

Chris Stein Reflection
[March 5, 2021](#)

One thread that runs through today's readings is that of rejection.

In the first reading we heard about a group of sons and brothers that are filled with a jealousy of the youngest brother, Joseph, and the love that his father has for him. So these brothers plan and eventually attack, entrap, and sell Joseph into slavery.

Rejected by family.

In the Gospel, the servants of the master are continuously thrown out from the vineyard by the tenants that are running things. Eventually the father sends his son. This son we are to understand as Jesus. What do the tenants do? Not only do they throw the son out, but they kill him. And this is what happened to Jesus, His rejection and crucifixion.

Rejected by many of his own people.

What side are we on? Are we the rejectors or the rejected? Probably it is a little bit of both. Have we ignored the poor or the suffering, said we were too busy to help or talk to someone in need of a few minutes of our time, held someone's past over them, refusing to forgive? To be clear, there is a sense of avoidance that is good: to reject putting one's self into harmful or sinful situations is

always good and acceptable and to be commended. To reject temptation and the situations that bring those about is good.

On the other side, I think we all have probably been in the shoes of Joseph and Christ. We have all experienced rejection. And rejection hurts, especially when it is through no fault of our own. Maybe we are rejected because we are not with the popular crowd, we are vocal about a belief, propose and live our faith publicly? Maybe we have been rejected by our adult children or our brothers and sisters that we grew up with.

In these moments, Christ would say blessed are you: blessed are you because you are experiencing what He experienced and can unite that suffering to His. It hurts, it is a challenge, we certainly do not want it to be there forever. But since we experience it, accept it as a way of sanctification.

To clarify, we are not speaking of the rejection that Jesus talks about if the rejection takes place because of sinful lifestyles and harmful activities. We cannot live or be in sinful situations and then claim rejection if others choose not to engage. What am I speaking of? In my own life, I can think of various friends who have entered into sinful relationships or gotten involved in sinful activities. At times, family members or even myself have had to avoid going around these situations or relationships, so as not to provide scandal, be tempted themselves, or to even be seen as approving of the sin. For those living in sin to claim rejection does not get to the rejection that Jesus experiences and refers to. We are called to love everyone, yes. To be charitable, yes. To be respectful, yes. But to go into a situation that could be scandalous, sinful, or

make us complicit, no. In fact, I would say that it is the other way around: it is those living in this way that have chosen sin and evil and have rejected their family and friends by choosing the sin over them.

So for today, where are you standing? Are you currently rejecting or being rejected? Today, on this third Friday of Lent choose one and either seek forgiveness or reach out and forgive. Be reconciled and work towards unity.