

How do you relate to God?

Pope Francis says that one of the most important things the Church helps us to recognize is that “*God takes the initiative, that ‘he has loved us first.’*” (1 John 4:19).”

The Bible begins with an account of God’s initiative in the Book of Genesis, which describes the beginning of all life as a product of God’s intentional plan.

Genesis portrays how God first created the world out of nothing, and created human beings in His image and likeness. Genesis tells again and again that God blessed His creation, and saw that it was “very good” (Gen 1:1-31).

Our Catholic faith affirms that God created us out of His “free and unselfish love.” Through the lens of faith, being human means being a child of God created out of *infinite love*. The story of creation reminds the faithful that the first human experience in the world was being cared for by God and receiving God’s love.

Jesuit priest James Martin explores how being “a child of God” relates to our everyday lives by suggesting that God “ultimately invites us to be ourselves.” Encouraging us to cherish our true identity as the “selves that God created,” Martin shares:

“At the heart of this is accepting who you are before God. ‘For it was you who formed my inward parts; you knit me together in my mother’s womb,’ in the words of Psalm 139. ‘I praise you for I am fearfully and wonderfully made’ (13-14). The beginning of sanctity is loving yourself as a creation of God.”

He invites us to consider how our personal relationship with God begins with loving ourselves for who we are.

LORD, you have searched me and you know me.

*You know when I sit and stand;
You understand my thoughts from afar.*

*You sift through my travels and my rest;
With all my ways you are familiar.*

*Even before a word is on my tongue,
LORD, you know it completely.*

*Behind and before you encircle me
And rest your hand upon me.*

*Such knowledge is too wonderful for me,
Far too lofty for me to reach...*

*You formed my inmost being;
You knit me together in my mother’s
womb*

*I praise you, for I am fearfully and
wonderfully made.*

Psalm 139:1-6, 13-14

“Before I formed you in the womb, I knew you.

