

## Present in the beginning

### ■ READ: A selection from Genesis 1:26-31

*Then God said, "Let us make humankind in our image, according to our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the wild animals of the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth."*

*So God created humankind in his image,  
in the image of God he created them;  
male and female he created them.*

### ■ REFLECT:

In the story of the creation of the first two humans, the cast of characters is actually more extensive than it appears at first glance. Of course, there are the two humans and God the creator. There's also the Spirit, hovering over the scene. And there's the second person of the Trinity, the Word who was with God in the beginning, through whom all things were created (John 1). That person, Jesus Christ, may not be present in his human flesh quite yet, but he's certainly part of this scene.

As God squats in the dust, gathering it into the form of a man, he has another human in mind—Jesus Christ. Though Jesus has yet to be born into the world, when he is, he will define humanity for all time. He is first—*alpha*—and ultimate—*omega* (Revelation 1:8).

So when God creates that man and that woman in Genesis, fashioning them after his image, he is really fashioning them after the image of Jesus Christ, who is *the* image of God (Colossians 1:15). If we humans bear God's image, Christ *is* God's image.

Keep this in mind the next time you hear that it's our ability to reason, to create things, or to relate to other people: that it is the image of God in us. It might be that. Or it might simply be Jesus Christ, the perfect human, the one there from the beginning, the one who is always interceding for us (Romans 8:34). If we worry that the image of God has grown dim in us, we can be confident that through Christ, it's shining brightly.

### ■ PRAY:

Jesus, I am grateful that you are the image of God, and that you are the true human. And I'm thankful that through the Holy Spirit, I'm united to you. I pray that you would shape me to look more and more like you each day. Amen.