

30<sup>th</sup> September 2023

## Seeing

**"It is only with the heart that one can see rightly;  
what is essential is invisible to the eye."**

Antoine de Saint-Exupéry, *The Little Prince*

I visited a blind lady to find her home in semi-darkness, which deepened as we talked. She must have picked up my anxiety, for she suddenly asked, "Is there something wrong?" Before I responded, she went on, "Oh, dear. Are we in darkness? You should have said." I was about to offer to help, but I realised that, even with no lights, *she* knew exactly what she was doing while I would have been stumbling around. Whatever she did, the lights came on again, and when she returned, she said, "I'm OK in the dark. I can see what you can't see. But then, we all see things differently, don't we?" Perhaps that what Martin Heidegger had in mind when he suggested in *Being and Time* that there was "seeing beyond seeing".

I was preaching later on the story of "Blind Bartimeus". That story, my pastoral visit, the quote above from *The Little Prince*, and Heidegger's idea gave me the words of a hymn which I set to William Croft's lovely tune, "St Matthew". Might there be "seeing beyond seeing" for us too?

*Your presence, Lord, I seek to know, though you I may not see.  
I come with hope; my one desire is that you come to me.  
Open my eyes that I might know your closeness as I wait.  
Open my hands, that I might hold your mercy, full and great.  
Though blinded by my selfish ways, cast down in sin and shame,  
I turn to God's forgiving love to find some peace again.  
Open my eyes to life and truth; for Christ's own light I pray.  
Open my soul and bid me come to walk His pilgrim way.  
Though blinded by the world's desires, and tempted by its power,  
I seek the Spirit's blessing here in this, my needful hour.  
Open my eyes to grace and love, to mercies sure and true.  
Open my mind that I may find my life transformed in you.  
Though blinded by my own concerns, my needs above the rest,  
I hear your call to care for those in sorrow and distress.  
Open my eyes that I may bring compassion to their plight.  
Open my heart that I may show God's Life, and Love, and Light.*

### **A prayer for today**

*Lord, help me to see, even in my blindness, what really, really matters. Amen*

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