

N.A.P.P.



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No. 5

Formation flying, of a sort

By Msgr. William J. King

We might call it flying in formation, or perhaps mile-high formation. After joining the faculty of the largest seminary in the United States, I found it challenging to find time to get up in the air as much as I'd like. Worrying that it might affect pilot proficiency, I responded quickly when one of the seminarians — also a private pilot, but long out of currency — suggested, "Maybe we could go flying together someday."

Since then, I've found a new reason to rent a friend's plane more regularly and bring smiles to the faces of seminarians — smiles, that is, until I get the plane trimmed for straight and level flight and then tell the seminarian, "Okay, your turn: I'll have the controls, but you try steering for a while."

As with any first-timer behind the yoke of a C172, they overcorrect

until they learn a more gentle way to grasp the yoke and relax into the control movements. (Don't worry, FAA: my hands and feet always remain on the controls and at the ready to make any necessary corrective movements.) Apprehension melts once the seminarian realizes that he is successfully handling a machine that moves in all three dimensions.



Photo by Fr. Joe McCaffrey

the joy of flying.

Conversation in the car to and from the airport (almost an hour's drive from the seminary) focuses on the dimensions of priestly formation — human, spiritual, intellectual, and pastoral — but once the airport is in sight, it quickly turns to the dimensions of flight and how a general

A look of glee comes with confidence in accomplishing a previously unknown task when initial dread melts into

President's column

Easter season brings thoughts of the shepherds in our lives

By Fr. Phil Gibbs
President

Dear Charter Members, Regular Members, Associate Members, Brother Priests, fellow pilots and friends of NAPP:



Happy Easter and may the power of the Resurrection continue to bless you in your ministry and manner of

life. We are so fortunate to have this gift of faith that does, indeed, lift us up from the doldrums of worldly ways and sets our sights on eternal joys rather than blinds us with earthly delights.

Easter season often brings with it the rich celebrations of the sacramental life of the church. First Communion, Confirmation and Holy Matrimony are in high demand during this time of the year. Recognition of Mother's Day and Father's Day are in the mix as well. One of the celebrations that

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aviation aircraft functions. Conversation once airborne conveys awe at the beauty of the ground below or the clouds above, but as the seminarian turns the yoke for a short while, I steer the conversation back to seminary formation.

It's amazing how many parallels or analogies there are between flying and formation: the tendency of a novice to overreact to movements in the interior life, only to be more patient and discerning later; knowing what to say and not say in prayer, like the radio (early conversations with God are as awkward as a new student's chatter with ATC — they have to learn how to keep it on-point and when to listen and not babble on); planning and delivering a homily that is like coordinated flight in the pattern and makes a good landing; and even the basic pilotage of establishing waypoints along the path of formation, then making adjustments to stay on course.

There's no "whiz-wheel" to plan the path of priestly formation, but the lessons of flying present practical application: the preflight walkaround becomes a consciousness examen; staying on the lookout for an off-field landing site becomes awareness of one's affective desires and the wiles of the enemy; checklists reveal the need for managing multiple tasks and deadlines; the sterile cockpit during takeoff and landing is

In the end, the simplest lesson is the most important: find room for fun and balance in life and ministry, and – oh yes – stay ahead of the airplane.

a reminder of the need for silence and a recollected heart and mind; an end-of-flight refueling a reminder to return to the source of grace — the analogies are many. In the end, the simplest lesson is the most important: find room for fun and balance in life and ministry, and – oh yes – stay ahead of the airplane.

It never fails after every flight with a seminarian: once the final knot is made in the tie-downs and the final chock is in place, the smiles tell it all. My smile is that I flew, and the seminarian's smile says that he learned something new

about himself while having some fun. That's "formation" flying at its best!

Msgr. Bill King is a priest of the Diocese of Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, serving as vice-rector of Mount St. Mary's Seminary in Emmitsburg, Maryland. He previously was contract chaplain for the 193d Special Operations Wing of the Pennsylvania Air National Guard, where he occasionally hitched a ride on one of their EC-130s.



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.

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2023 NAPP Dues – U.S. \$25.00

Fiscal year began July 1, 2022

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

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

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Make check payable to NAPP and mail to: Tom Enwright, 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.

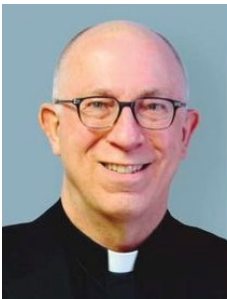


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we sometimes gloss over and that doesn't receive the recognition it should is the Fourth Sunday of Easter, which is designated Good Shepherd Sunday.

We bishops and priests are entrusted with this sacred responsibility of shepherding the faithful in a variety of different ways. It is an arduous responsibility that can either bring us down, zapping us of our strength, or energize us and take us to new heights in emulating Christ, the Good Shepherd. It is nice to have a day dedicated to honoring that important ministry in our Church.

We offer prayers for Pope Francis as he enters into his 10th year of the papacy and continues to serve as the Vicar of Christ. We offer prayers for our own bishops as well. As you may or may not know, in Dubuque, Archbishop Michael Jackels, also in his 10th year as



our Shepherd, recently submitted his resignation and, on Tuesday of Holy Week (the day of our Chrism Mass), announced his retirement effective immediately due to some serious health issues. We, here in the Archdiocese of Dubuque, pray for him as well as pray for his successor whom we anxiously await to be named and placed among us.

Shepherds are important in the church as they lead, teach, govern and provide pastoral care. One of the many things they do is walk among the flock and strive to become familiar so that the sheep may come to know his voice and follow him.

Of the many responsibilities I have, I admit that making pastoral visits to those people entrusted to my care is not as high on the priority list as it should be. The administrative responsibilities of the nuts and bolts of parish life, a.k.a. "maintenance," has gotten in the way of the true "Mission" that I (we) should be more concerned with in devoting my time and effort.

Archbishop Emeritus Jackels really did a splendid job of getting out on the road and visiting the various faith communities and pastors within the 30 counties of the archdiocese. I couldn't even begin to imagine how many miles he put on the three cars he used while here and how much windshield time he spent going from parish to parish for Confirmations and other various gatherings. I commend him for that and will continue to strive to be as present and personable as he was.

Even our popes do a fairly decent job getting out among the global community to break bread, share the word and lead people closer to Jesus with their pastoral presence. As a priest pilot, I have always been fas-

cinated by how the pope gets around. I am not necessarily enthralled by the "Pope-mobile" as I am with "Shepherd One." So, I would like to share some interesting tidbits about Shepherd One of which I recently learned:

The first papal flight was in 1964 when Pope Paul VI traveled to Israel to visit the Holy Land. At that time, the pope leaving the Vatican for anything, much less taking a flight to a foreign land, was huge news. Since then, the popes have become adept to traveling far and wide with none other than Pope St. John Paul II being the most traveled pope in the history of the Church. In 27 years, he visited 129 countries and flew 725,000 miles.

The Vatican doesn't own a jet named "Shepherd One" but rather uses the Italian carrier Alitalia. Usually it is an Airbus 330-200 or the Boeing 777. These Alitalia flights that carry the pope are all designated with a special flight number, AZ4000, and the call sign "Shepherd One."

Depending on the country visited, it would be that country's air carrier that would provide the air transportation back to Rome. They would simply use that special flight number and call sign.



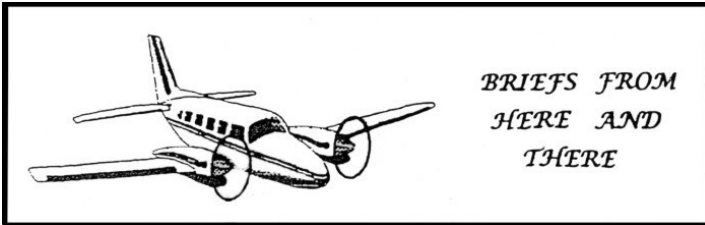
White House photo by Chris Greenberg

Pope Benedict XVI walks with President George W. Bush and Laura Bush after the pontiff's arrival on Shepherd One at Andrews Air Force Base, Maryland, in 2008.

The Vatican doesn't burden the Italian taxpayers with the costs of the pope's travels. Members of the press are required to purchase business-class fares, which gets them prime access to the pontiff. However, they sit in the economy cabin while the pope is in business class. Therefore, these seats come at a premium price, which helps to subsidize the price tag of the flight.

Knowing the rising costs of flying, perhaps we should consider taking a few news reporters up now and again throughout the year to help pay for the operational expenses of our own "Shepherd One!" What do you think?

Easter blessings to you all. And, as they say, keep the shiny side up and the dirty side down.



Flying bishop's plane is back in the air

Editor's note: Here's an item from the [February 2023](#) newsletter of the Diocese of Gizo in the Solomon Islands. Bishop Capelli is a member of NAPP.

“(Our) flying bishop, Bishop Luciano Capelli, SDB, is now flying again after an Italian volunteer, Captain Henrico, installed parts of the plane that were not functioning. His first flight was to St. John Bosco Parish, Taro, for the feast day of St. John Bosco on Sunday, 29th January, 2023. ... The bishop's plane, which has not been flying for quite a while, is now overhauled and flying again.”



One more landing ... then tire trouble

Fr. Allen Corrigan, NAPP secretary and pastor in suburban Cleveland, Ohio, sent this note on March 31:

It's been a rather interesting day. I met my friend at Medina Municipal Airport at 8:45 a.m. and we were airborne by 9:20. We went around the pattern twice (two takeoffs, two landings) and I said, “Those were good. Would you like to go down to Wooster/Wayne County and do a few landings?” My friend said, “Sure.”

So I flew to Wooster and had a good landing, and I said, “That was good. Want to go around and do another one?” Again my friend said, “Sure.”

So I went around the pattern again. When I landed, I could not get the airplane to go in a straight line, but I kept it on the runway. I turned off onto a taxiway (with difficulty) and we stopped and inspected the airplane. It turned out that the tire on the right landing gear had popped off the rim, and the tire was totally flat!

The Wayne County personnel were excellent and got the airplane towed back to their hangar where we were told the airplane could not be fixed until tomorrow. So we borrowed a car, drove back to Medina, picked up one of our cars, drove back to Wooster to give back the loaner and then drove back to Medina to pick up the other car and go our separate ways. Along the way we stopped for lunch.

It was quite an adventure, but I'm proud that we controlled the airplane effectively after suffering a blown-out tire!

George Gratton presents at SUN 'n FUN

Associate member George Gratton reports he had a great turnout for his series of safety presentations at the SUN 'n FUN Aerospace Expo in Lakeland, Florida, March 29-April 1.

“SUN 'n FUN is dun! Four forums on SEL IFR engine failure in a Comanche were successful. Over 100 people attended, and after Friday, Chairman Bill informed us we were the best-attended forum. ... The question of ‘Why do I spend the time and money to do this?’ is easily answered. I must, to honor CFI Fr. Mel Hemann's legacy and hope to prevent life-threatening accidents.”

George described an in-flight emergency in his Piper Comanche while flying from Georgia to Iowa for the NAPP convention in July 2021.

See “*Emergency over Georgia*” in the [August 2021](#) newsletter.

Jubilee recognition: Any NAPP member priest or deacon celebrating a major jubilee in 2023 is invited to send a note to be recognized in a future issue of the newsletter. Email: napp.editor@gmail.com.

Reminder to pay your dues: Thanks to the 37 members who have paid their NAPP dues for the 2023 fiscal year, which began July 1, 2022. Please follow their example by supporting NAPP. See **form on Page 2**.

Obituary planning: Members who are making their own advance funeral arrangements may wish to include NAPP in the list to be notified by the family or funeral director. Email: napp.editor@gmail.com.

Welcome to NAPP's three new members

Fr. Sahaya Paul Sebastian

I am excited to introduce myself to all the NAPP members. I am Fr. Sahaya Paul Sebastian (Fr. Paul) from the Diocese of Palayamkottai, Tamilnadu, South India. I am a diocesan priest who has served in the Diocese of Burlington, Vermont, since August 2018.



I am coming from the village of Singamparai, which has St. Paul as its patron. My parents and my two brothers live there. I completed my schooling in Catholic schools and colleges in India. I had a passion for three different things in my life: I loved to become a priest, a pilot and a cricketer.

God blessed me by ordaining me to be a priest. When I was appointed in the Northeast Kingdom of Burlington Diocese, I used to dream of being a pilot whenever I passed by an airport in Morrisville, Vermont, and that became my parish now. I was so happy that three families that are parishioners of Morrisville and Barton were more interested in me becoming a pilot and it worked out that I started taking classes in January 2023.

I love learning more about aviation. I love flying because I love adventures. Flying added more joy in my life when I learned that there is an association called NAPP for priest pilots. I just tried to Google on “pilot priests,” and I was so happy that I found NAPP. It was really nice talking to Fr. Phil, our president, and Tom, our editor, regarding our association. I love to help the Church in Her missionary work by becoming a pilot too. I have much interest to work in Alaska where I can put my learnings into practice as a pilot. I thank God for all of our members.

Fr. Paul is associate pastor at Blessed Sacrament Parish in Stowe and Most Holy Name of Jesus Parish, Morrisville, Vermont.

Nick Chapman

I am a seminarian for the Archdiocese of Hartford in my second year of pre-theology at St. Paul Seminary in St. Paul, Minnesota.

I grew up in Windsor, Connecticut. My mom was a nutritionist and my dad worked as an engineer. My parents are both recently retired and enjoy taking trips

around the country in the minivan with their bicycles in the back. I've got a younger sister who is an incredible artist and is studying to become a physician's assistant.

As a child, I enjoyed cycling, swimming, camping with the Boy Scouts, and playing the drums. I attended the University of Connecticut to study computer engineering. While I drifted from my faith in my first two years of college, friends I met at the UConn Catholic Center eventually inspired me to put Christ at the center of my life.

After graduating college in 2017, I worked for two years as a FOCUS missionary on college campuses. After that, I worked for two years back home as a project engineer at an aerospace company. Through time spent in adoration and helping at my parish, the priesthood gradually shifted from a scary prospect to a life in which I believe I'll be truly happy. Seminary life has truly

“felt right” to me, and I plan to continue at St. Paul Seminary for theology studies starting this fall.

My interest in flying began

while I was at UConn's marching band practice. While I was playing the cymbals on the hot blacktop of our practice field, I saw someone fly overhead in a paramotor. “He's got it figured out,” I thought. While my parents nixed the idea of my flying an ultralight paramotor, they thought that getting a pilot's license was safe enough for me to pursue.

I took lessons in a 172 through a flying club at KHFD, a towered airport located right on the bank of the Connecticut River. I got my private license in April of 2016. That summer, I worked as an intern for Garmin Avionics' “Human Factors” team in Kansas. There, my boss pointed me to a little grass strip, K34, where I found true airport community and fraternity. Hanging out after work most nights at K34, I got my tailwheel endorsement in a Luscombe, grilled burgers over sunset, and made friends that I keep in touch with today.

As a FOCUS missionary, I was able to rent aircraft a few times and take students up in the air. Then in 2019, settled with an engineering job, I bought my 1946 Luscombe 8E and today have about 350 flight hours.



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Reservations are open for September gathering in Poconos

Mark your calendars for the 2023 convention of the National Association of Priest Pilots in the Pocono Mountains. Lodging and some of the meals will be at the [Shawnee Inn and Golf Resort](#) located along the Delaware River in northeastern Pennsylvania.

Arrivals will be on Monday, September 18. We'll have activities and time for relaxation on Tuesday and Wednesday, with departures on Thursday, September 21.



Credit: Shawnee Inn and Golf Resort

Fr. Phil Gibbs, NAPP president, has arranged a group package that includes:

- Lodging for three nights
- Breakfast on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday
- Dinner on Tuesday and Wednesday
- Meeting room with refreshments

The package rate is \$819 for single occupancy and \$570 per person for double. Prices include state and local taxes and a resort gratuity.

Each member will be responsible for their own resort reservation and payment to the resort.

However, for NAPP planning purposes, if you are planning to attend, please fill out the RSVP form on this page and send it to Tom Enwright (email and postal addresses are on the form).

Special note: If you prefer to share a room but need help finding another member to room with, make a note of that on the RSVP form and Tom will help coordinate arrangements. (We already have one priest who is looking to share a room with another member.)

In addition to the resort fee, plan on a nominal convention fee (to be determined) to cover other expenses, and lunch may be on your own Tuesday-Wednesday.

Activities are still being planned, so watch for details in the June newsletter.

To get a virtual feel for the region, check out the [Pocono Television Network](#) and learn what you can experience during a visit to the four counties of the Poconos.

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2023 NAPP Convention RSVP Form

[Shawnee Inn & Golf Resort](#)

100 Shawnee Inn Drive, Shawnee on Delaware, PA 18356

Arrive: Monday, September 18

Depart: Thursday, September 21

NAME _____

CELLPHONE _____

EMAIL _____

Arriving by private plane at:

___ KMPO – Pocono Mountains Municipal Airport in Mount Pocono, Pennsylvania

___ 1N7 – Blirstown Airport in Blirstown, New Jersey

N _____ ETA: _____

Arriving by airline at:

___ Lehigh Valley (Allentown)

___ Wilkes-Barre Scranton

Airline/flight number: _____

Arriving by car: _____

Send this RSVP to:

Tom Enwright, 419 Chestnut St., Sauk City, WI 53583

Email: napp.editor@gmail.com

LODGING/MEAL PACKAGE

Each member is responsible for making their own resort reservation and payment to the resort.

Reservation deadline is August 18. Call 800-742-9633 and mention the group name: "National Association of Priest Pilots." A credit card deposit of \$100 is required at time of reservation.

Each guest must pay the remaining balance to the resort by **September 15.**

The NAPP group package includes:

- Lodging for three nights
- Breakfast on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday
- Dinner on Tuesday and Wednesday
- Meeting room with refreshments

Package rates:

- \$819 for single occupancy
 - \$570 per person for double
- (Prices include state and local taxes and a resort gratuity.)

If you select the double rate, the resort will need to know who you are rooming with.

___ **CHECK HERE** if you need to find a roommate, and we will help coordinate arrangements.

OTHER CONVENTION COSTS

In addition to the resort package rate, members can expect a nominal convention fee to cover other NAPP expenses, activities and tours. Lunch on Tuesday-Wednesday may be on your own. Details will be announced closer to the convention date.

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Memorable flights include flying to Fishers Island (OB8) to go to Mass and then go swimming at the beach adjacent to the runway; taking my home parish priest for a flight; landing on the ice runway at Alton Bay, New Hampshire (B18); and flying my Luscombe from Connecticut out to Minnesota as I got ready to enter seminary. Here I've been able to take some of my classmates and my formator up for flights.

If anyone's got suggestions of airports to visit out in the Midwest or would like to say hello, I'm happy to hear from you. Email: chapmanick@gmail.com.

Postscript from Nick: "I was encouraged to join NAPP by a member, Msgr. Jeffrey Steenson. He came to give a talk to the men at the seminary and I happened to learn that he was a pilot. We got to talking planes and it was all over from there!"

Chris Ransom

I heard about NAPP while at a lecture given by Msgr. Jeff Steenson. He was introduced as a member of Priest Pilots, among his many other accomplishments.



This intrigued me, so I looked into it after the lecture and I noticed that you accept non-priest pilots as members. I'd just like to hang out virtually with you all for a while and see what you're up to and help out if I can.

I have a private pilot certificate (VFR only) and live in St. Paul, Minnesota, with my wife Margot. I've been a facility manager for a large laboratory services company for the last 23 years, but on April 1 I will begin a new career as the maintenance supervisor at the [Cathedral of St. Paul](#).

I am the president of the [Minnesota Maple Syrup Producers Association](#).



Editor's note: Special thanks to Msgr. Jeffrey Steenson in St. Paul, Minnesota, for planting the seed for Nick and Chris to join NAPP.



Credit: Pocono Mountains Visitors Bureau

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Recommended airports for general aviation arrivals:

[KMPO](#) – [Pocono Mountains Municipal Airport](#) in Mount Pocono, Pennsylvania

[1N7](#) – [Blairstown Airport](#) in Blairstown, New Jersey

For those traveling by airline, suggested options are [Lehigh Valley](#) (Allentown) or [Wilkes-Barre Scranton](#).

More about the resort:

- [Resort Guide](#) (spring edition)
- [Hiking](#)
- [River trips](#)
- [Golf](#)
- [Amenities](#)

[Things to do in the Poconos](#)

[Pocono Mountains Visitors Bureau](#)



Credit: Shawnee Inn and Golf Resort

It was quite the sight: Lear Jet makes a lasting impression

By Tom Enwright

Here's a postscript to a nugget that was included in the obituary story for Msgr. Ivan Vap in the [February](#) newsletter. The story referenced his recollections of the early years of NAPP in the [August 2022](#) edition.

"I co-hosted the meeting in Columbus, Nebraska, many years ago (1965)," Msgr. Ivan wrote. "Possibly the first meeting not in Kentucky. We met in the Elks Club for the meals ... [Max Conrad](#), the 'flying grandfather,' was with us one evening and [Bill Lear](#) flew in his new jet to the Columbus airport. It was still 'experimental' so we could only sit in it parked on the ground, but it made a big hit in that small town. I think the Hemann brothers were the draw for both Max and Bill."

It turns out that the [Classic Lear Jet Foundation](#) recently acquired the first Lear Jet (serial number 23-003) that was put into service in 1964. The aircraft was brought back to Wichita, Kansas, where it was built, to be restored to flying condition. For details, see the article on page 51 of the April/May 2023 edition of [Midwest Flyer](#) magazine.

I wondered if that was the aircraft at the NAPP gathering in 1965, so I contacted Rick Rowe, who handles public relations for the Foundation.

"That's an interesting story you have there," he said. "23-003 was the first-ever Lear Jet delivered to a customer on October 13, 1964. I don't know for sure, but I think it is likely that she was at the 1965 convention in Nebraska. Mr. Lear might have been using her as a demonstrator."

I remember seeing one of the early Lear Jets arrive at my hometown airport, Alexander Field in Wisconsin Rapids. I recall my dad taking me out to the airport to see this impressive, sleek business jet, probably when



I was about 9 or 10 years old. It was amazing to see how fast it would climb on takeoff.

Our backyard was great for plane spotting



Photos courtesy of the Classic Lear Jet Foundation

Lear 23-003 on the ramp in Bartow, Florida, as the team prepares for the disassembly process. Below left: A Lear Jet in flight back in the day.

since we lived just a couple of miles from the airport on the downwind leg for Runway 20. We also had a good view of planes climbing out in a right turn after departing from Runway 02.

During those growing-up years of the 1960s and '70s, I became fascinated with aviation, and that still holds true today. NAPP is one way that I continue to live the dream. I'm neither a pilot nor a priest, but my vantage point is the next best thing to sitting in the left seat.

The Classic Lear Jet Foundation welcomes tax-deductible donations to help fund its mission. Online donations can be made at classiclear.org/support. Checks can be mailed to Classic Lear Jet Foundation, 626 S. Tyler #75623, Wichita, KS 67209.

From the NAPP archives ... 20 years ago | April 2003

*Editor's note: As we celebrate the season of Easter in 2023, here's an excerpt from the president's column by **Fr. Everett Hemann**. (Fr. Ev died April 4, 2012, in Cedar Falls, Iowa. He was 66 years old.)*



CENTER: American 521 heavy (level at FL310), climb and maintain FL350 for noise abatement.

AA521: Noise abatement at FL310?

CENTER: Yes, sir. Have you ever heard the awful sound two 747s make when they collide?

Our perception, our perspective on reality is so important. When we are forced to look at a reality very familiar to ourselves from someone else's perspective, it frequently is shocking, or at least surprising to us. "I have never thought of it that way."

We celebrated the Easter Triduum. Now we are in the middle of 50 days of celebrating. WHAT? A new way of looking at reality. As we get older, we must be careful that we don't rule out new ways of looking at life. Easter helps us keep that fresh, open approach to reality. As the men and women at the cross and tomb discovered, things are not always what they seem at first glance.