



## January 2019 Reflection

*"Then, we could just step through the clouds... and into Heaven."*

Mattie J.T. Stepanek

In this season of endings and beginnings, we have the celebration of Epiphany to remind us that what we seek is certainly more than we imagine. The wise men had the courage to set out on a journey that they could not possibly have understood or envisioned. We realize that we are unlikely to have an epiphany of our own, unless we show similar courage to advance into the unknown. Mattie Stepanek lived and wrote about that kind of courage, and what it yields.

In one of his earlier collections of poetry, *Journey through HeartSongs*, we find a poetic and spiritual imagination of the inner voyage that is required when one asks the great questions of life, written from the beautiful perspective of a child. One poem in particular seems very fitting for this season, where so much is dying around us as we move through winter and celebrate a holy birth. The hope in this poem, which Mattie titled, "*Climbing to Heaven*," makes me believe that I may indeed be *so, so, so close*. Such hope gives me the courage to take another step, and another and another, on my own spiritual journey. And perhaps it will do the same for others as well.

I encourage readers to share the inspiration of Mattie's message and courage as we journey forward in time and life, with choices that can help us realize just how close we are to Heaven, and just how close God is to us. Please visit the Guild's website for our January theme message and poem on "moving forward," and a "*Reflect, Respond, and Reach Out*" activity suggestion page.

Doreen Engel  
Director, Mattie's Guild

### Climbing to Heaven

In the winter, trees reach  
Up to touch the sky.  
Without their leaves,  
The trees look like hands  
And fingers stretching up  
So, so, so high.  
And if you look at the  
Tallest tree in our backyard,  
You can see that it is  
So, so, so close to Heaven.  
Perhaps we could go out  
And climb  
Up the tree,  
Up the hand,  
Up the fingers,  
And into the sky.  
Then, we could just step  
Through the clouds,  
. . . And into Heaven.

Mattie J.T. Stepanek  
January 17, 1996

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The Mattie J.T. Stepanek Guild  
[www.Mattie4Sainthood.org](http://www.Mattie4Sainthood.org)