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THE THE EIGHTH MONTH

Miyazia 22

(April 30)

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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 Isaac, from the city of Harin, in the district of Sebko, in the north of Egypt. This holy man had pious parents, and his father's name was Abraham, and his mother's name was Sosna; his mother died when he was a child and left him alone with his father. When he had grown a little, he herded his father's sheep, and his father married another wife. In those days there was a great famine, and his father's wife hated him, and only gave him a little bread, and this holy man used to give his food to the shepherds, and fasted the whole day long until the evening; now at that time he was five years old. When his father knew that his son used to give his food to the shepherds and fast all day until the evening, he went to see him. And this holy man, knowing the matter before his father came to him, tied up three pieces of mud in his cloak, so that his father might think when he saw them that they were three loaves of bread tied up in it. And when his father came to him, and unrolled the cloak, and found the three pieces of mud he thought they were loaves of bread. And he asked the boy to tell him if he had given his bread that day to the shepherds or not, and he said, "Yea." And he gave his food to the shepherds, and many came and heard this; and his father marveled, and glorified God. When this holy man had grown up he went and became a monk with a certain righteous man whose name was Elias, and he lived with him for many years. When Abba Elias died Abba Isaac went to the monastery of Barnug, and he lived with an elder whose name was Zacharias, and he devoted himself to the ascetic life, and fought a great spiritual fight. And his father went about in every district, trying to find him. When his father came to the monastery of Barnug, and found him there, he asked him to return with him, and Isaac refused. And Abba Zacharias said unto him, "Go with thy father, and live with him until he dies"; and the holy man went with his father; and he had been living with his father a few days when his father died. And all the goods, which his father left, he gave to the poor and needy, and then he built for himself an abode far from the city, and he dwelt there alone, and devoted himself to the ascetic life. And he fought a great fight, with fasting, and prayer, and ceaseless vigils, until he died in peace, and he was buried in his abode, and the place was forgotten. After many years God willed to reveal it, and a lighted lamp, which appeared above his grave, was seen by certain men who were reaping; and having seen this miracle for a space of three days, they marveled exceedingly. When they came to that place to look at it, the lamp disappeared, and when the story of the saint was noised abroad, and the place had been seen by them, they found the lamp burning above his grave. Then the saint appeared unto certain believers in a dream, and told them the place where his body was, and they took it up with great honor, and laid it on a camel. Then they set out and journeyed on until they came to the middle of his city Harin, and the middle of Mesrat; and there the camel knelt down, and would not get up again. And they beat the camel with many strips, but he would not get up, and they knew that it was by the Will of God that he would not move. And they decided to build a shrine for him there, and to lay him in it; and they built a church in his name, and laid his body in it, and through it many signs and wonders took place. Salutation to Isaac, who made clods of earth to appear to be loaves of bread.

And on this day also died the holy father Abba Alexander, the nineteenth Archbishop of the city of Alexandria, concerning whom the apostolic Athanasius saith, "My father Alexander never read the Gospel sitting down, but he read it standing up with the light in front of him." And concerning him he also mentions the following: "The chief widows came to him, and they spoke unto him, saying: There is with us a certain virgin who fasts seven days at a time, but she doeth no work with her hands. And he said unto them, O my sisters, I never fast two days at a time. I never eat when the sun hath appeared. I eat in moderation. And he told them that one should eat in moderation and fast in moderation, and work in moderation, in every good matter." The parents of this holy man were

Christians. He grew up in the service of the Church, and he was reared therein, for Maximus made him a reader, and Abba Theonas made him a deacon, and Abba Peter made him a priest; and he was pure, and a virgin from his youth. When the time drew nigh for Abba Peter to become a martyr, this holy father Alexander and ‘Akilas went to him when he was in prison, and asked him to remove the excommunication from Arius, for Arius had asked them both to ask Abba Peter about him. When they asked Abba Peter, he excommunicated Arius again in their presence. And he informed them, saying, “Our Lord Jesus Christ appeared unto me, ‘Arius hath rent My human nature,’ and He commanded me not to receive him again.” And Abba Peter told them that “Akilas should become archbishop after him, and that after ‘Akilas, Alexander should be archbishop. And he told them this thing before the priests of the Thorah of the city of Alexandria, and he commanded them not to receive Arius, and to have no fellowship with him. When Abba Peter had finished his martyrdom, ‘Arkilas was made archbishop after him, and he transgressed and received Arius, and made him a priest; therefore ‘Arkilas lived only seven months and died. After him this father Alexander was made archbishop, and as soon as he had taken his seat, the elders of the people came and asked him to receive Arius, but he refused to do so, and added curses to those, which he had already heaped upon him. And he said unto them, “Father Peter commanded me and ‘Arkilas not to receive Arius, and he told us, saying, “Take heed that thou dost not receive Arius, and thou shalt have no fellowship with him.” And ‘Arkilas having received Arius, God speedily removed him from his office; and Alexander said, “Nay, I will not receive him.” And he expelled Arius, and the people who believed in his evil Faith. Then Arius went to the Emperor Constantine, and laid an accusation against this holy man, saying, “Alexander hath excommunicated me wrongfully.” And Constantine assembled the General Council of Three Hundred and Eighteen Saints in the city of Nicea. And this father was the President of the Council, and he disputed with Arius and revealed his denial to Christ (or, infidelity) in words, which were light in their expression, but weighty in their majesty; and they excommunicated him and would not receive his words. And Alexander uttered the Faith, which God spoke, with his own mouth unto all the fathers, and he drew up the Canon, and the Law, and [rules for] right judgment, and these are in the hands of Christians until this day. And he made regulations for the Fast (i.e. Lent), and the festival of Easter, and he returned to his office victorious and joyful. And he shepherded his flock in grace and in peace, and he sat upon the throne of Mark the evangelist for seventeen years, and he died in peace. Salutation to Alexander, President of the Council of Nicea, who made the excommunication of Arius to resound in heaven and upon earth.

And on this day died the holy father Abba Mark, the Second, the forty-ninth Archbishop of the city of Alexandria. This father was a native of Alexandria, and he was a virgin, and chaste, and learned, and honorable, and he was the second Archbishop of Alexandria with the name of Mark. Abba John made him a deacon, and he performed the duties of that office exceedingly well. He was an eloquent speaker, and his voice was sweet, and because of his learning and his knowledge of the Books (the Scriptures) all those who heard him rejoiced in him. Then Abba John made him to live in his house, and he delivered to him the regulation and administration of the archiepiscopate, and he did nothing whatsoever without his advice. And he arrayed him in the garb of the monk, in the monastery of Saint Abba Macarius. And at the moment when he put on the garb of the monk, a certain righteous man from among the holy fathers came, and spoke unto him before all the people, saying, “This deacon whose name is John (sic) shall, rightly and fittingly, sit upon the throne of his father Mark, the evangelist.” When the time of the death of Abba John drew nigh, he spoke unto the bishops, and told them that they must make this father archbishop; and they rejoiced in him, and they appointed him by force, and against his wish, after he fled from them to the desert of Scete. And they sent for him, and bound him, and they brought him and enthroned him. In his days he restored the churches, and rebuilt those that were in a ruinous state, and in his days he removed the heresies of the heretics who appeared in his days in the country of Egypt. And he made a church for them specially, and they sat therein, and he rebuked and admonished them, and he counted them among the sheep of his flock. And God made manifest through this father many signs and wonders, and he healed multitudes of sick folk, and he drove out the

filthy devils which possessed men. And he said unto one of them, "Understand that this would not have come upon thee unless thou hadst shown irreverence to the Holy Mysteries. Rise up, without fear, and henceforward guard thyself against the vain word which would go forth from thy mouth." And in his days the Muslim Arabs used to carry off many Christians from Rom, and bring them to the city of Alexandria and sell them. And this father was exceedingly sorrowful about this, and he borrowed money from the monasteries and begged money from believing men, and he bought many Roman Christians from the Muslims for three thousand dinars in gold; and he wrote for them bills of manumission and set them free. And he said unto them, "Whosoever among you wisheth to depart to his own country I will supply him with what he needeth [for the voyage], and send him off, and whosoever among you wisheth to stay with me, I will look after him and protect him." When any of them wished to return to their own country he gave them the money necessary for the journey, and had them protected on their way until they reached their own country; and for those who remained with him, he provided wives and protected them. After this he took thought for the Church of our Redeemer in the city of Alexandria, and restored it; Satan stirred up a riot in the city, and the church was burned, but this father restored it again. When God willed to give him rest he became a little sick. And on Easter Sunday Saint Mark the evangelist appeared unto him, and told him about the everlasting joy which God had prepared for him, and he made known unto him, saying, "After thou hast received the Holy Mysteries thou shalt rest." Having awoke from his sleep he told the bishops who were about him what he had seen, and he commanded them to begin the service of consecration of the Offering, and he himself consecrated and received the Holy Mysteries. And he said unto them, "I embrace you all with a holy embrace," and he died in peace straightway. And all the days, which he sat, were twenty years. Salutation to Alexander, who ransomed the captive Roman Christians for thirty thousand dinars in gold.

And on this day also died the holy father Abba Michael, the fifty-third Archbishop of the city of Alexandria. This holy father was a righteous man, and a monk, and he was made abbot of the church of Saint Abba John of the desert of Scete. And they seized him against his will, now it was with the greatest difficulty that they seized him and made him Archbishop of the city of Alexandria, on the 24th day of the month of Hedar; and he devoted himself to the ascetic life and he ordered his course after the manner of the Apostles. When the Great Fast came, the holy man went up to the desert of Scete to keep the Great Fast there, and his spiritual fight and his strenuous asceticism when he was in the desert by himself are remembered. Before he was made archbishop, he prayed to God with tears and groans, saying, "O God, Thou knowest how much I love to dwell by myself, and that I have not strength enough for this office, [to say] nothing about my fitness. I beseech Thee, because of the greatness of Thy compassion, to take my soul and to give me rest in this Fast." And God received his petition, and it came to pass that after the Easter Festival God called him, and gave him rest. And the days of his office were two years and five months. Salutation to Michael, whose soul God took according to his request.

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