

...I too will take from the crest of the Cedar...

The first reading today reminds me of my first priestly assignment. I received a letter from the Archbishop telling me I was assigned to Holy Trinity Parish in Cedar County Nebraska. I had to get a roadmap to find out where it was. And where it was: 150 miles from my hometown of Omaha..

I remember driving and driving wondering if I would ever get there. After 100 miles, the countryside changed into rolling hills which were not far removed from the Missouri River. And here and there would appear a solitary Cedar tree. How did it get there, all by itself?

My two years in Cedar County were momentous for a callow priest wet behind the ears. My mother would die just two years after my ordination. On my day off, I would drive round trip, 300 miles, once a week to be with my parents. Then the pastor where I was stationed, would die, leaving me, a twenty five year old, responsible for a grade school, a high school, and a fair sized parish, in Hartington, the County seat.

And then my health broke and my father and I took a two month sabbatical in Arizona. Little did I realize that at age 62, I would return there.

In the Second Reading today, Saint Paul reminds us: *we walk by faith, not by sight.*"

We cannot see what awaits us over the next hill, around the next curve in the road, so we walk by faith moved along by the Spirit.

In the Gospel, the seed of the Kingdom is cast on the ground and then it springs up in the most surprising places, like the lone cedar tree appearing on the brow of a hill.

Each of us is a sower. And we know not where the seed falls or when it sprouts.

In 1960, I was assigned to Saint Adalbert Parish in Omaha. It was such a blessing to be back in my old neighborhood and close to my father. Some of my first convert instructions were given to a South High School girl named Sherry.

The seed fell on good ground. Today 65 years later, she keeps in touch as she fights the good fight against pancreatic cancer. Truly:

"she walks by faith, not by sight,"

yet, she is courageous.

Recently I received a letter from a young man I knew as a child in Scribner Nebraska.

He wrote: "When you gave Kristi and I pre-marriage instructions, you told us to pray together at night, and we listened, and we do, every night..."

We never know where the seed might land: a kind word here, an admonition somewhere else.

As we prepare to celebrate Father's Day, parents, know that you are seed planters!

We all are one way or the other. And we shall never know fully what we have planted till harvest time!

