



# Daily Reflections

**March 22, 2019**

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## Scripture

**Matthew 21: 33-46**

"Hear another parable.

There was a landowner who planted a vineyard,  
put a hedge around it,  
dug a wine press in it, and built a tower.

Then he leased it to tenants and went on a journey.

When vintage time drew near,  
he sent his servants to the tenants to obtain his produce.

But the tenants seized the servants and one they beat,  
another they killed, and a third they stoned.

Again he sent other servants, more numerous than the first ones,  
but they treated them in the same way.

Finally, he sent his son to them,  
thinking, 'They will respect my son.'

But when the tenants saw the son, they said to one another,  
'This is the heir.

Come, let us kill him and acquire his inheritance.'

They seized him, threw him out of the vineyard, and killed him.

What will the owner of the vineyard do to those tenants when he comes?"

They answered him,

"He will put those wretched men to a wretched death  
and lease his vineyard to other tenants  
who will give him the produce at the proper times."

Jesus said to them, Did you never read in the Scriptures:  
The stone that the builders rejected  
has become the cornerstone;  
by the Lord has this been done,  
and it is wonderful in our eyes?  
Therefore, I say to you,  
the Kingdom of God will be taken away from you  
and given to a people that will produce its fruit."  
When the chief priests and the Pharisees heard his parables,  
they knew that he was speaking about them.  
And although they were attempting to arrest him,  
they feared the crowds, for they regarded him as a prophet.

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## **Our Scripture Reflection**

Today's Gospel reading has been called, "Salvation History in capsule form." God's vineyard is His Kingdom and He placed His people in the vineyard to produce a harvest for Him. But each time God sent servants such as Moses and the Prophets to gather His produce, the workers refused to heed them. Finally, God sent His only Son. They killed Him. But God will not be deterred. He expects a return on His investment. He demands good fruit. Therefore, God turned away from His own people and entrusted the work to outsiders, the Gentiles. The message for us is simple and direct: God loves us and entrusts us to work in His Kingdom. What a privilege this is. But he expects results not excuses. What are you producing with the time and talent that has been given to you?

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## **Food for your Journey**

In the summer of 1950, Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., turned down the English-language rights to a Dutch manuscript after receiving a particularly harsh reader's report. The work was "very dull," the reader insisted, "a dreary record of typical family bickering, petty annoyances and adolescent emotions." Sales would be small because the main characters were neither familiar to Americans nor especially appealing. "Even if the work had come to light five years ago, when the subject was timely," the reader wrote, "I don't see that there would have been a chance for it."

Knopf wasn't alone. The Diary of a Young Girl, by Anne Frank, would be rejected by 15 others before Doubleday published it in 1952. More than 30 million copies are currently in print, making it one of the best-selling books in history. (David Oshinsky, "No thanks, Mr. Nabokov," New York Times, September 9, 2007.

<http://select.nytimes.com/preview/2007/09/09/books/1154688485546.htm?8tpw&emc=tpw>.

The article goes on to quote some other rejection letters sent out by Knopf editors:

- Pearl Buck's The Good Earth (Americans are "not interested in anything on China")
- George Orwell's Animal Farm (it's "impossible to sell animal stories in the U.S.A.")
- Jorge Luis Borges ("utterly untranslatable")
- Isaac Bashevis Singer ("It's Poland and the rich Jews again.")
- Sylvia Plath ("There certainly isn't enough genuine talent for us to take notice.")
- Jack Kerouac ("His frenetic and scrambling prose perfectly expresses the feverish travels of the Beat Generation. But is that enough? I don't think so".)

Moral of the story: If you want to be a published author, perseverance is a virtue.

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## **A Prayer from the Heart**

Dear God, In spite of all my failures and shortcomings, You trust me to do Your good work. I am humbled by Your love and trust. Help me to be persistent in my efforts to please You through my words and works in Your name. Amen