

March 15, 2026



## WEEKLY LETTER FROM MONSIGNOR KEN

Last week, we read from the Gospel of John, the story of the Samaritan woman at the well. This week, again from the Cycle A readings, the Gospel is also from John and is the story of the healing of a man born blind. At the end, Jesus challenges the Pharisees, and us, saying, “If you were blind, you would have no sin; but now you are saying, ‘We see,’ so your sin remains.” The obvious point of the challenge is that Jesus is not talking about physical sight.

If we are blessed with physical eyesight, we most likely have regular eye exams. These test the health of our eyes and the scope and strength of our vision. There aren’t any actual tests for spiritual vision, but we can do our own evaluation. So, how well do you see? The first thing we have to admit is that our values, what is important to us, influence what we notice, what we focus on. Just think of a buffet. Our eyes can see all the items on display, but our eyes are drawn to what we like. That’s what we give our attention to.

Do we see mostly negative things, and ignore the positive? Even though we have faith, we look at life only through the prism of materialism—money, health, actions. What about the presence and hand of God? Do we see only today and ignore the future? Do we focus on the future and forget today? There is so much more to sight than physical sight.

Everyone knows the hymn Amazing Grace, and you may even know the story behind it. John Newton had a troubled youth, losing his mother when he was six. He was rebellious and given to drinking, and was forced to serve in the Navy. He was so difficult that he was abandoned by his crew, and then forced to serve on a slave ship. During a voyage, during a severe storm, he nearly drowned and cried to God to help. He was rescued and that began his conversion. God still had more work to do with him. After that, John Newton voluntarily entered the slave trade, and by his admission was often cruel to the slaves. After several years, during one trip, he became violently ill. Perhaps seeing in that the sickness of his soul, he finally repented. He eventually became an Anglican priest and worked with William Wilberforce to abolish slavery.

All of that is captured in the words of the hymn we know so well. The second verse could have been sung by the man born blind in today’s Gospel, but especially by everyone who finally embraces and lives faith, and sees. That vision is not only a one-time conversion, but a lifetime of striving to see more and more clearly. Amazing grace, how sweet the sound, that saved a wretch like me! I once was lost, but now am found, was blind but now I see! How well do we see?

***“One thing I do know is that I was blind and now I see.” (John 9:25b)***