

N.A.P.P.



Volume 58

April 2022

No. 5

President's column:

Lent is a time for spiritual inspection and healing

By Fr. Joe McCaffrey
NAPP President

In January, N1986Q went in for its annual inspection. I noticed an oil leak over the summer, but couldn't



figure out its source. After a flight, I would find oil on the back and belly of the engine.

Sometimes it would even drip down onto the nose wheel. I asked the mechanics to see what they could figure out. Unfortunately, they gave the plane back to me and basically shrugged their shoulders!

Within four hours of flying after the annual, I was already down a quart of oil! This thing was getting worse and I had to find out where it was coming from.

The culprit was a prop seal. Thank God we finally fixed this annoying and potentially dangerous nuisance leak!

As I write this article, we are in the holy season of Lent and when this article is published, we will be celebrating the highest holy days of the year. In my prayerful reflection, this annoying oil leak reminds me of my own spiritual imperfections. We know they're there and we also know if we don't do something about them, they will only get worse. It dawned on me that Lent is like our annual aircraft inspection. It's



time to examine our defects or sins. We can't ignore them any longer. We must face them head-on and work for a cure so that something worse doesn't overtake us.

Finding a good aircraft mechanic is a challenge these days but perhaps a greater challenge is to find an excellent priest or spiritual director – someone who can help us discover where the leak or "sin" is coming from and how best to fix it.

I complained about that oil leak to a number of my flying buddies and even mechanics. They all said that "a little bit of oil can make a big mess." I was probably being "paranoid. Every engine leaks a little oil. It's no big deal." But there was

something in my gut that told me this is not good, and I don't want it to get worse when I am on a trip and I end up losing my engine!

In the end, my instinct was correct and I'm grateful that the problem is finally solved.

I'm glad I didn't listen to those voices that told me to

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Reminder to sign up for the NAPP Convention, which will be in September in Branson, Missouri

By Fr. John Schmitz

My parishioners and I would like to extend an invitation to you to join us in Branson, Missouri, for the 2022 NAPP



Convention, September 19-22. **Full convention details can be found in the [February 2022 newsletter](#).**

Reservations are currently being taken for your lodging at the beautiful [Thousand Hills Golf Resort](#).

To hold a room, please RSVP as soon as possible to nappbranson2022@gmail.com. Include your shirt size, date of arrival and first-floor room request, if truly needed. The lodging fee of \$450 for three nights (or \$500 if arriving on Sunday) is not due until August 15.

In addition to the entertainment we have planned, there is much to do and explore in Branson: shows, museums, caves, mini golf, Missouri Ridge Distillery & Brewery, Top of the Rock, etc. Check out the links below. Our tour guide can get us great prices and good seats if we know what you plan to do in advance. For more information, contact Fr. John Schmitz at 573-619-6889. We look forward to you joining us in Branson.



[Check out all Branson has to offer](#)

[Ripley's Believe It Or Not Museum](#)

[Silver Dollar City](#)

[Hollywood Wax Museum](#)

[Titanic Museum](#)

[Celebrity Car Museum](#)

[Auto & Farm Museum](#)

[Sail on the Branson Belle](#)

[Shepherd of the Hills Zipline Canopy Tours](#)

[Shepherd of the Hills Inspiration Tower](#)

[Aquarium at the Boardwalk](#)

2022 NAPP CONVENTION RSVP FORM

BRANSON, MISSOURI

Arrive: Monday, September 19

Depart: Thursday, September 22

NAME _____

ARRIVAL DATE _____ CELLPHONE _____

EMAIL _____



Arriving by private plane at [M. Graham Clark Downtown Airport \(KPLK\)](#) : N _____ ETA: _____

Arriving by airline at [Springfield-Branson Airport \(SGF\)](#)
Airline/flight number: _____

Arriving by car: _____

Reservations to: **Fr. John Schmitz**

129 Fabick Drive, Gravois Mills, MO 65037

Email: nappbranson2022@gmail.com

Cell: 573-619-6889

To hold a room, please RSVP to nappbranson2022@gmail.com.

____ \$450 lodge payment included (**due by August 15; check payable to NAPP**)

____ I require a first-floor room (unable to do stairs)

____ Shirt size

- The commercial airport we will provide transportation from and back to is Springfield, Missouri (SGF)
- Local airport for general aviation is KPLK

[Xtreme Racing Center](#)

[Branson Jet Boats](#)

[IMAX Theater](#)

[Veteran Memorial Museum](#)

[Helicopter Tours](#)

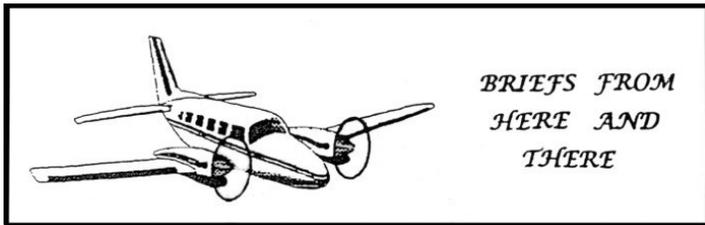
[Mini Golf](#)

[Talking Rocks Cavern](#)

[Branson Scenic Railway](#)

[Missouri Ridge Distillery & Brewery](#)

[Top of the Rock](#)



Midwest Regional Meeting: Reminder of the Midwest gathering, which is set for May 9 in South Sioux City, Nebraska. See details in the box at right. Thanks to Fr. Gene Murray for hosting!

From the treasurer: If you haven't paid your 2022 dues, please do so before June 30, which is the end of the fiscal year. See the payment directions on Page 4. Also, please consider a donation to the Missionary Gift Fund. – *Tom Enwright*

Special celebration: Fr. Allen Corrigan sported a green beard when he went home to visit his mother, Catherine, for St. Patrick's Day. He shared the story with his parishioners at St. Victor Parish in Richfield, Ohio: "Like many families, we've been keeping Mom safe during the lingering pandemic, including social distancing that is very hard for everyone. All but one of the family (who had to work) did get together for St. Patrick's Day. 'No Shave November' lingered until St. Patrick's Day with the 'wearing of the green' taken quite seriously."



A small price to pay: Fr. Bill Menzel's letter to the editor was featured in the March edition of EAA Sport Aviation magazine. In the letter, which was headlined "A small price to pay," he commented on the upcoming increase in EAA's membership dues. "After holding the line at \$40 for 24 years, I would say that an \$8 per year raise is probably long overdue," he wrote. "Eight dollars per year comes out to 67 cents extra per month, give or take one-third of a penny here and there. ... EAA membership is still one of the world's best bargains."



Maryland museum: NAPP members are invited to visit the [Glenn L. Martin Maryland Aviation Museum](#), which is at Martin State Airport in Middle River. For more information, contact Debi Wynn, the museum's public relations person, at glmmuseumpr@aol.com.

NAPP MIDWEST REGIONAL MEETING

Monday, May 9, 2022 – South Sioux City, Nebraska
Please call, email or mail reservation by May 2

NAME _____

CELLPHONE _____

EMAIL _____

Arriving by plane: N _____

ETA: _____

Arriving by car: _____ ETA: _____

Reservations to: Fr. Gene Murray

Email: elmurray@midlands.net

Cell: 712-261-1246

SCHEDULE

Arrive: 10:00-10:45 a.m.

10:45: Depart for [Lewis & Clark Interpretive Center](#)

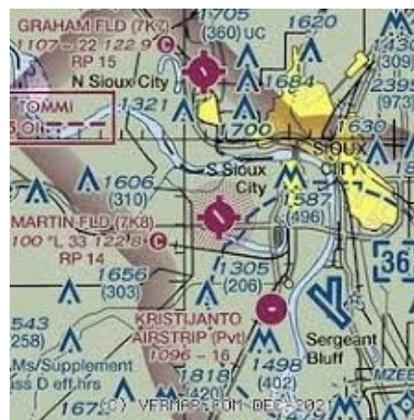
12:15: Lunch

1:15: [Queen of Peace Shrine at Trinity Heights](#)

Departure: 3:00

The destination airport for the NAPP Midwest Spring Meeting is Martin Field (7K8) in South Sioux City, Nebraska.

It is a public-use airport, owned and operated by Gene and Ginger Martin. 100LL is available. Runway is hard surface, 3,323 feet. Note that it's Right Traffic for Runway 14.



Gene is excited to have us come. The Martins are members of Sacred Heart Parish in Sioux City and have given flight instruction to some of our NAPPers.

Queen of Peace Shrine is a 10-acre beautiful setting on a hill overlooking the Floyd River valley. Its centerpiece is a 30-foot stainless-steel statue of the Immaculate Heart of Mary and a 30-foot statue of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, plus a life-sized carving of the Last Supper by a local artist.

I hope and pray that we have good weather.

Fr. Gene Murray



The National Association of Priest Pilots newsletter is published online six times per year (August, October, December, February, April, June). Fiscal year begins July 1. Website: priestpilots.org

Articles, news notes and photos can be sent to Tom Enwright, napp.editor@gmail.com. Deadline for the June edition is May 31.

NAPP Leadership Team

President: Fr. Joe McCaffrey
1st VP: Fr. Nick Radloff 2nd VP: Fr. Bill Menzel
Secretary: Fr. Allen Corrigan
Treasurer & Newsletter Editor: Tom Enwright
Regional Directors
East: Fr. Al Ruschman Midwest: Vacant

2022 NAPP Dues – U.S. \$25.00

2022 fiscal year ends June 30, 2021

Use this form to send your dues or use PayPal (go to priestpilots.org and click on **Pay Now**).

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____

STATE: _____ ZIP: _____

EMAIL: _____

PHONE: _____

Member: Charter Regular Associate

Mail to: Tom Enwright, NAPP Treasurer, 419 Chestnut St., Sauk City, WI 53583

In addition to the \$25 annual dues, we encourage members to make a separate donation to the **NAPP Missionary Gift Fund**, which will be used to support the organization's charitable grants. Donations can be sent to the same address or you can use PayPal. Go to priestpilots.org and click on the **Donate** button.



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just ignore the problem. Our conscience is that inner voice that tells us we shouldn't ignore or excuse our sinful behavior. And I find that voice speaks loudest to me when I am still before the Blessed Sacrament or when I'm in the air alone soaring in the heavens.

The Lord is always speaking to us. But how often are we listening?

My prayer for all of us this Lent and Easter season is that we will discover our own inner leaks and take them to the Lord to be healed by His mercy.

As a pilot, there is no more peaceful feeling than to know my aircraft is airworthy. And as a priest and human being, there is no more peaceful feeling than to know we are healed of our sins! I pray this is the joy and peace that all of you are experiencing at the time you're reading this article and newsletter. And if not, then you will not give up on your own quest for Easter joy and peace!

Never give up! He is Risen and He wants to raise us up on eagle's wings!

Safe flying! See you all in September! Don't forget to register for the annual convention. See Page 2 for more information.



"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

Purpose:

1. To promote the use of private aircraft as a practical, safe, and efficient tool of the apostolic work of a priest.
2. To cooperate with other aviation and ecclesiastical groups wherever possible in order to promote aviation in the cause of the Church.
3. To insist on the safe and proficient use of the airplane by its members.
4. To encourage the use of private aircraft as worthy of the talents and dignity of priests.
5. To further the use of aircraft in the missions.



Showing solidarity with Ukrainian sisters and brothers of all faiths

Fr. Allen Corrigan, NAPP secretary and pastor of St. Victor Parish in Richfield, Ohio, offered prayers for peace in Ukraine when he made a February pilgrimage to [St. Josaphat Cathedral](#) in Parma, a suburb of Cleveland. The people of Ukraine have been under attack since the Russian military invasion began on February 24.

“The Ukrainian Catholic Eparchy of Parma is united with the Roman Catholic Diocese of Cleveland through the same faith, baptism, sacraments, and unity under Pope Francis,” Fr. Allen wrote in his February 25 e-newsletter to parishioners.

“There are both Ukrainian Catholic and Ukrainian Orthodox who worship with us every weekend. Some of our most faithful parishioners are also major benefactors of a Ukrainian Orthodox orphanage,” he wrote. Some parishioners of St. Victor recently came from Ukraine or have close relatives there and around the Baltic Region, he noted.



*Photos by
Fr. Allen
Corrigan*



Stolen fuel ... and then another emergency landing

Editor's note: Associate member George Gratton shared this story in March.

Yesterday, I flew my trusty, old 1965 Piper Comanche. Doing my preflight checks, I found about 55 gallons of 100 low-lead gasoline were stolen from my plane.

That is three of the four tanks virtually emptied! (One tank requires a screwdriver to open the fuel cap and was not drained.) The thief was not courteous enough to replace the caps or secure the fuel doors. Now I had to flush the water out of the system and replenish the fuel. At over \$7 per gallon, that's nearly \$400! Add a mechanic to flush from the tank to the injectors, well, you get the picture. After two-plus high-speed/high-power taxi runs and changing out one injector, then it happened again, another emergency, and no Fr. Mel Hemann to assist.

Yesterday, I made an emergency landing at Athens, Georgia, after experiencing total electrical failure, the smell of smoke in the cabin and pitot failure, no air-speed indicator, untrusted altimeter, one mag inoperative, and no avionics. I did know how to lower the gear without the full function of the failed electrical system (J-bar on the floor) and got half the flaps down before landing.

The tower reported seeing smoke when I landed, and they were not thrilled with no radio contact or transponder. I did not damage the airplane and there was no accident.

My plane was repaired in Athens for a wiring fault. I flew to KOKZ for further follow up. This and the stolen fuel incident made yesterday very interesting. The pitot system plugged up in flight. (The fuel thief also stole my pitot cover.) All this on the first flight with a fresh annual and new engine and prop.

Here are some thoughts to consider:

- 1) Please, my fellow pilots, only fly VFR after maintenance.
- 2) My precious and expensive new avionics were periodically exposed to "0" volts, 10 to 14.4 volts, and surges to 28 volts (displays became quite bright). Is it advisable to have the avionics removed and bench tested for possible damage? They did power up and worked OK for about 40 minutes.



3) Fr. Mel was there to help. I could still hear him saying "Look out the window!" I found Athens looking out the window. I actually thought I was at an Atlanta area reliever airport and initially misreported my arrival to the tower. They were quite forgiving, and I landed with tower light signals.

4) Post-maintenance preflight is the most thorough one you should do.

It was a "rough day" (pun intended). This fuel larceny is more than theft; it endangered the life of a pilot and maybe more. I was "nervous" after two consecutive emergencies, and I mentioned I

was just going to quit flying to the mechanic. He advised not to do so, that the ability to successfully cope with emergencies indicates I am still good for a while. I thanked him (and Him).

NAPP, et al: Keep up your training, including some CFI time, 'cause ya'al never know when ya' gonna' need it.

***P.S. from George on March 24:** My PA24 260 is now for sale. New OH prop, governor, and engine, fresh 2/22 annual.*



Surviving an engine failure in IMC: In a February presentation on Zoom, George Gratton shared his story about the in-flight emergency last July while flying from Georgia to Iowa for the NAPP convention. Joining him on the presentation was Lou Bragg, who was in the right seat when the engine on the Piper Comanche failed. Fr. Mel Hemann was in the back seat. Mel died from medical complications in December. Here is a [link](#) to the presentation, which was hosted by the [Northeast Comanche Tribe Inc.](#)

See "[Emergency over Georgia](#)" in the August 2021 newsletter.

Memories of Fr. Mel Hemann, priest and pilot

St. Patrick Parish in Cedar Falls, Iowa, offered parishioners and others the opportunity to share their memories of Fr. Mel Hemann, who died December 14, 2021, and whose memorial Mass was celebrated in the parish church on January 13, 2022.



Fr. Mel was a charter member and former officer of the National Association of Priest Pilots. Here are excerpts of some of the tributes that were published in the [February 6](#) and [February 13](#) bulletins.



Kelly Sullivan spoke at the [April 2010](#) Midwest gathering in Waterloo, Iowa. Here, she's photographed with the Hemann brother-priests, John, Ev and Mel.

Kelly Sullivan, St. Patrick parishioner:

Fr. Mel was simply the best! He loved unconditionally and had an incredible sense of humor! He was super intelligent and loved being with people. Every summer he would come to my house and sit on the porch swing on my deck. We would drink beer, eat lasagna, and solve the world's problems. My dog, Kinnick, was especially fond of him.

I also have a great memory of when Fr. Mel came to Naval Station Mayport to visit the ship that I am the sponsor of, USS The Sullivans DDG 68. The executive officer of the ship was a nice Catholic guy from Philly. Fr. Mel sat in his stateroom and talked his ear off!

*I will miss our dinner date on the deck, Fr. Mel!
Thank you for making a huge difference in my life!*

Editor's note: In the [April 2018 newsletter](#), Mel wrote about his visit to the ship. He also referenced the 2011

NAPP convention, which was highlighted in the [August 2011 newsletter](#).

Justin Gray, Chicago-based First Officer for Sky-West Airlines and graduate of St. Patrick School in Cedar Falls:

At age 15, Fr. Mel took me in as a student and confirmed my aspirations to become a pilot. Today, as an instructor myself and professional pilot, I appreciate the humility and patience Mel had to teach me how to fly. (I was 70 years younger than he!)

I will never forget returning to the Waterloo Airport when a bolt broke off our engine, and Mel brought the plane around to a closed runway.

When I was 16, Mel put his trust in me to fly myself across the state to see my grandma. This memory and confidence booster I will never forget. Mel inspired many people in aviation, and I am so fortunate to be lucky enough to have experienced his joy and knowledge of flying.

Diane Flaherty, parish wedding coordinator:

I was fortunate to work with Fr. Mel on a couple of occasions. Anyone who lectored when he said Mass would know how much he hated multiple announcements.

He would often retort, "Those announcements are longer than my homily!" He would often muse if Jesus gave announcements before the Sermon on the Mount.

George Gratton, associate member of the National Association of Priest Pilots:

Fr. Mel Hemann, ever the certified flight instructor, was over the Tennessee/Georgia border in the back seat of my trusty Piper, 8,000 feet in instrument conditions. Then the trusty became untrustworthy; the engine failed ... Atlanta controllers sent us to the Dahlonega, Georgia, airport as the closest within gliding distance. After one mile of vertical space in the "blind," we found the bottom of the clouds.

Looking at my map and GPS, I said, "Where is the airport?" somewhat excitedly.

Mel calmly gave the best four-word certified flight instructor instruction I have ever heard: "Look out the window" and pointed to the runway.

We successfully landed without incident. Amen.

CFI Corner: Corporate flying in Texas

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

My retirement move to Tyler, Texas, from Richmond in June 2021 to work for Bishop Joseph Strickland has been a life-changer. Like Alaska, folks in Texas talk aviation as essential transportation given the state's size and the need for businesses to meet, move product and oversee multi-region business sites.



Through the local pastor, Fr. Martin introduced me to a corporate pilot, Dan, who attends daily Mass at the Cathedral. He is four years younger and a former Braniff pilot who flew freight in all kinds of weather, has a mastery in corporate prop and jet aircraft and now has worked since 2012 in a 1986 Turbo Commander for a plumbing magnate who owns 32 stores in seven states.

Dan has invited me on a number of runs out of Tyler to take the boss wherever he needs to be. Retirement gives me the kind of schedule where I can follow along on many flights learning the complexities of the Turbo Commander as well as experience the vastness and beauty of Texas. Prior to this exposure, the only thing I knew about a Turbo Commander was what I saw in Bob Hoover who could make the Aero Commander do amazing acrobatic feats.

The particularities of our 1986 Turbo Commander feel comfortable to a pilot like me who is familiar with "steam gauges" and the kind of panel I learned back in the '70s. Our only acknowledgement of the digital age is the Garmin 530 with ADS-Out and use of a new Stratus 3 for ADS-In as well as our Apple tablets loaded with ForeFlight.

This is typical of one of our last runs: We start out of Tyler around 8 in the morning and head over to Class B airspace in Dallas to land at Addison Executive to pick up his boss. Learning the quirks Class B starts with staying VFR, if possible, and asking for clearance into the airspace. This avoids getting stuck in morning sequencing of inbound commercial flights, which burns fuel better used in cross-country flying.

Our next stop is David Wayne Hooks Airport in Houston to pick up his chief executive comptroller. From

there, we fly four hours to Laredo for the business meetings, the opening of a new store there. The air crew of two has a few hours to relax and tour the area. Dan knows many of the local restaurants, which along with the dry desert heat reminded me of my Air Force time in Alamogordo, New Mexico, back in 1996.

Then we head off to Corpus Christi for another meeting before dropping the company's exec back at Houston. We then head back to Addison to drop off Dan's boss before heading back to Tyler at 10 p.m. Sometimes we encounter typical low-hanging stratus in north and east Texas, given the level of regional moisture there. Getting into the clouds requires a pop-up instrument clearance and some challenging approaches often down to minimums.

This kind of eight-hour flight day is all in a day's work for Dan who gave me a chance to hand-fly some of the VFR approaches and assist on the radios. Even better, there is all the multi-engine time I care to log from the right seat.

This kind of eight-hour flight day is all in a day's work for Dan who gave me a chance to hand-fly some of the VFR approaches and assist on the radios. Even better, there is all the multi-engine time I care to log from the right seat.

Right now, the post-COVID corporate world is screaming for pilots. This prompted Dan to ask me if I would like training in a Falcon 10 that covers the company's stores in New

Mexico, Arizona, California, Idaho and Florida.

I told him that I would have to pray over such an invitation. I will take the training and see how the schedule works. It would mean stepping up to an ATP (Air Transport Pilot), which is a rating I sought back in 2011, passed the knowledge test but never had time for the check ride, given my acceptance into a master's program of psychology at the Institute for the Psychological Sciences.

The nice thing about flying with Dan is that he is always watching for opportunities to take parishioners on dead-head flights to places like Las Vegas or the Carmelite Monastery in Las Cruces.

I have to say as a retired clergy, it has been a great new way to meet parishioners and the corporate pilot community. The local Quiet Birdmen Hangar in Tyler invited me to join, saying they would welcome a chaplain to pray at meals and visit some of the older, now infirm members. More to come. Stay tuned!

Email: moranec13@gmail.com