306 Forty (*Quadraginta*)

The fortieth number in Sacred Scripture is made sacred and open by sacred mysteries. For before the law was received Moses[[1]](#endnote-1) fasted for forty days, [Exod. 34:28]. Under the law Elias fasted as much [3 Kings 19:8]. After the law Christ fasted as much, [Matt. 4:2].

Again, God rained water of the flood for forty days and forty nights, [Gen. 7:12]. And the spies of Moses explored the promised land for forty days, [Num. 14:34]. And the people of Israel ate manna forty years in the desert, [Exod. 16:35]. And Jonah preached the overthrow of Nineveh in the space of forty days, [Jonah 3:4]. And Christ after his resurrection remained on earth for forty days, [Acts 1:3]. And he was in the womb for forty weeks, [Luke 2:6]. Also, in the sepulcher for forty hours, [Matt. 28:1].

Again, he fasted forty days because of the mystical sacrament, because the number forty is superabundant. And aggregated from its parts it ascends to the number fifty. Its parts are seven, namely, the numbers twenty, ten, eight, five, four, two, and one. Which added together yield the number fifty. The number fifty however conveys quiet and remission as well as jubilation, thus by a similitude from the fasting (*jejunio*) of Lent (*quadragesimali*) one is raised to eternal rest.

Concerning the number forty applied to fasting, see more above chapter [169] Fasting (*Ieiunium*), at the end.

1. Cf. *Fasciculus morum* 6.6 (p. 646): In cuius figura Moyses ieiunando quadrginta diebus cum Domino loquitur familiariter, ut patet Exodo. Similiter Helias quadraginta diebus ieiunando perrexit ad montem Dei Oreb cum Domino locuturus, Regum 19.

Cf. William de Lancea, *Diaetae salutis* 10.6 (8:345b): Ideo tam Moyses, quam Elias, quam Christus quadraginta diebus et quadraginta noctibus jejunaverunt. [↑](#endnote-ref-1)