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THE FOURTH MONTH
TAHISAS 25
(January 03)

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

On this day died John Kama (John, the Black). This holy man was from the city of Sabra, of the country of Mansis (Mansurah) in the north of Egypt, and his parents were God-fearing believers; and they had no other son, ad they wished to rejoice in him in this world. And they married him to a certain maiden against his will, and when he entered the bridal bed-chamber he stood up as one who prayed frequently, and he drew nigh to the maiden and said unto her, "O my sister, thou knowest that this world is a fleeting thing, and all the lust thereof; wilt thou that we agree together to preserve our bodies in purity?" And she answered and said unto him, "God is my witness that I have never for a moment thought of desire in my heart. I do not love marriage. May parents forced me to marry thee against my will. And now, behold, God hath fulfilled my petition." And they agreed together to preserve their virginity unsullied, and they lived together many days and they slept together, but kept their virginity undefiled. And it came to pass that when they lay down together the angel of God descended like a bird, and covered them over with his wings. And because of their exceedingly great righteousness God made a vine to grow in their house, which no man had planted, and it grew and mounted up and overshadowed their heads, and their children (sic). And it was a sign of their virginity and of their holiness, for this their action was above the nature of the children of men--two young people sleeping together and the desire of the flesh never rising in their thoughts! Who can go into the fire without burning himself? They would not have done this unless the help of God had protected them. And when their parents saw that they had lived together for many days, and had begotten no children, they thought that they had had no children because they were too young. And after this John Kama said unto his wife, "O my sister, I want to go to the desert of Scete and become a monk, but I will do nothing without thy consent." And she answered and said unto him, "Do what thou wishest, and may God cause thee to be right, so far as I am concerned." When she had said this John took her and placed her in a house of virgin nuns, and she became abbess, and she performed signs and wonders and pleased God. And when the saint went out to depart and to labor in the desert of Scete, a man with a shining face appeared unto him and asked him concerning his going forth. And Saint John Kama said unto him, "If God be willing I wish to become a monk." And the man with a shining face advised him and said unto him, "Go to the cell of Saint Abba Darudi of the monastery of Abba Macarius, and live with the elder Abba Darudi, who will make thee a monk and teach thee the path of the ascetic life." And the shining man walked with John Kama, and comforted him until he came to the house of Abba Darudi; and when he entered the house Abba Darudi received him into it, and arrayed him in the garb of the monk, and Abba John learned from him the Monastic Rule and the way of righteousness until Abba Darudi died. When Abba Darudi died the angel of God commanded Abba John Kama to go to the west, to the city of Saint Abba John, the Short, and to build a habitation for himself there. And he departed thither, and three hundred brethren gathered together to him, and he arrayed them in the garb of the monk, and they built a church and a tower (or, fortress), and he taught them to pray and to sing hymns and psalms, and the Liturgy, and the Praises of our Lady Mary. One night when they were standing in prayer at the time of midnight, at the praising of our Lady Mary, the apostolic Saint Athanasius appeared unto him, and revealed unto him spiritual mysteries; and from that day they have mentioned the name of Saint Athanasius at the end of the prayer of the Three Children. Once our Lady Mary appeared unto John Kama, and said unto him, "This place shall be my house for ever. And I will be with thy sons as I have been with thee, and my name shall be given to this monastery"; and the church was dedicated in the name of our Lady Mary, the God-bearer. Now there were certain

monasteries in Upper Egypt the monks of which wished to be under the shadow of Saint Abba John Kama, and they sent a message to him asking him to come to them, so that he might strengthen them in his Rule and Ordinances. And Abba John called one of his disciples whose name was Sinoda, and he said unto him, "Stand over the brethren until I return"; and that holy brother whose name was Sinoda stood on his feet, and he slumbered not, nor lay on the ground, until Saint Abba John Kama returned from Upper Egypt; and he found him standing on his feet, which had broken out in ulcers wherefrom the worms were crawling. And Abba John Kama said unto him, "O my son Sinoda, why hast thou done this thing? I commanded thee to stand over the brethren in my place, and to inspect their works and their obedience." And Sinoda bowed down at his feet and said unto him, "Forgive me, O my father, I have not done anything good." Then the days drew nigh when God wished to give Abba John Kama rest from the toil of this fleeting world, and the saint wished to depart to his everlasting habitation, which changeth not; and he became a little sick and delivered up his soul into the hand of God. Salutation to Abba John Kama. Salutation to Abba Darudi.

And on this day also died the Maccabees in the kingdom of the Midianites and Moabites. There was a king whose name was Sirusadin who was devoted to evil, and he boasted himself in the multitude of his horses, and the might of the soldiers who were under his authority. And he had many gods whom he worshipped and served, fifty of whom were in the form of men and twenty in the form of women; and he used to sacrifice to them morning and evening, and compel [other] men to sacrifice to them. And there was a man of the tribe of Benjamin whose name was "Maccabeus," and he had three good, strong sons; one of them used to choke bears, and kill them like chickens, and one of them used to kill a bear with a single blow. And their names were "Abya" and "Sila" and "Pantos." And they possessed beauty of their hearts, for they worshipped God, and feared not death. And the king said unto them, "Ye are heretics; why do ye not offer sacrifice to my gods and worship them?" And they answered him with one voice, and said unto him, "We will neither offer sacrifice to thy gods, now worship them, but we will worship the Lord God, Who is thy Creator, and Who made thee, and made thee to reign over all His work so that thou mightest see His people in integrity and righteousness. When He shall say unto thee, 'Leave this world,' wilt not thou have to leave it? And will He not give thy glory to another, because thou hast made thyself blind to the duties of governing, which He hath committed to thee? For suddenly death shall come upon thee. And at the Resurrection there shall be judgment, and the deeds of men and of kings shall be enquired into. There is nothing, which shall give them honor, for at the punishment and the judgment riches and poverty shall be alike. The Judge is just, and the punishment is prepared, and the Books shall be opened, and the deeds of men shall be made manifest, and there shall be nothing, which shall remain, concealed and unrevealed at the resurrection of the dead. Even the earth shall give back what hath been committed to its care, and what hath been laid upon it, even as a woman when her time for bringing forth hath arrived cannot shut her womb when that which is in her belly is about to go forth. Can any man compel the clouds to gather up water when their Lord hath commanded them to drop down rain? And they will shut up the souls of sinners in houses of darkness, the darkness where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth. And the souls of the righteous they will take into the houses of light, wherein there is pleasure and never-ending joy. And at the resurrection of the dead [souls] will be gathered from the four winds, and they shall be brought by water, and by the dew, and by the sun, and by the heat, and by the dust of the earth, and by the breath of the winds; and God will bring from His habitation the Spirit. And when He summoneth them with one word they will all be gathered together, and the resurrection will take place. And the Living God, the Spirit of Life, will give the space of seven hands to one grain, according to His Will, and it shall shoot out its roots into the earth, and sprout and burst into leaf above ground. See that it be not dead, and unable to live at all." And when the king heard this he commanded [his soldiers] to cast them into a red-hot oven, and they did as the king commanded; and these blessed and holy men entered it and delivered up their souls into the hand of God, their Lord. And the angels met them with joy and gladness, and they took them into the bosoms of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, in the Garden of Delight. And the king also commanded the soldiers to cast their bodies into the

sea, and they did so, but the sea would not swallow them, because the Spirit of God was with them. And he also commanded them to cast their bodies to the wild beasts, and they did so, but neither the wild beasts nor the birds would touch them; and the eagles and other birds hovered over them and protected the bodies for fourteen days. And their bodies sparkled like the foot (i.e. rays) of the sun, and like a tabernacle of light. Salutation to the five (sic) Maccabees.

And on this day also are commemorated Nicolaus, the governor, and his believing wife, and Daniel, the Less, the monk and spiritual fighter.

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