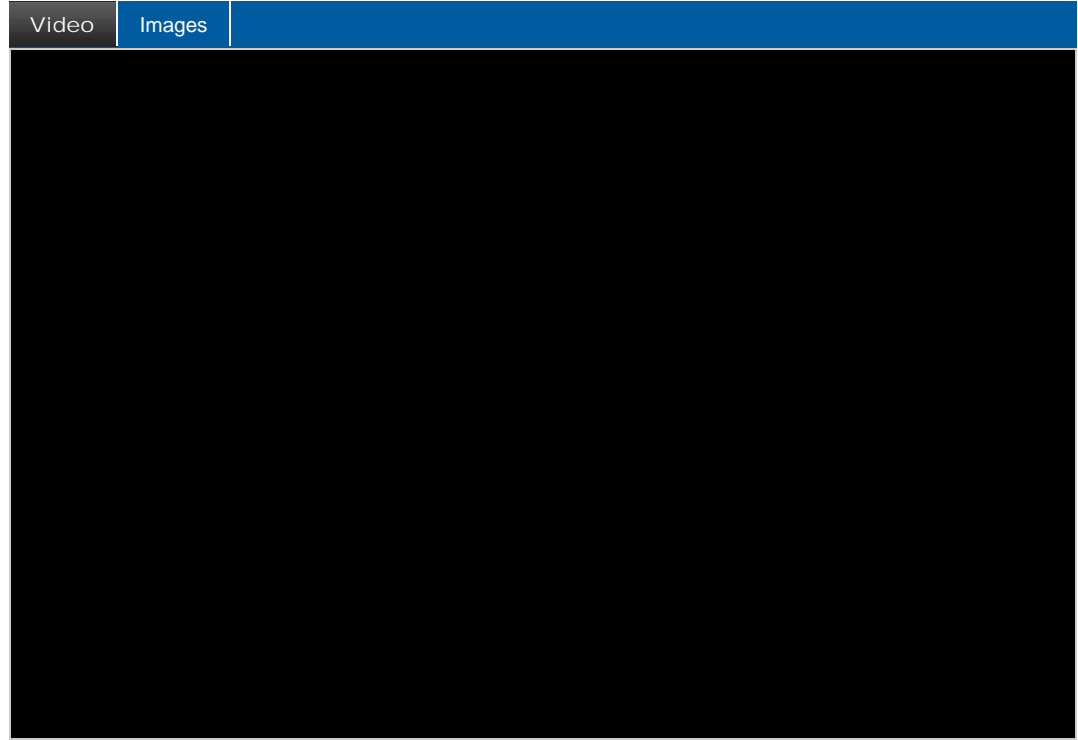




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Priest Pilots



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MASON CITY, IA-A unique group of airplane pilots are making their way to Mason City. They call themselves priest pilots.

The National Association of Priest Pilots promotes aviation and teaches other how it helps the cause of the church, but it's also a release from their typical tasks.

For nearly 50 years...priests from all over the country leave their congregations and confessionals behind and get together with other priests... to fly....

Allen Corrigan from Ohio is one of the many priests that make their way to different states every year for the National Association of Priest Pilot's Annual Meeting.

It combines his two favorite things since he was a child

"I was drawing pictures of airplanes on my desk and pretending that I was flying my desk and I knew when I grew up I wanted to be two things; I wanted to be a priest and I wanted to be a pilot," he said.

Corrigan said the event can be summed up as a priestly fraternity.

"it's a bunch of guys who love getting together, they love to fly planes. There are so many stresses associated with ministry itself, it gives people something totally separate from their professional lives."

So, every year these members meet up and have a couple days dedicated to just talking about something else. But when you have this many priests, their faith most certainly finds its way into the events

Reported by: [Natalie Tendall](#)
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They had a prayer and even have a blessing of the planes with holy water by the area bishop himself. But one of the biggest parts is recognizing a member whose missionary work and skills have shown through. This year's winner is Mel Hemann...one of the original Priest Pilots.

Hemann said, "if Jesus was living today he'd use TV, he'd use radio, and the internet, and if he wanted to go somewhere he'd use a car or a plane, so it's trying to incorporate a thing that's not only a hobby but also it's something that can be very practical in doing what we're called to do."

Allen said, "There are many areas of the country where priests can only reach their people by aviation."

So what it boils down to is not great liturgy...these priests use a common interest to spread their message while in flight.


The national association of Priest Pilot's Annual Meeting will continue Wednesday. The public is invited to attend a movie viewing at 10:30 in the morning of "The Fighting Sullivans." It shows the story of five brothers from Waterloo, Iowa who died together in World War II.

Following the movie, the only granddaughter of the Sullivans will speak at the Mason City Airport.

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