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THE FIFTH MONTH

TIR 27

(February 04)

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

On this day Saint Sarabyos (Serapion) became a martyr. This saint was a man from the city of Bebnusi, in the north of Egypt, in the district of Lower Mesr (Cairo). He had much money and possessions, and flocks, and he loved to give alms, and was very charitable. When the day of persecution came, he heard that the governor Romanus was going about seeking for Christians to torture, and this saint went forth from his city seeking the governor. And he had a friend whose name was Theodore, and a certain shepherd, who tended his flocks, and whose name was Sorma, and these followed the saint, and they drew nigh unto Romanus, governor of the city of Alexandria, and confessed before him the Lord Jesus Christ; and the governor shut Sarabyos (Serapion) up in prison. When the men of the city heard of this, they gathered together with the soldiers, and they came to the governor, bringing their weapons of war with them, and they wanted to kill the governor and to take the saint from him. And the saint prevented them, and said unto them, "I came of my own free will to shed my blood for the Name of Christ, our Lord." And the governor embarked on a ship and departed, and the saint went with him, and when they arrived at the city of Alexandria the governor commanded the soldiers to torture the saint severely on the wheel, [and they did so]. And they cast him into a red-hot furnace, and boiled him in a cauldron of pitch and bitumen, and they cut the tendons of his body, and they laid him on a [red-hot] iron bed, and they drove iron nails through his body. And the saint bore all these tortures patiently, for the angel of God sustaineth him that is tortured. Then they hung him upon a tree, and shot at him with arrows, but the angel of God brought him down, and he bound the governor with fetters, and hung him up in the place of the saint and shot at him with arrows, whilst the governor cried out, "I am Romanus the governor." And Saint Sarabyos (Serapion) said unto him, "As God liveth I will not bring thee down from this tree until thou hast set free all those who are in prison; and thou shalt write an account of their strifes, and thou shalt command the soldiers to cut off their heads." [And the governor did so,] and they received crowns of martyrdom in the kingdom of the heavens; now they were in number five hundred and thirty souls. And Romanus commanded a certain nobleman, whose name was Harneus to take the saint with him to his city, and to torture him there and, if he would not turn from his unclean opinion, to kill him; and the nobleman took the saint with him in the ship. When night came they arrived in port, and they slept, (now, by the Will of God the ship came to the native city of the saint,) and when the sailors woke up in the morning and found that the place where they arrived had been changed, they marveled exceedingly. And a voice came to Sarabyos (Serapion), saying, "Behold, this is thy city." And they brought him out of the ship, and tortured him severely, and they cut off his head with the sword, and he received the crown of martyrdom in the kingdom of the heavens. And Romanus brought down his apparel, and swathed him for burial, and gave him to his kinsfolk. Salutation to Sarabyos (Serapion) the martyr.

And on this day also is commemorated the translation of the body of Saint Timothy, the Apostle, from the city of Ephesus to the city of Constantinople; it was translated by the righteous Emperor Constantine who translated many of the bodies of the holy apostles and martyrs to the city of Constantinople. When he heard that the body of Saint Timothy was in the city of Ephesus, he sent certain faithful priests, and they translated it to the city of Constantinople, and they laid it in the Sanctuary of the Holy Apostles. Salutation to the translation of thy body, O Timothy.

And on this day also is celebrated the festival of Suriel, who is called "Safari," who was with the righteous man Ezra, and told him hidden mysteries. He prayeth always on behalf

of sinners. Salutation to Suriel.

And on this day also Saint Abba Bifamon became a martyr. This saint was a virgin from his youth, and he loved God, and he was merciful to the poor and the needy; and he abandoned this fleeting world. His father, whose name was Anastasius, belonged to a noble family, and his mother's name was Sosna (Susannah); and they were Christians, and they loved almsgiving, and they kept the festivals of our Lord Christ, and of our Lady Mary, and of the holy martyrs; and they gave to the poor whatsoever they needed. And they lived in the city of Wesim in the district of Mesr (Cairo). And God gave them this saint, whose form was exceeding goodly, and they rejoiced and added to their good works and benevolence. When he was grown up, and his days were nine years, they handed him over to a certain God-fearing priest that he might teach him; and the priest took him and taught him literature, and philosophy; and he admonished him, and made him strong in the knowledge of the Books of the Holy Church. And he attended church devotedly, and fasted, and prayed, and kept vigil, and made prostrations; and God wrought many signs and wonders by his hands, of which the following are examples: There was a certain poor man who was sick of a disease in his hands and feet, and he begged the saint to give him alms, and the saint stretched out his holy hands to give the beggar money, and straightway he was healed of his disease, and he became whole and without a blemish, and all his limbs became sound. And on another occasion when he was reciting the Psalms of David, a certain man there, whom an unclean spirit had thrown down, cried out, saying, "O saint of God, let me destroy him, for his parents oppress men"; and the saint prayed, and made entreaty to God, and the man whom the Satan cast down was healed. And the angel of God appeared unto the teacher of the saint, (now he was a righteous man,) and he informed him about all that would happen to the young man Bifamon, and said unto him, "He shall become a martyr"; and the priest and his mother Sosna (Susannah) paid him greater honor than before. And as he grew up he continued to do the works of excellence, and works of the spirit, without ceasing, and at length the report of him was heard in all countries. And our Lord Jesus Christ used to appear unto him with His holy angels, and our Lady Mary used to comfort him. And he lived with his teacher for eight years. And he used to remain without eating for seven days and seven nights at a time, and he ate once a week only. And his parents spoke to him about marrying a wife, and he said unto them, "What is the good of a wife to me in this fleeting world, for it shall pass away and all the desire thereof?" And his parent rejoiced in him, and they added to their good works from that day onwards. Six months after this his parents died, and the saint gave alms to the poor, and he devoted himself to the Church, and strove to fulfill all the commandments of the Holy Gospel. And in those days certain men of the Persians rose up against Rome and they slew Numerianus, the king, in battle, and the empire of Rome remained without an emperor; now Numerianus left only two daughters and one son, whose name was Justus, and who became a martyr. And the chiefs of the palace gathered together, and they took counsel together, and they sent messengers into every country to collect for them strong men for the war. And when the messengers came to Upper Egypt, they found a strong and powerful young man, with a bold heart, pasturing sheep, and his name was "Agripada"; and he had been a habitation for Satan from his youth up. And the messengers rejoiced exceedingly, and they took him with them to the city of Antioch, and when 'Agripada arrived the officer, who was captain of the royal horses, rejoiced in him. One day 'Agripada took a couple of reeds tied together and played upon them like a flute, and Satan entered into the horses, and they capered about and cried out with loud cries. And the daughter of the king who had arrived at woman's estate, heard the noise, and she looked out of her window in the upper room of the palace, and 'Agripada pleased her with his playing. And Satan thrust into her heart the desire for fornication, and she summoned him to her, and she married him, and arrayed him in [royal] apparel, and called him "Diocletian," for they used to change the names of men when they became kings. And when the younger daughter of the king saw what the elder had done, she became jealous, and she married an officer whose name was Maximianus, and she arrayed him in royal apparel, and made him a king; and Maximianus and Diocletian were equals in the kingdom of the city of Antioch. And Satan appeared unto them and said, "I am he who set the idea of fornication in the hearts of the king's daughters, who have made you kings. If

ye will obey my commandment, I will make all men on the earth to submit to you. Henceforward bow down, and worship me. Make models [of men and women] in gold and silver, and call them gods, Apollo, Artemis, and the like, and command all men to perform the ceremony of incense before them. Shut the churches, and open the houses of idols, and command ye all the men who are in the palace to do this. Whosoever will not obey you and worship the gods shall die an evil death; cut off his head with a sharp sword." And they answered and said unto Satan, "We will obey thee, and will do as thou tellest us." And they worshipped him straightway, and they did all that Satan commanded them to do in every country of their kingdom. And they appointed a certain nobleman, whose name was Romans, governor over the city of Alexandria, and all the region round about, and they made Arianus governor over the city of Antinoe and Egypt, and they commanded them to carry out these orders in all the towns and villages. When Abba Bifamon heard this report, he was exceedingly sorry, and he hid himself until he knew what was going to happen. And he called his friend Theodore, and they talked together for a day about what they had heard, and they were exceedingly sad. And they multiplied their prayers, and entreated God to save them from evil. And Saint Bifamon increased his good works, and report of him was made to the infidel king, and to Maximianus, by the deniers of Christ. And they told them, saying, "A certain man whose name is Bifamon, of the city of Wesim, on the border of Mesr (Cairo), is a Christian magician, and he transgresseth the commands of the kings, and he curseth the gods." And straightway the king wrote a letter and sent it to Arianus, and commanded him to take the saint and to torture him until he worshipped Apollo and Artemis, and if he would not obey, to cut off his head with the sword. And the angel of God appeared unto Saint Bifamon and told him what had taken place, and he informed him that he and his mother would become martyrs. And he showed him the crowns, which were prepared for himself and his mother, and he commanded him to depart, and to take with him his slave Diganes. And straightway Saint Abba Bifamon rose up and came to his mother, and told her all that he had seen, and she told him how she had seen the same vision; and the saints Abba Bifamon and his mother rejoiced together. And the saint went to his abode and prayed until the morning. When the morning had come he sent again to his friend Theodore, who came to him, and Bifamon told him what he had seen. And he said unto him, "After the days of the persecution have passed by thou shalt be appointed bishop of this city"; and he commanded to build a church for him, and then they embraced and bade each other farewell. After a few days Arianus the governor came to the city of Wesim, and he had the head men of the city brought to him, and he questioned them concerning Bifamon, the judge, and said unto him, "This man curseth the gods"; and the head men of the city were sorry on account of Saint Abba Bifamon, for he was beloved by them. At that time Abba Bifamon rose up, and put on beautiful apparel, and prayed for a long time, and then he embraced all the men of his house, and mounted his white horse, and he went to the place where all the head men of the city were gathered together; and when they saw him they paid him honor and went with him to Arianus the governor. And when Arianus saw Abba Bifamon, he rejoiced in him, and he rose up and embraced him and said unto him, "Peace be unto thee." And the saint answered, "Why dost thou say 'peace' to me? for the interpretation of 'peace' is 'joy.' Verily I rejoice, and am glad, because I am going to the Lord my God and Redeemer, Jesus Christ." As for thee, however, the Book saith of [such as] thee, "There is no joy for the wicked" (Isaiah xlviii, 22). And Arianus said unto him, "I did not come for thee to speak words of insult to me, but I came to thee with an order from the emperor commanding thee to offer sacrifice to the gods." And the saint said unto him, "God forbid! But it is right that I should worship the True God, and not the work of the hand of man, as the prophet saith: 'The gods of the nations are of gold and silver, the work of the hands of the children of men. Mouths they have and they speak not, hands have they and they handle not, feet have they and they walk not, eyes have they and they see not, ears have they and they hear not, noses have they and they smell not; they speak not with their throats, and there is no breath in their mouths' (Psalm cxv, 4 ff.). May all those who make them become like unto them. I will worship none save my Lord Jesus Christ." When Arianus heard these words from him he was exceedingly angry with him, and he tortured him with every kind of torture; and he tied him to the back (tail ?) of a horse, which he made to gallop through all the city. And when his mother and his servants heard of this

they all came [to him], (now his servants were five hundred [in number,]) and the saint rebuked them and spoke unto them, and his mother with them, many words from the Holy Gospel. But they all cried out, saying, boldly, "We are Christians," and they overturned the throne of Arianus the infidel. And the governor commanded the soldiers to dig a large pit, and to fill it with fire, and to cast them all into it alive; and they did as he commanded them; and Saint Abba Bifamon encouraged them, and exhorted them, and made them to endure [their sufferings] until they finished their martyrdom. And the mother of the saint asked him to pray for her, and he made the sign of the Cross over her, and said unto her, "Depart in peace"; and straightway they cast her body into the fire, and she received the crown of martyrdom with those martyrs. And Arianus sent the saint to Maximianus the emperor, and straightway the emperor said unto him, "Art thou Bifamon the sorcerer? Thou hast transgressed our command, and hast not worshipped the gods." And the saint said unto him, "I will not worship thy gods. Only Jesus Christ our Lord will I worship; as for thee, thou canst go to Ghannum." And the emperor was wroth, and tortured him severely, and when he was tired of torturing him he sent him to Romanus, who sent him to Arianus. Now the saint neither ate nor drank the whole time he was on the journey. And Arianus took the saint, and drove sharp nails through his hands and his feet, and he said unto him, "If thou wilt not worship the gods I will destroy thee"; and the saint reviled him and his gods, and cursed them. And Arianus commanded the soldiers to drag him through the city, and to burn him outside the city of Antinoe, and they did so, but our Lord Jesus Christ took him out of the fire uninjured. Now when the saint was standing in the fire much blood flowed from his feet. And there was standing there among the people a certain blind leper, and he took some of the blood and smeared it on his eyes and on his body, and straightway he became able to see, and his body was cleansed from his leprosy. And he cried out, and confessed our Lord Jesus Christ, and said boldly, "I am a Christian, I believe on my Lord Jesus Christ." And Arianus commanded them to cut off his head with the sword, and they did so, and he received the crown of martyrdom. And Saint Bifamon called his servant Diyoganos (Diogenes) and commanded him secretly to anoint his body and to swathe it with fine linen, and to relate the story of his fight to the believers who were in the city of Wesim, and to tell them that the days of persecution would pass; and he made over his body the sign of the Cross, saying, "In the Name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost, One God." And the saint approached the soldiers and said unto them, "Do ye what the governor hath commanded you [to do]." And the soldiers took him away from the governor to a place where they would be with him alone, and they cut off his head, and he received the incorruptible crown of martyrdom. And much blood flowed from his neck, and his servant Diyoganos (Diogenes ?) spread out the fine linen napkin which he had laid up by him, and caught the holy blood therein, and so sweet a perfume filled that place that the soldiers marveled, and were dismayed, and great fear fell upon them. And when the soldiers departed many believers came, and they and his servant prepared the body of the saint for burial in a splendid manner, and they brought sweet-smelling unguents and anointed it, and sang many psalms and dirges over it. And straightway they carried it outside the city to the west, and they buried it there, and many miracles were made manifest at his grave. And the servant of the saint took that napkin and laid it upon him. And when he wished to depart to his city he fell into doubt and wondered what he should do. And Saint Bifamon appeared unto him, and told him to make known his story to his friend Theodore, and to the men of his city. And God sent unto him certain believers who carried him with them in the ship, and whilst he was with them in the ship God made manifest many miracles through that napkin. And his servant Diyoganos (Diogenes ?) told them all that had happened to Saint Bifamon, and they marveled exceedingly and glorified God. Then he came to his city Wesim, and he told his friend Theodore everything, which had happened to Saint Bifamon, and he gave him the napkin through which very many signs and wonders took place. And this napkin was kept by them until the infidel Diocletian died, and Constantine the righteous reigned. And the days of persecution came to an end, when the Christian people enjoyed rest and peace in [all] the cities. And God wished to reveal the body of Saint Bifamon, so that it might be a hope to the believers, and a consolation, and strength. Now he became a martyr in the city of Kaw, in Upper Egypt, in the district of Tema, on the twenty-seventh day of the month of Ter. And God made manifest from his body signs and wonders, and great healings, and

especially in the church in the city of Demonu, on the twenty-seventh day of the month of Ter. On that day many people assemble therein, and God maketh manifest in them great healing through the martyrdom of Bifamon. Salutation to Abba Bifamon.

And on this day also are commemorated Theophilantus and Sarnis (or Sosa), the martyrs.

And on this day they [angels] carried away Enoch, the son of Jared, the son of Mahalaleel, the son of Cainan, the son of Henok (Enos), the son of Seth, the son of Adam, with the rushing of stars, and of lightening and of winds, and they took him up above the heavens and seated him between two spiritual beings. And he is called the scribe of the commandments of God. And he said, "I will answer on behalf of the righteous, and of him that goeth forth, holy and great, from the habitation of God." And thence he treadeth upon Mount Sina, and appeareth with the armies and mighty powers from heaven, and everyone feareth him when he is on the waters. He judgeth Dan, which is on the right hand of the Arabs, and he reciteth the memorials of their petitions until the sleep of a dream calleth him, and visions of all are upon him; and they revile the watchers of heaven. And he drew nigh a house which was built upon a stone of crystal, and the walls whereof were inlaid with slabs of stone. And he saw another house which was larger than this, and all its doors were open, and it was built on a tongue of fire, which uttered praise and glory. And he looked and saw a high throne, and the appearance thereof was that of ice, and the circle thereof was like the sun; and the voice of a cherub was going forth under the throne. And he saw seven mountains, three facing the east and three facing the south, and the middle one projected upwards into the heavens. And he saw one hundred and forty wings, and the lord of the winds, and he saw four other faces. And he prophesied concerning Christ, saying, "With the Head of Days was going another, and His face was like the face of a man, and it was fitted with grace like one of the holy angels." And he also saith concerning Christ, "And in that day the Son of man shall be called before the Head of Days, when as yet the sun shall not have been created, nor the stars made." And he also saith, "He shall be a staff to the righteous, and a lights of heaven and described them, one by one, each to its people, each to its dominion, and each by its name. And he spoke concerning the doors of heavens; one in the west, one on the right hand, and one on the left." And he spoke concerning Adam, "Behold, a bull went forth from the earth, and this [bull] was white." And he spoke concerning Eve, saying, "There went forth a calf, a female." And he saith concerning the Temple: "I saw them overturning this ancient house, and they brought out all the pillars, and all the plants (?) and beauty of this house." And concerning the Church he saith: "God brought sheep into a new house, which was larger and higher than the one before it, and He set them in the front one, which was veiled, and all the pillars thereof were new, and the beauty thereof was new, and greater than that of the former house which was rejected, and all the sheep were in the midst thereof." And he speaketh concerning the believers: "These sheep were all white, and their wool was abundant and pure, and all those who were scattered and the wild beasts of the desert, and the fowl of the heavens, were gathered together into this house, for they were all chosen, and they returned to his house." Salutation to Enoch, who was caught up into heaven.

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