

*Do you believe in miracles?* On February 22nd, 1980, at the 1980 Winter Olympics, Al Michaels, a sportscaster, proclaimed those words as a group of college age kids from America played the most Soviet Union Hockey team, considered the greatest team in the world, having even beaten the all-stars of the National Hockey League. As the clock ticked down to ten seconds, and as the puck was sliding away from the American goal, the clock hit zero, Michael's shouted *Yes!* This was probably the greatest upset in sport's history.

Ten years ago this past week, Captain Chesley Sullenburger landed a plane filled with 155 people on the Hudson without a life being lost and this moment has now been referred to as the *Miracle on the Hudson*. This past July, the world watched and prayed as 12 Thai boys and their coach, trapped for many days and nearing death, were rescued from cave by a heroic group of rescuers.

Are these events miracles? I do not believe that God is hockey fan chanting USA as our hockey team played a game. Experts would point to the amazing flying skills of Captain Sully and the perfect circumstances that surrounded the event. Even though all the boys and their coach were saved, a courageous Navy Seal from Thailand died during the rescue.

Yet, each event took human beings functioning at their highest capacity to succeed. Each of these extraordinary moments reflected a commitment to people working together, supporting one another, and great capacity to train and prepare for a moment that they probably never expected to be called to achieve. These three events lifted human spirits and made us feel better about our humanity. Do you believe in miracles?

Our Gospel today gives us the first miracle that Jesus will perform while he is on earth. The Wedding Feast of Cana is a well –known scripture passage to us. Oftentimes, at parish gatherings or parties, if the adult liquids appear to be running low, someone will kid me with the words: *Father, we might need you to do another Cana.*

We are amazed at all the miracles of Jesus, and this one is far from the most awesome. I would think raising a man from who has been dead for four days, or

feeding 5000 people with a few loaves of bread and some fish, calming the storm on the sea and then walking on the waters, are miraculous events even more astonishing than the Cana miracle. But I love this story for what it reveals to about Jesus.

First of all he is at a wedding. There you go: you have the Son of God, Lord of the Heavens and the Earth, at a wedding. We can wonder if Jesus did the hockey pokey at this wedding. Did he congratulate the groom and kiss the bride? Did he complain that the band was too loud?

Scripture scholars believe that it was probably a wedding in a small village where everyone was invited to rejoice in the event. There must have been a great deal of rejoicing because the wine is running low. Most nationalities consider themselves hospitable. Still, a first century Jew who did not have enough wine for his guests would have been shamed.

But who is going to notice the wine running low? That is a key to this first miracle. Jesus, perhaps caught up in deciding whether to order fish or meat, does not see the looming crisis. Mary, the mother of Jesus, is also at the wedding. With the heart of a sensitive and attentive woman, she sees that the wine is running low. A young couple is about to have their wedding down ruined. No bride should be disappointed on her wedding day. So, Mary goes to Jesus and simply says, *they have no wine*. Jesus responds that it is not yet the plan of salvation that he begins to do miracles. That will come later.

I love the words that follow his saying it not yet his time. Mary can read the heart of her son and knows nothing she asks of him will be refused. Mary says with complete confidences to the wedding stewards: *do whatever he says*. So, Jesus, without drawing any attention on himself, has six large water jars filled with water. When the chief steward tastes the water, now wine, and a far better wine than had been previously poured the chief steward is awed struck.

The six stone jars would have had about 120 to 150 gallons of wine. 150 gallons! Jesus must have loved a good party. He is a good of abundance: 12 baskets of

leftovers, so many fish that nets are breaking, seeds sown everyone mercy for every sinner. He is revealing to us a God of abundance.

Don't miss a key detail: Jesus does this miracle quietly. He does not want to steal the attention of the guests from the bride and groom. He does this miracle so a young couple can have a happy wedding day and for love of his mother. Today, we have presented before us another miracle: bread turned into his body and wine into his blood.

I have a lot of pictures and plaques. So many that I have placed some on the outside wall of my office. One reads.



I hope as you go forth today, you see the wondrous presence of God in your life and in the world around you. If you are attentive, you will experience it.