



**Joseph  
Peterburs**  
*Army Air Corps*

## Joseph Peterburs

Nov 25, 1924 -

**BIRTHPLACE:** St. Paul, Minnesota

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### SOLDIER DETAILS

**DIVISION:** Army Air Corps, 20th Fighter Group 55th  
Fighter Squadron

**THEATER OF OPERATION:** European

**SERVED:** Nov 30, 1942 - May 1, 1949

**MILITARY HONORS:** Three battle Stars,  
Distinguished Flying Cross, Purple Heart, Air Medal  
- 5 oak leaf clusters

**HONORED BY:** The Eisenhower Foundation

**PRISONER OF WAR**

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### BIOGRAPHY

Joseph Peterburs was born in 1924, in St. Paul Minnesota. On the 7th of December 1941, Joe was attending the Salvatorian Seminary in St. Nazianz, Wisconsin. He heard the news coming out of the loudspeakers in the gym that morning, Peterburs knew he would be leaving the seminary and joining the Armed Forces of the United States. After the semester at St. Nazianz and at 17 years old he applied for pilot training in the Navy. They turned him down! Peterburs heard that the Army Air Corps was accepting applications for Aviation Cadet Training, however, you had to be 18 years old and take a competitive examination. On his 18th birthday on 25 November 1942 he took the test and passed the exam. He assumed the academic discipline acquired at the Seminary that enabled him to pass. He was sworn in by an Army Colonel friend of his dad's on the 30th of November 1942 with his Dad there, looking as proud as he could be. After being sworn in, Peterburs was placed on deferred status until called up. On 23 January 1943 and Peterburs headed for Miami Beach, Florida for basic training. He also trained in Nashville and was sent to Scotland overseas November, 1944 flying a P-51. His first mission was December 22, 1944 and Peterburs went on to fly 49 missions. On one flight, Peterburs had a crash landing and was taken hostage, but escaped and fought until the end of the war.