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THE FIFTH MONTH

TIR 10

(January 18)

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

Our learned fathers of the Church who were before us, the chiefs of the Councils, have laid down the law that believers should fast on this day until the evening, and that they should eat no kind of moist (or, fatty) food whatsoever, and only that kind which is eaten during the Great Fast of Lent. And the reason why the fathers ordained that believers should fast on this day until the evening is this: The holy Apostles commanded in the Canon, saying, "If the festival of the Birth or the festival of the Baptism fall on the Fourth Day of the week, or on the Sixth Day of the week, let them eat in the morning every kind of food which is eaten at Pentecost, for these two festivals are to God, so that men may not imagine that we regale ourselves with the luxuries of this fleeting world. And let us not make our feasts with meats and drink like the festivals of the Jews and pagans." Therefore our learned fathers of the Church, who were before us, have commanded us to fast these two days, namely, before the festival of the Birth and the festival of the Baptism. And these two days shall take the place of the Fourth Day of the week and the Sixth Day of the week when the festival of the Birth and the festival of the Baptism fall on them, and two matters shall be fulfilled by us, the matter of fasting and the matter of the festival; and this is ordained in the churches of the Egyptians. And if the day of Bayramum fall on the First Day of the week, or on the Sabbath of the Jews, one shall fast on the Fourth Day of the week preceding it until the evening, and shall only eat what it is meet to eat during the Great Fast. And if the festival of the Birth and the festival of the Baptism fall on the Sabbath, or on the First Day of the week, or on the second day, it is impossible to fast on the day preceding the Sabbath and the First Day of the week, but they shall eat what is eaten during the Great Fast. And on the night of the festival of the Baptism they shall rise up before midnight, and pray over the water and dip themselves in it. And the reason why they must rise up before midnight is that the young may not be cast away in the water when they are baptized. And they shall consecrate the Offering before the day dawneth, and they shall come into the church very early, even as the Apostles commanded in the holy Canon. And the Melchites, if the festival of the Birth and the festival of the Baptism fall on the day before the Sabbath, on the First Day of the week, fast on the sixth day of the week preceding the festival until the ninth hour, according to their frequent custom. And on the day before the Sabbath; and before the First Day of the week, they ordain the consecration (of the Eucharist), at the third hour or earlier, they eat a young . . . and drink if they wish. And then the priests sit in the church, and pray the prayer of the hours, and read the prophecy which is suitable for the festival. And they pray over the water at the time of evening on that day, which is the tenth day of the month of Ter. But this is not according to what the Apostles commanded in the holy Canon, for the pure Apostles commanded them to keep the festival of the Epiphany, which is, being interpreted, the "appearance of our God" on the seventh day of the month of Ter. And the Melchites transgress the command of the holy fathers, the doctors of the Church, and they eat on the day of the festival, in the morning if it fall on the Fourth or the Sixth Day of the week, and they do not fast on the day before it instead of it. As for us, we ask our Lord Christ to cleanse us from all our sins, and to reveal the glory of His Godhead in our hearts even as He revealed it in the River Jordan--to Him be glory, etc.

And on this day died Abba Tawbentos (Theopantus). This saint was brought up from his youth in the house of Abba Tauna (Theonas), Archbishop of Romya, and it was he who arrayed him in the garb of the monastic life. And when the archbishop saw that he was endowed with wisdom and strength he made him a bishop, and the head of a monastery outside the city of Alexandria in a place which is called Tinadiran; and the number of the monks who were subject to his rule was seven hundred. And after this when Tawbentos (Theopantus?), the bishop and preacher and the brethren who were with him, heard of the

commotion which was taking place through the Emperor Diocletian, the heretic, and worshipper of idols, he fled and departed to Dabra Sihat, and took up his abode with a God-fearing virgin, and he lived hidden in her house for a long time. At the beginning of his stay he found that she worshipped idols through fear of the emperor, but he converted her from error to the Faith of Christ. And from there he went to Dabra Tarnut and Dabra Marmus, wishing to hear the histories of the churches of Egypt, and he lived in each monastery hidden for two or three days (?), submitting himself to fasting, and prayer, and many vigils. And all the brethren testified that the gift of the Holy Spirit had descended upon him, and God wrought signs and miracles by his hands, and he even converted many thieves and robbers to the service of Christ, and made them monks. And having grown very old and grey, and knowing that the day of his departure was nigh, he exhorted his children to be strong in the True Faith, and to keep his commandments, and he died in peace.

And on this day also are commemorated Abba Kinaria (Cynarius), and Batrika (Patricia) the queen, and Tomiani the martyr.

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