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THE FOURTH MONTH
TAHISAS 03
(December 12)

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

On this day took place the entrance of our holy Lady the Virgin Mary, the God-bearer, into the Sanctuary (i.e. Temple) of Jerusalem, when she was three years old, and she was the daughter of a vow to God. Because her mother Hannah was childless the [other] women who were in the House of God kept themselves away from her, and she was exceedingly sorry about this; now Joachim her husband was an old man. And God heard their cry. And the blessed Hannah vowed a vow to God, saying, “The fruit which He shall give me I will devote to God.” And having brought forth our Lady Mary she reared her for three years in her house, and after this she took her to live with the virgins in the Sanctuary of God. And Mary dwelt in the Sanctuary for twelve years, and received her sustenance from the hands of angels, until the time when our Lord Christ came into the world, and took flesh from her, the elect of all women. And when she had completed twelve years in the Sanctuary, the priests took counsel together about her so that they might give her unto one who would protect her, for she was vowed to God, and it was not right in their sight that she should blossom in the Sanctuary and become after the manner of women therein. Then they called her by a name of honor for him that should be worthy to see her. And Zachariah, the high priest, answered and said, “Bring Mary hither so that I may find out what is in her heart”; and they called her and she came and stood before him. And Zachariah said, “Know, O Mary, that thou hast grown up and that thou art mature like any other woman. Dost thou wish to be married? [If so] we will seek out for thee a good, and blessed, and God-fearing young man, and we will marry thee to him. Or, wouldst thou rather remain in the Sanctuary and minister unto God all the days of thy life? [If so] we will lay upon thee the prohibition which is written in the Torah that thou salt not approach the gates of the Sanctuary during the days wherein there happeneth to thee what happeneth to women.” And our Lady Mary answered and said unto him, “Behold, I am the handmaiden of the Lord before you; I have neither father nor mother. Ye are to me in the place of my father and my mother before God, holy and blessed be His Name! What ye know to be the command of God in respect of me that do for me.” And the priests and all the Sanhedrim said unto Zachariah the priest, “Go to the Sanctuary and pray to God, and God shall make it clear to thee concerning Mary.” And Zachariah put on his priestly vestments, and went into the Sanctuary, and prayed to God concerning Mary. And the angel of the Lord appeared unto him and said unto him, “Zachariah, go forth and gather together all the men and old men, and take their staffs, and write the name of each man upon his staff. Then gather together all the staffs into the Sanctuary, and pray to God; and after this go forth and give unto each man his staff. And the man on whose staff the Lord God shall make a sign to appear is he who is worthy that Mary shall be given unto him to protect.” And Zachariah the priest went forth and told the assembly what the angel of God had said unto him. And straightway he sent criers out into every land of Israel and into the cities and villages, and they cried out, saying, “Let every man of the House of David, whether he be young or old, whose wife is dead, go to Jerusalem.” When Joseph of the House of David heard this he took his staff and went from Nazareth to Jerusalem, where he found very many men gathered together. And Zachariah the priest took all their staffs and wrote their names upon them and the staffs were in number seventeen hundred and eighty-five. And he prayed to God inside the Sanctuary, and all the men who were standing outside the Sanctuary prayed likewise. And when Zachariah had finished his prayer he brought out the staffs, and gave unto every man the staff, which belonged to him. When Joseph, the carpenter, drew nigh to take his staff, there appeared from out of it the form of a white dove and it flew up and stood upon his head. And when the priests and all the people saw this they marveled exceedingly and they glorified God greatly.

And Zachariah said unto Joseph, “Take Mary the Virgin and keep her in thy house, even as the angel of the Lord saith”; and Joseph took our holy Lady, the Virgin Mary, and she dwelt with him until Gabriel, the angel of the Lord came to her, and told her that the Son of God was to take flesh from her. Salutation to the coming of Mary, according to the Law of Moses.

And on this day also is celebrate the festival of the glorious angel, Fanuel the archangel.

Salutation to thy office in the court of God, O Fanuel, thou ladder of prayer, and expeller of Satan.

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