

Missouri Veterans, Monuments & Memorials

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A native of Cole County, John C. Condit attended grade school and high school at St. Peter in Jefferson City followed by seminary in the St. Louis area. He was ordained into the Catholic priesthood in 1945 and spent the next several years serving parishes in southern Missouri and the St. Louis area. Father Condit was commissioned as a chaplain in the U.S. Navy in 1953 and participated in duty assignments with the 3rd Marine Division in Japan and Okinawa; served aboard the USS Independence in the Mediterranean with further service aboard the USS Bushnell in the Caribbean; duty at Camp Pendleton and in Vietnam; and service at naval air stations in California, Florida, Washington and China.

One of the most interesting aspect of Father Condit's military experience came when he served two years (1955-1956) in the Antarctic with Admiral Richard Byrd during Operation Deepfreeze. During this timeframe, Father Condit became the first clergyman to reach the South Pole while serving at the Williams Air Facility in McMurdo Sound, Antarctica. While stationed at the South Pole, Father Condit also built the first chapel on the continent called "Chapel in the Snows," which was constructed from sections of four leftover Quonset huts and had a plywood steeple. Father Condit retired from the Navy in 1973 and returned to Jefferson City where he spent the next few years in Boonville as pastor for Saints Peter and Paul, until receiving assignment as pastor for St. Francis Xavier in Taos in 1977.

Father Condit was very active in veterans' organizations and served as state chaplain for the American Legion. He is pictured in the second photograph while serving as guest speaker at the 60th anniversary dinner for American Legion Post 5 in March 1979. The veteran passed away in in 1994 and was laid to rest in Resurrection Cemetery in Jefferson City.