

I wonder what they saw in the sky that first night. What was it that got the ones we call Magi or Wise Men thinking? What was it that motivated them to pack and begin a journey to who knew where? *Something* had been revealed to them. But what was it? Was it something truly in the sky, or was it something they envisioned in their minds, in their hearts?

We don't have much historical information about these wise men and their journey. St. Matthew says they came from the East. Some have speculated they were from Persia. We like to think that there were three of them but St. Matthew doesn't say that and the number has varied throughout the church's history; some have even enumerated as many as 12. We call them Caspar, Melchior, and Balthazar but those names didn't become attached to the Magi until the seventh century. And what about "the star?" It has been viewed as a supernatural phenomenon, a comet, or perhaps as a conjunction or grouping of planets.

This anonymity and lack of historical information is a reminder that this story, this Epiphany journey, is not just the wise men's journey; it is *everyone's* journey. The truth of sacred scripture is never limited to or contained only in the past.

I don't know what was in the sky, what they saw, that first night. I don't know what was in their minds; what they thought, asked, or talked about. I don't know what was in their hearts; what they felt, dreamed, or longed for. But I know that there have been times when we each have experienced Epiphany; times when our night sky has been lit brightly, times when our minds have been illumined, times when our hearts have been enlightened. Those times have revealed to us a life and world larger than before. They have been moments that gave us the courage to travel beyond the borders and boundaries that usually circumscribe our lives. Epiphanies are those times when something calls us, moves us, to a new place and we see the face of God in a new way; so human that it almost seems ordinary, maybe too ordinary to believe.

That's what happened to the wise men. They began to see and hear the stories of their lives. Something stirred within them and they began to wonder, to imagine, that their lives were part of a much larger story. Could it be that the one who created life, who hung the stars in the sky, noticed them, knew them, lived within them, and was calling

them? Could it be that the light they saw in the sky was a reflection of the divine light that burned within them, that burns within each one of us?

To seriously consider these questions is to begin the journey. That journey took the wise men to the house where they found the answer to their questions in the arms of his mother, Mary. We may travel a different route than the wise men did but the answer is the same.

Yes, Yes, Yes. God notices us, knows us, lives within us, and calls us. God is continually revealing God's self in and through humanity, in the flesh.

Maybe it was the day you said, "I love you" and knew that it was about more than just romance or physical attraction. Perhaps it was the moment you really believed your life was sacred, holy, and acceptable to God. Maybe it was the time you kept vigil at the bedside of one who was dying and you experienced the joy that death is not the end.

These are the stories of our lives, epiphanies that forever change who we are, how we live, and the road we travel. They are moments of ordinary everyday life in which divinity is revealed in humanity and we see God's glory face to face. As 2019 begins, may we have *many* epiphanies. Amen.