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THE TENTH MONTH

Senne 02

(June 09)

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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 the body of Saint John the Baptist and the body of Saint Elisha, the prophet, the disciple of Elijah, the zealous, appeared in the city of Alexandria. In his days Julian, the infidel, wished to [re] build the Temple of the Jews in Jerusalem, Vespasian, Emperor of Rome, and his son Titus having destroyed it, for Julian, by the wickedness of his works, wanted to make of no effect the word of the Lord which He spoke in the Holy Gospel, saying, “There shall not be left here one stone upon another which shall not be overthrown” (Matthew xxiv, 2). And Julian having thrice commanded the building of it, it was destroyed. And the Jews said, “In this place there are some bodies of Christian elders, and unless thou dost cast them out the Temple cannot be [re] built.” And Julian commanded them to cast out the bodies from that place and to burn them with fire. And when they cast the bodies out they found the bodies of Saint John the Baptist and Elisha the prophet, and they wanted to burn them with fire. And certain believers came and gave the soldiers much money, and they took away the bodies of the saints, after the soldiers had made them swear that they would [not] leave them in that city, so that the emperor might not hear of it, and destroy them. Here is the story of the Emperor Julian. His enemies having surrounded him in the fight, God sent Mercurius in the spirit, after he had received the crown of martyrdom, and he speared Julian in the neck with his spear, and he died. Before Julian the infidel died, he took a handful of his own blood, and scattered it in the air, saying, “Jesus, take this soul of mine which Thou hast given to me”; and straightway he died an evil death. And those believing men brought the bodies of the saints, John the Baptist, and Elisha the prophet, to the city of Alexandria, to Saint Abba Athanasius, and he rejoiced over them with a great joy; and he laid them by him, until he could build a church for them. And one day when Abba Athanasius was sitting in the garden of his fathers, his scribe Theophilus being with him, he said, “If God giveth me good days, I will build in this place a church in the names of Saint John the Baptist and Elisha the prophet, and I will lay their bodies in it.” And Saint Theophilus recorded the words, which Abba Athanasius spoke, and Abba Athanasius built a church; and he took many of his own priests, and all the Christian folk and he went to the bodies of the saints, and carried them with great honor, and bore them to the church. And as they were passing along they came to a house wherein was an old woman who had suffered for forty days with the pains of labor, and she cried out in pain by day and by night until she was all but dead. And when she heard the singing of the priests, as they passed with the bodies of the saints, she looked from the window of her house, and asked [her servants], saying, “What is this?” And they said unto her, “The bodies of the saints, John the Baptist, and Elisha the prophet.” And straightway she brought herself to believe, saying, “O John, thou saint of God, if thou wilt deliver me from this tribulation I [will become] a Christian.” And before she had finished saying these words with her mouth, straightway she gave birth to a boy, and she called him “John”; and after this, she and all the men of her house were baptized with Christian baptism. And Abba Athanasius laid the bodies of the saints in the church, and great signs and miracles appeared through them. And Saint Abba Theophilus, and many of the saints, saw Saint John the Baptist and Elisha the prophet; and they went round in the church with the archbishop, and consecrated the church. And the person of Saint John the Baptist was hairy, and his beard fell down upon his breast; and Elisha the prophet was tall, and his head was noble. Afterwards when Saint Abba Macarius the bishop became a martyr the monks placed his body with theirs. Salutation to the appearance of the bodies of Saint John the Baptist and Elisha the prophet, in Alexandria.

And on this day also are commemorated Kerlos (Cyril), and ‘Akeltus the martyr, and Questus (Caustus) the monk.

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

