

News Story Summary

In 1995, Mary Ann Franco of Okeechobee, Florida, awoke after surgery following a car accident to find she was legally blind. Yet, on April 6, 2016 Ms. Franco awoke from another surgery after a fall in her home to find that she could see again.

John Afshar, the surgeon who conducted the surgery, called the restoration of Mary Ann’s vision a true miracle. “I really don’t have a scientific explanation for it,” he told ABC News.

His best theory is that an artery supplying blood to her optic nerve inadvertently got kinked during her surgery twenty years ago. Then, during the April 6 spinal surgery, which was meant to alleviate pain in her neck and arm, the surgeons “unknowingly probably unkinked that vessel reestablishing blood flow and, therefore, she could have regained her vision.”

Mrs. Franco has another explanation, however--one that doesn’t include any words such as “unknowingly, inadvertently, probably” or “could have.”

She calls it an act of God. She now not only has her sight restored, but she says she was colorblind before the accident. Now, she can see in color.

(For more on this story, enter the phrase “A 'True Miracle': Woman Regains Sight After 21 Years of Blindness” in your search engine. You can also search “Medical Miracle Restores Vision” on YouTube.)

Focus Attention

As the group settles, modify the “First Thoughts” paragraph (Leader Guide, p. 114) to include the news story about Mary Ann Franco. Emphasize the theory from the surgeon about the unkinked artery. Ask the question on PSG page 112: *Why do some people search for any explanation of a true miracle that eliminates God from the equation?* Explain that in the Bible passage for this session, God uses a miracle to validate the gospel message about Jesus.

Challenge

Refer back to the news story. Comment that it gets people’s attention when something happens that defies a natural or logical explanation. But getting someone’s attention is a wasted opportunity if we don’t redirect the attention on Jesus. Mrs. Franco gave credit to God for her sight being restored. Ask, *What “everyday miracles” give us a chance to give glory to God in our own lives?* Close by praying that your group can be bold in making the most of opportunities to focus people’s attention on Jesus through our own stories.