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THE THE EIGHTH MONTH

Miyazia 03

(April 11)

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**IN THE NAME OF THE FATHER AND THE SON AND THE HOLY SPIRIT,
ONE GOD. AMEN.**

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On this day died the holy father Abba John, Bishop of the city of Jerusalem. This holy man had Jewish parents, who kept the Law of the Torah (i.e. Pentateuch). When he had arrived at man's estate his parents taught him the doctrine of the Law of the Torah, and he became exceedingly learned therein. And he disputed with the Christians, and argued with them, until at length he became certain in his heart and believed that our Lord Jesus Christ came into the world and that He was God in truth. And he believed through Saint Justus, Bishop of Jerusalem, who baptized him with Christian baptism, and made him a deacon in the city of Jerusalem. Then he advanced in good works, and in knowledge, until he became fit to be Bishop of the city of Jerusalem. When Andrianus became king, he who was called "Elias," he commanded [the people] to rebuild the ruined places of the city of Jerusalem; now his name was called "Elias." Then the Jews built the western gate, of great strength (?), and he made (i.e. set) over the gate a tablet of costly stone on which was engraved the name of "Elias." Now in his days Jerusalem was filled with stone, and with Gentiles and Jews. When the Gentiles saw the Christians coming to Golgotha and praying there, they prevented them, and built there a temple dedicated to the planet Venus, and they would not allow the Christians to pass that site. Then there came upon this holy man great tribulation and sorrow, and provocation from the Gentiles, who lived in the city of Jerusalem, and they beat him often, and dragged (?) him about, and treated him with insult, and afflicted him, and he entreated God that his soul might be received to Him; and he died in peace, having sat upon the Episcopal throne for two years. Salutation to John, the persecuted, the son of Mary.

And on this day also died the holy father, the pure virgin, Abba Michael, the seventy-first Archbishop of the city of Alexandria. The soul of this father desired what was good, that is to say, to put on the apparel of the holy angels, or the garb of the monk, and he became a monk in the church of Saint Abba Macarius, in the desert of Scete. He lived in the desert until he was an old man, and he was set over many monks, and he fought a good fight all his days, and he pleased God. And he labored and did a great work until he reached the archiepiscopate, which is Christian ordination in this world, and in the heavenly world, which is to come. When Abba Gabriel, the archbishop who preceded him on the throne of Mark the evangelist, died, there was no Archbishop of Alexandria for four months, and the bishops, and priests, and the chief doctors spent a period of three months in searching out, and trying to choose the man who was best suited for the office of archbishop. And after much searching, and great labor, they chose three desert monks, concerning whom it was testified that they were Orthodox in Faith, and learned. And they wrote the names of these three men on three small pieces of paper, and they sealed each one of them with wax, and laid them on the altar. And the bishops, and priests, and monks remained praying for three days and three nights, and they consecrated the Offering; and they entreated God Most High to set over them a good shepherd and a faithful priest. And after three days they called a certain small child and they said unto him, "Take out for us one sealed paper from among these four seals." And the boy took out that seal under which was the name of this holy father Abba Michael, and all men knew that God had chosen him. And he was of the sons of Makedos, of the cell of Darsen, which is in the desert; and all the men cried out, "He is worthy, he is worthy, he is worthy"; and straightway they enthroned him archbishop. And he entered upon his office with all the gracious excellence, which befits the archiepiscopacy. And they chose a scribe to write his epistles to every country, and to every bishop. And this father used to teach the people, and exhort the sinners to repent of their sins; and all his flock feared him because they knew that God was with him. He was pure in heart and in soul, and he had no desire for any of the dainty meats and delicate foods of this world, and he coveted neither the honor thereof nor its possessions. And he strove and understood the visiting of the poor and needy, and he gave them what they

asked for their needs, and whatsoever remained after their wants were satisfied he spent in building churches. This father did not hold his office a full year, but lived a little short of it, and he died in peace. Salutation to Michael.

And on this day also died Marke, the poor, the Christian. This holy man was a native of the city of Antioch, and he had a trusted friend whose name was Guespar, an infidel, and a worshipper of idols; and the two men differed about nothing whatsoever except their Faith. One day Marke and this Gufar departed on a pilgrimage to the city of Bagdad (Baghdad), and they spent five days in traveling through a desert wherein there was no man. Now Marke the Christian was a rich man, and he had with him thirty pounds of gold, and whilst he was on the road he fell sick of a violent disease, which brought him [nigh unto] death. And he forced himself and wrote a document, saying thus: "From Thy servant, the son of Thy handmaiden, I have thirty pounds of gold fastened to the black mule and it is Thine, O my Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, Glory be to Thee! In atonement for my sins, and for my errors, so that Thou mayest give me the kingdom of heaven; and it shall not be for my children, my wife and my kinsfolk." And he rolled up the paper, and sealed it, and called his friend Guespar, and he made him swear by his gods that he would do for him everything, which he told him. And when Guespar had sworn, he said unto him, "When I die do not touch me, but take this paper and the thirty pounds of gold with the mule on which it is, and give it to my Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God; take it in thy hand and do not tell my children." And Guespar said unto him, "Art thou mad, O my friend? Didst thou not say that Christ, glory be to Him, died, and rose, and ascended into heaven? How than can I give it unto Him?" And Marke said unto him, "Go to a church, and when he who belongs to it cometh unto thee, give him the gold from thy hand into his." And after this when Marke came nearer and nearer to death Guespar sat down some distance from him, and waited for him to die. And he saw angels coming down to him holding a heart of light, and with them were the righteous, and the martyrs, and David singing psalms to his harp; and the Holy Spirit came down in the form of a white dove, and He went round the body of Marke thrice. And when the holy soul of Marke saw [this] it went forth from his body, and ascended into heaven with great glory. And then two lions came and buried him. And Guespar loaded the gold [on the mule] and departed, marveling at everything, which he had seen to Thaddeus, the steward of the church, [who did not wish] to receive Guespar the pagan, but he demanded from him the gold and the mule. When the priest said this, Guespar said unto him, "I will give the gold and the mule from my hand into the hand of my Lord Jesus Christ [only], as my friend made me swear to do." And leading away the mules, he departed to the church. And the priest Thaddeus opened the gates, ad having gone in Guespar laid the gold on the altar; and having gone out the gates were closed, and he stood there. And at the time of midnight, he heard the sound of thunder inside the church, and light appeared, and suddenly my God our Lord Jesus Christ came down with great glory; and with Him were two angels, and He sat down upon the altar. And an angel said unto Guespar, "Come, worship, for this is Christ Himself, the Son of God"; and Guespar bowed low and gave Him the paper, saying, "I have believed in Thee, my Lord Jesus Christ." And Christ ordered the angels to weigh the gold, and there were thirty pounds, and our Lord commanded Guespar to be baptized by the priest Thaddeus, and he and all the men of his house were baptized, now they were in number seventy-five souls. And Guespar died in the Faith of Christ. Salutation to Marke who sent his gold to Christ. Salutation to the idolater Guespar, and also to the men of his house who believed through this great miracle.

Glory be to God Who is glorified in His Saints. Amen.