

My Story

I'm Bill Thomas and I'm here representing our M. A. P. (Mission Advancement Planning) Committee. It's a committee instituted by our Bishop to help the Diocese prepare for it's Bicentennial in 2020.

In our committee discussions we realized that, in many cases, our religion has become routine. We've gotten into a faith slump and we're missing the excitement of old. Nobody's walking on water anymore. You don't see people casting demons into pigs and watching them run off a cliff. What's happened to the miracles? Where's the pizzazz?

Like the apostle Thomas in the Bible, some people are doubting Thomases today. They don't believe that miracles happen any more. As a matter of fact, my whole family is a bunch of Thomases.

However, miracles do still happen. We just don't hear about them. People are afraid to share their own miracle stories. They might be labeled as religious nuts. Just this week on ABC's "The View," Joy Behar, talking about the Vice President, said, "It's one thing to talk to Jesus. It's another thing when Jesus talks to you." She said, "That's called mental illness."

I think we need to talk about the miracles in our lives. We need to hear what's happening with other people. We need to know that the pizzazz is still there.

So, I'm going to tell you my story. If you think that I'm a religious nut and that I have mental illness, that's OK... but this really happened to me.

Introducing: **Story Time**

First, a little background: About 25 years ago I was moving a big round bale of hay - about 1000 pounds - with my tractor. I had it in the loader bucket and lifted it too high and it rolled back over me. It broke my back (a couple of vertebrae), broke 9 ribs, gave me a bloody nose. and wrenched my shoulder. Everything eventually healed and for the most part, hasn't caused me any lasting problems - everything except my shoulder. It was stiff and I couldn't raise my arm all the way up. It always hurt, sometimes just a dull ache but if I used it too much or twisted it the wrong way, it was really painful. I went to physical therapy for a while and finally the Doctor said just live with it and take Tylenol if it gets too bad - and I did.

Now for my miracle: Years later (about 10 or 15) I was sitting in the choir on Sunday. We always held hands during the Our Father and this Sunday was no different. I was in the middle row, on the end. I took the hands of the person beside me and of the person in the row in front of me. I had no more hands so Truman Metts, who was behind me, placed his hand on my shoulder - the sore one. As we prayed my shoulder got very hot. It wasn't like a burn, but it was uncomfortably warm. I was so distracted that I could hardly pray.

Finally, we finished the prayer and Truman took his hand away. My shoulder immediately was cool again... but it didn't hurt anymore. And it hasn't hurt since! I believe I was miraculously healed!

We'd like to make this "Story Time" a weekly event, at least through the end of Lent. If you have a story you'd like to share, please tell Father or me so we can schedule you for a Sunday. And you're welcome to use my sign.