



I suspect that most readers of these Friday Reflections, who are over 50, are members of a very secretive gang. And I want to urge you to come out of the closet and share some of your activities with me. But first the background.

The first fruits have appeared on the persimmon tree outside my window. It is on the hill going up to the chapel. Before long the leaves will drop and the reddish brown fruit will hang on the bare branches. Some persimmon trees traveled from east of the Mississippi but ours came from Asia. Its ancestor might have inspired Issa's haiku. This tree will provide a bright spot in the

graying landscape of winter. And some time in November the smell and wonderful taste of a persimmon pudding will be enjoyed around the hearth on a cold evening. However, there is much more to the story.

Generations ago someone decided to plant a seed realizing that he or she would never eat the fruit of the tree they hoped would come. Other hands would have nurtured the sapling. And still others, would have brought a young tree across the ocean. And somehow a descendent survives outside my window. 40 years ago it bore no fruit and there was some talk of cutting it down. But we nurtured it and the first fruits eventually came. I look forward to telling my 7-month-old grandson, Damien, someday over a bowl of pudding how he fits into the story of this tree. It is a saga which connects someone planting a seed long ago to a child, who will inherit the future, enjoying a bowl of pudding.

I know there are many members of today's "Persimmon Gang" reading this reflection. There are some of you who frequently, even daily, plant seeds of some nature which may take generations to grow. I also know you have a tendency not to talk about these things. But I want to encourage you to start sharing those stories among friends. And just as a personal favor I would like for you to share them with me as an inspiration for me to start a more frequent practice of planting some seed for the distant future. What are the ways in which the "Persimmon Gang" operates?

School is starting and I look at these young people walking by and think of what can I do perhaps not for them or for their children but their children's children. I know some of you have ideas to share!

I will of course respect your privacy but I really would like to know more about the seed planting adventures among my fascinating extended circle of friends. Well, if you are inclined to humor me in this, admittedly slightly weird request, just [CLICK HERE](#) and leave me a message.

I thank you, Issa thanks you, Damien thanks you!

Brother Toby