303 Four (*Quatuor*)

According Augustine, book 11, *De civitate*, chapter 31,[[1]](#endnote-1) the number four is the first even number. And thus, four is the next number after the number three, thus the four evangelists were even closer in teaching to the Trinity.

¶ However they are figured by the four rings by which the ark of God was carried, Exod. 25[:12].

Again, by the four animals, four other halters, Ezech. 1[:5] and Apo. [4:6].

¶ Again, by the four rivers of paradise, Gen. 2[:10].

Again, by the four wheels of the cherubim, Ezech. 10[:9].

Again, by the four galleries which were in the house of the forest of Libanus, between the cedar pillars, but also among the apostles and first teachers of the Church who were the four pillars, 3 Kings 7[:2]. Jerome says in the preface upon Mark,[[2]](#endnote-2) there are four qualities by which the four evangelists joined the precepts, commandments, testimonies, and examples. And it follows in these four qualities are fear, faith, hope, and charity. We begin with fear, they are built on hope, and they are perfected with charity.

¶ For the end of the precept is charity. These are the four months which Christ set forth before the harvest saying, [John 4:35]: “Do you not say, There are yet four months, and then the harvest comes?”

1. Augustine, *De civitate Dei* 11.31 (PL 41:344): Hoc itaque satis sit admonere, quod totus impar primus numerus ternarius est, totus par quaternarius: ex quibus duobus septenarius constat. [↑](#endnote-ref-1)
2. Jerome, *Praefatio Hieronymi in Quatuor Evangelia* (PL 29:528): Vel dum eumdem [Col.0528B] sensum alius aliter expressit, ille qui unum e quatuor primum legerat, ad ejus exemplum caeteros quoque aestimaverit emendandos. [↑](#endnote-ref-2)