying faculties that impose real limitations.

A good example of this can be seen in short-term memory. I can remember the days when ATC had to give me an IFR clearance only once. I usually had it planned, written down and ready to take down and readily absorb any deviations from what I filed. Clearance changes in flight got written down with instrument adjustments happening right away. Decades later, I notice more lag time and the crucial need to write down everything ATC says so I do not forget amid all the other duties of cockpit management.

Flight physicals are another way of estimating the capacities of underlying faculties. Aviation doctors are sensitive to the effects of age on stress management, blood pressure, eyesight, muscular response reflexes, hearing and even mood changes. Worse, we all have that psychological tendency with age to want to live in that “houseboat in Cairo.” You know the one. It’s anchored in “de-Nile.” But age happens to us all. It’s God’s way of getting us ready to “go home.”

Here is a bottom-line tool for assessment. If after proficiency training for updating currency you are still having problems staying ahead of the aircraft in flight, take a serious look at learning how to buddy-fly or stop.

The truly great feature of NAPP is that we have a supportive community of active and retired pilots who derive great personal benefit out of just getting together as priests and associates to share our experiences about flying, even though we might not be doing as much of it as we used to do. Changes in life always go better in sharing with others instead of going it alone. Friendships for priests are very crucial for any stage of life for good emotional development where activities can be shared and safety stories retold. We even learn the rare and frequently missing characteristic in the male species of learning how to laugh at ourselves, grow in humility while going from being young “bold” pilots to “old” pilots who survived the “perils of youth.”

*Remember to send me your questions at [morane13@gmail.com](mailto:moranec13@gmail.com).*

## NAPP Executive Team

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