277 Father (*Pater*)

Augustine[[1]](#endnote-1) in a *Sermone* of the Lord,[[2]](#endnote-2) concerning the way of making a sermon 2, says that in the old testament God is the Lord on account of the severe punishment, but in the new testament he taught his disciples freely that he was the father, Matt. 6[:9]: “Thus,” he said, “shall you pray: Our Father who art in heaven,” etc.

¶ For according to Hilary, book one, *De Trinitate*,[[3]](#endnote-3) God is by the name of power, Father is by the name of piety. In the figure[[4]](#endnote-4) of which, Luke 15[:21] when the prodigal son said, “Father, I have sinned.” He kissed him. Where Peter of Ravenna said,[[5]](#endnote-5) why do we not return to the father, who did not say to the returning prodigal son, Where have you been, What did you do, What became of the things which you carried away. But kissing him he said [Luke 15:22]: “Bring forth quickly the first robe,” etc. For the power of love did not see the offenses. Thus far Peter. So, we also do, for certainly we spend our times evilly. And we say to the Father, [Luke 15:19]: “I am not worthy to be called your son.” Just as Peter who was crucified for you, or just as Paul who was beheaded, but make me just like yours among the number of the saved.

¶ Certainly God,[[6]](#endnote-6) God in the custom of a good bird catcher is inclined to recall those sons flying away with reclamation of his own body reddened on the cross, Osee [9:11]:

¶ As for Ephraim, they have flown away like a bird.” Ephraim is interpreted as fruitful, it designates being abundant in this world, they who might easily forget God, according to that of Deut. 32[:15]: “The beloved grew fat and kicked.”

¶ Wherefore,[[7]](#endnote-7) it would be safe for us to do as boys do who fearing for themselves for a beating carry the rod to the father by which they will be beaten. Which seen, the father has mercy. If therefore honor and love are owed to the father of the flesh, according to that of Deut. 5[:16]: “Honor your father and mother,” that you may live a long time in the land. And Deut. 27[:16]: “Cursed be he that honors not his father and mother.” And Eccli. 7[:29]: “Honor your father and forget not the groanings of your mother.” These things are owed much more to God our spiritual Father, and the cause of creation generally, and the cause of adoption spiritually, and the cause of the incarnation and redemption singularly, according to that of Mal. 1[:6]: “If then I be a father, where is my” love? Wherefore Chrysostom, homily 18, *Super Mattheum*,[[8]](#endnote-8) therefore the Gospel introduces the similitude of the fathers and sons, that if we despair because of our sins, because of paternal goodness we may have hope. Thence it is that Eliseus seeing his master to be taken up into the air, 4 Reg. 2[:12]: “He cried: My father, my father, the chariot of Israel, and the driver thereof.” Which word Gregory treating, *Super Ezechielem*, the second part, homily 9,[[9]](#endnote-9) says that that one said chariot and driver because the father needed to carry the son and drive him. Wherefore Augustine, *Epistola* 84,[[10]](#endnote-10) if you call God the Father. Come to the honor of the father, guard the customs of the father, fulfill the will of the father, if you wish to obtain his inheritance. Because it is the son despising the father who merits to receive the inheritance. Wherefore Christ when he was reproached by his putative father and mother, Luke 2[:49] responded, “I must be about my father's business?” Wherefore Eccli. 3[:7]: “He that honors his father shall enjoy a long life.”

1. Cf. *Fasciculus morum*1.9 (p. 68): Unde Augustinus: “Vocatur, inquit, Christus novi testamenti ‘Pater noster qui es in celis’.... [↑](#endnote-ref-1)
2. Cf. Augustine, Sermo de Scripturis 58.1 (PL 38): Ipse Filius sicut audistis, cum Evangilium legeretur, docuit discipulos suos et fideles suos hanc Orationem. Spem habemus obtinendae causae nostrae, quando talis jurisperitus nobis Preces dictavit. Assessor Patris, sicut confessi estis, qui sedet ad dexteram Patris: ipse est advocatus noster, qui futurus est judex noster. Inde enim venturus est judicare vivos et mortuos. Tenete ergo et hanc Orationem, quam reddituri estis ad octo dies.

   Cf. Sicardus Cremonensis, *De officiis ecclesiae* 6 (PL 213:171): Et vide quod quandoque ponitur personaliter, ut Deus genuit Deum, id est Pater Filium, et uterque [Col.0171D] Deus est; Dominus, ut ait Augustinus, non est naturae sed potestatis, sed hic secundum quod dicitur a dominio, quia «Dominus nomen est illi.» Verum secundum quod dicitur a dominando, indicativum est relationis, «quia sicut singillatim unamquamque personam Deum, ac Dominum confiteri Christiana veritate compellimur; ita tres deos, aut Dominos dicere catholica religione prohibemur.» Ac si dicat haec essentialia non pluraliter, sed singulariter dicuntur de omnibus, et in summa. [↑](#endnote-ref-2)
3. Hilary of Poitiers, *De Trinitate* 1.8-9. (PL 10:31): Deus intelligentiam excedens fide attingendus.---His itaque piae opinionis atque doctrinae studiis animus imbutus, in secessu quodam ac specula pulcherrimae hujus sententiae requiescebat, non sibi relictum quidquam aliud a natura sua intelligens, in quo majus officium praestare Conditori suo minusve posset, quam ut tantum eum esse intelligeret, quantus et intelligi non potest, et potest credi: dum intelligentiam et fides sibi necessariae religionis assumit, et infinitas aeternae potestatis excedit.

   1.9. In immortalitatis spem assurgit Hilarius. Hanc ratio ipsa ei suadet.---Suberat autem omnibus his naturalis adhuc sensus, ut pietatis professionem spes aliqua incorruptae beatitudinis aleret, quam sancta de Deo opinio et boni mores quodam victricis militiae [Col.0031B] stipendio mererentur. … [↑](#endnote-ref-3)
4. Cf. *Fasciculus morum*1.9 (p. 68): In cuius figura, quando filius prodigus bona sua dissipasset vivendo luxuriose, statim ut dixit “Pater, peccavi in celum et coram te,” pater osculatus est eum. Et ideo attende hoc quod dicit Petrus Ravennatensis: “Quare, inquit, moramini in peccatis, quare non redimus ad patrem? Non enim dicit pater et iste filio prodigo, ‘Ubi fuisti? Ubi sunt que tecum optulisti?’ Non, ‘Quare tantam gloriam in tantam turpitudinem commutasti?’ Set continuo ait: ‘Proferte stolam primam,’ quia delicta non vidit vis amoris.” Hec ille. Sic ergo faciamus nos cum omnia tempora in malis dissipamus. Redeamus cum humilitate ad Patrem et dicamus sicut ille dixit: “Pater, peccavi in celum et coram te. Iam non sum dignus vocarei filius tuus, sicut Petrus crucifixus, Paulus occisus, Laurencius assatus, Bartholomeus excoriatus; et tamenj mediante tua misericordia permaxima fac me sicut unum de numero salvandorum.” [↑](#endnote-ref-4)
5. Cf. Peter Chrysologus, *Sermo* 3 (PL 52:193): Cito proferte stolam primam. Pater hic qui in secundis esse non passus est peccatorem, plus de venia quam de justitia gaudium vult habere. Cito proferte stolam primam. Non dixit, unde venis? fuisti ubi? ubi sunt quae tulisti? quare tantam gloriam tanta turpitudine commutasti? sed: Cito proferte stolam primam, et induite illum. Videtis quia delicta non videt vis amoris. [↑](#endnote-ref-5)
6. Cf. *Fasciculus morum*1.9 (p. 68): Et adverte: Christus enim pater noster benedictus facit ad modum nobilium qui aves suas avolante4s reclamant. ... Unde Osee dicitur: “Effraym quasi avis avolavit.” “Effraym” enim frugifer interpretatur et signateos qui propter habundanciam frugum ac ceterarum rerum temporalium af obsequiis divinis fugiunt. [↑](#endnote-ref-6)
7. Cf. *Fasciculus morum*1.9 (p. 68): Et ideo consulo quo faciamus sicut pueri faciunt disciplinabiles et discreti, qui cum se senciunt aliquid contra prec epta paterna deliquisse, assumunt sibi virgam et vadunt ad patrem petentes misericordiam, et preparent se totaliter ad disciplinam et patris voluntatem; quod videns pater pietate motus rigorem omnino tollit aut saltem in bona parte compescit. [↑](#endnote-ref-7)
8. (Pseudo-)Chrysostomus, *Opus imperfectum in Mattheum* Homilia 18 ex cap. 7.10 (PG 56:732-733): Ideo patrum et filiorum similitudinem introduxit, ut etsi propter peccata nostra desperemus, propter paternam veritatem, bonitatem Dei speremus. [↑](#endnote-ref-8)
9. Gregory, *Homiliarum Ezechielem* 2.9.15 (PL 76:1052): Pater mi, pater mi, currus Israel et auriga ejus (IV Reg. II, 12). Quid est, fratres charissimi, quod Elias currus Israel et auriga dicitur, nisi quia auriga agitat, currus portat? [Col.1052C] Doctor ergo qui mores populi et per patientiam sustinet, et sacri eloquii verbis docet, et currus dicitur et auriga. Currus, quia tolerando portat; auriga, quia exhortando agitat. Currus, quia mala sustinet; auriga, quia populum bonis admonitionibus exercet. [↑](#endnote-ref-9)
10. Augustine, cf. Chrysostom, *In symolum Apostolorum expositio* homilia 1, *Opera omnia* (Lyon: Joannis Henrici Huguetan, 1687, 5:287b: Ergo credo in Deum patrem omnipotentem. Ecce patrem Deum vocatis. Ad honorem patris venite, mores patris custodite, ejus voluntatem implere, si vultis haereditatem ejus accipere. [↑](#endnote-ref-10)