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THE FOURTH MONTH
TAHISAS 10
(December 19)

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

On this day they brought the body of Saint Abba Severus, Archbishop of the city of Antioch, to Dabra Zegag, which is outside the city of Alexandria. This holy man having died in the city of Seha in the house of a certain rich man whose name was Dorotheus, a Christian and a lover of God, this man sent the body away in a ship under the charge of certain believing and trustworthy men to Debra Zegag, which is outside the city of Alexandria; and he commanded them not to travel by the chief stream of the river, and not to land on the quayside. And when they came to the stream Kartas, facing the north, having the body of the saint with them, they sailed a little towards the west, but they did not find water enough to float their ship, and the crew labored very hard to force the ship along. And they wished greatly to tow it, but were unable to do so, and they became sad and sorry, and dismayed, and their courage failed them. And God, Who loves man, and Who made the children of Israel to disappear before their enemies, and opened out a way for them in the Red Sea and made them to pass over, this same God made the body of Saint Severus to disappear from the heretic Melchites who had hated him during his lifetime; now even after his death his words cut their hearts like a sword, and made manifest His miracles. And He made the ship to sail slowly for a distance of seven stadia, until they arrived at the place where they were to disembark. Then they took up the body of the saint and brought it to Dabra Zegag and laid it in the shrine, which that rich man Dorotheus had built for it. And there was great joy throughout all the land of Egypt, and especially in the city of Alexandria, and God worked great signs and wonders through the body of the saint. And one of the teeth of the saint fell out in his chamber during his lifetime, and one of the monks of Dabra Zegag took it and wrapped it up in a silk rag, and it healed everyone who was sick. And the monks used to take it to the city of Alexandria and lay it on the sick, and they would walk. And God magnified Saint Abba Severus after his death more than during his life. Salutation to Severus whose tooth, which fell out during his life, heals those who are smitten with fever to this day.

On this day also died the holy father Abba Theophanius, the sixth Archbishop of the city of Alexandria, having sat on the throne of Mark the evangelist four years and six months; and after this he died by murder. Salutation to Theophanius, and a petition for his prayers.

And on this day also died the holy father Abba Nicolaus, the Archbishop, whose name being interpreted is “Conqueror of the people.” This just and holy man was one of the men of the city of Mira, and his father’s name was Epiphanius, and the name of his mother was Yona; these were rich, God-fearing folk of the city of Mira and they had no children. And they continued thus in great sorrow because they had no son, and they prayed to God with great frequency and made supplication to Him that He would give them a good son in whom they might rejoice and who would inherit their riches. And they remained without a son until they grew old and their time for begetting children had passed, and having failed to have children they fell into despair, and knowing that they were barren, and that their days had passed, and that they had become very old, they ceased to ask for a son. And from the day when they did this God the Most High took pity upon them, and gave them this holy man Nicolaus, and He made him holy, and blessed, and perfect, and He revealed with him the beginning of the working of righteousness. When he was born he rose up and stood among men for a space of two hours, and one knew by this concerning his being raised up to work righteousness. When he sucked the breast of his mother, he only sucked the right breast, and by this he showed that during all the days of his life he would only drink of the fountain of the work of the right hand. And he completed the Canon of the Apostles from his youth up, for on the day of the Eve of

the Sabbath (Friday) and on the Fourth Day of the week, he never sucked his mother's breast except at the time of the ninth hour of the day. When he was a little boy and his parents handed him over to the teacher he sat and learned far more from the Holy Ghost than he did from his teacher. And in a few days he learned all the doctrine and Law of the Holy Church, and was appointed deacon, and he added to his spiritual labors. Then he became a monk in the monastery wherein the son of this father was the brother of the abbot, and this saint fought a great fight therein, and men who were born were unable to do as he did. And because he performed many righteous deeds he was made a priest when the days [of his life] were nineteen years. And God gave him great grace and the power to work signs and wonders and to heal the sick. Who is able to declare his signs and wonders, the which he added to everywhere daily throughout his life? And since he hath departed (i.e. died), it is meet for us to mention a few of the things, which he did during his life. Now there was a very rich man in his native city, and after many days his riches came to an end, and he became so poor that he had not the wherewithal to get his daily food. And he had four daughters who had grown old and had passed the period for marriage, and besides this no man would marry them because of their poverty. And Satan caused the man to think a filthy thought, namely, that he should make a house for whoremongers, and put his four daughters in it, so that they might play the whore for hire and he and his daughters might get their food from fornication. And God revealed unto Saint Nicolaus the thought, which this man was thinking. And Saint Nicolaus rose up by night, and he took one hundred dinars in gold of his father's money, and tied it up in a cloth, and before the morning dawned he threw [them] into the house of that man. When the man awoke from his sleep he found the gold, and he rejoiced therein with a great joy, and he gave his eldest daughter away in marriage. And the saint threw another hundred dinars of god into the man's house, and he gave his second daughter away in marriage. And on the third occasion when the saint threw gold into his house the man woke up, and would not take the gold but went out of his house to see who it was that threw the gold to him. And having gone out he found Saint Nicolaus and he knew that it was he who had thrown the gold three times. And straightway that man bowed down at his feet, and paid him great homage, and he said unto him, "Thy reward will be great in the kingdom of the heavens, for thou hast saved me from want caused by poverty, and from falling into sin; for I have thought that I shall be able to get my third and fourth daughters married." And then Saint Nicolaus drove out the Satans, which were many, from the man, and from the trees wherein they dwell and lead men astray. And this saint healed many sick people, and he pronounced a blessing over a little bread, and satisfied very many people therewith. And they took what was left of that bread, and they found that it was far more than it was originally. Before he was made a bishop he saw a vision wherein he himself seemed to be seated on a great throne, having with him the vestments of the honorable priesthood, and a shining man said unto him, "Put on these vestments and sit upon this throne." And on another night he saw our Lady Mary giving unto him the vestments of the priesthood, and our Lord Jesus Christ gave him the Gospel. When the Bishop of the city of Mira died, the angel of the Lord appeared unto the Archbishop of the city of Rome, and spoke to him about Saint Nicolaus, and told him his name, and described what manner of man his was. When the archbishop woke up he told the bishops what he had seen, and they all believed that vision, and knew that it was from the Lord Jesus Christ. And he took Saint Nicolaus and made him Bishop of the city of Mira. After a few days Diocletian the infidel and idolater began to reign, and he arrested many believing men. When he heard the report of this saint, he seized him and tortured him severely for many years; and our Lord Christ strengthen him, and enable him to endure, and He protected him against the torture, and raised him up sound and unharmed. When Diocletian was tired of torturing him he cast him into the prison house, and God gave him strength and protected him so that he might become a mighty branch of the tree of the Faith. And he remained in prison until God destroyed Diocletian and made Constantine the Just to reign. And Constantine brought out all the confessors from the prison houses, and with them was Saint Nicolaus, and he returned to his country in peace. And he continued to teach the True Faith to all the people, and he urged them to be strong, until the assembling of the General Council of the Three Hundred and Eighteen Bishops in the city of Nicea; and this father was one of them, and he rebuked Arius and cast him out. And having finished his fight and guarded

his flock Saint Nicolaus departed to God, having sat on his Episcopal throne for more than forty years; and all the days of his life were eighty years. Salutation to Saint Nicolaus.

And on this day Talases and ‘Al’Azar (Lazarus) became martyrs. This Talases was a man of Babylon, of the province of Nineveh. And Sapor, the King of Persia, said unto him, “Worship fire and sacrifice to idols.” And Talases said, “I worship the Lord my God, and to Him I offer up sacrifice.” And Sapor commanded his soldiers to bring all the instruments of torture in order to frighten Talases, and when he was not afraid of his terror Sapor commanded them to beat him with one hundred strips, and for a long time, and he said unto him, “Offer sacrifice, Taslas, so that thou mayest have rest from the torture”; and Taslas said unto him, “I do not know (i.e. feel) thy torturing, for my God delivers me [from it].” And Sapor commanded them to beat him with another hundred stripes, and they fixed bandages over his eyes and they beat him with seventy stripes--until he made no answer, and then they cut off his head with the sword. Then they brought out ‘Al’Azar (Lazarus), and Sapor, King of Persia, said unto him, “Sacrifice to the gods”; and when he refused to worship and to offer sacrifice to the gods, they cast him into the fire forthwith. Thus they finished their martyrdom nobly. Salutation to Taslas (sic) and to ‘Al’Azar (Lazarus).

And on this day also died Saint Surset. This holy woman was daughter of one of the nobles of Constantinia, and they betrothed her to the son of a nobleman. When she heard this she said unto her father, “Permit me first to go and worship in the sanctuary, the place of my conversion; God’s Will be done!” And her father said unto her, “Go first to thy bridal bed, and when thy marriage is consummated go with him (i.e. thy husband) and fulfill thy vows.” And she said unto him, “I made a covenant with God that I would pray in that holy place as long as I was a virgin, and if I falsify my words a punishment from God will come upon me.” When her father heard this he sent her away with guards, and handmaidens to minister to her, and he gave her the sum of three hundred dinars in gold to give away in alms. When she arrived there she went round to all the holy places, and when she came to the monastery of the Egyptians she found an elder monk dressed in sackcloth, and she told him everything, which was in her heart; and he said unto her, “God’s Will be done!” And when her attendants were ready to go, she went into a secret place and wrote a letter to her father, saying, “I have offered myself to God. Seek me not for thou wilt not find me.” And she tied up the letter with her clothes, and placed it with her baggage, and she made her attendants think that she was going with them. And whilst they were going on in front bearing her baggage, she said to a slave, “I wish to pray in the shrine of Golgotha before our departure.” And he said unto her, “[The others] have gone on before us, how canst thou travel alone?” And she said unto him, “What hath it to do with thee? I will go by myself and come back.” Then she took her handmaid and went into the shrine of Golgotha, and she said unto her slave, “Wait here for me a little”; and then she went away by herself. And she came to that elder monk, and when he saw her he rejoiced, and she cast herself down at his feet, and she gave him the three hundred dinars for the poor, and she asked him to make her a nun. Then he rose up and prayed, and he arrayed her in the garb of the nun, that is to say sackcloth, and he prayed over her, and he helped her to follow the way of God. And she entered [her] cell when she was eighteen years of age, and she dwelt therein for seven and twenty years, without seeing the face of a man. Now it happened that there was a certain monk, whose name was Silas, who was a fighter, from the country of Caesarea, who had a friend who was a pilgrim and a man of the desert, and he lived in the caves of Kalmon. And at each festival Silas used to visit him, taking a little food [with him], and he was blessed by him. And when Easter came Silas took a few loaves of bread, and went to seek his friend according to his custom, and he could not find him. And when he was tired of searching for him, and was wandering about over the mountains and hills, he found the footprint of a man, and he followed the footprints and found a small cave, and he said, “Bless me, O saint!” And there was none who answered. And he went inside the cave and found a monk fasting, and each bowed to the other and asked for his prayer. And the monk of the cave said unto him, “It is meet that thou shouldst pray for me, for thou art a priest.” When Silas heard this he was astonished [and he wondered] how the man knew his secret. And he meditated in his

heart, saying, "Is it a woman or a eunuch?" Then she revealed unto him all her story, and he brought her food, but she would not eat, and she died, and he buried her in her cell. Salutation to the lady Surset.

And on this day also died Abba Tewashi. This holy man was a eunuch from his youth, and he became a monk in a certain monastery and he fought the spiritual fight therein for many days. One day as he was going to Alexandria he found a woman weeping, and when he asked her [why she was weeping] she said unto him, "I am a Jewess and I wish to become a Christian." And he took her with him, wishing to do good to himself, and not to receive punishment from God, and he baptized her with Christian baptism. And he began to go about with her in the bazaars and received alms, and the men of Alexandria were scandalized, for they thought that she was his wife. And they seized him and brought him before Abba John, the merciful, and they said unto him, "Behold here is a man who is disgracing the monks. Order [thy servants] to beat them and to separate them, and let the monk be put in fetters." And Abba John dreamed a dream, and he saw in his dream that monk who was showing him his lacerated back, and the monk said unto him, "Why dost thou lacerate my back without any offence on my part?" When Abba John awoke he commanded them to bring the monk to him, [and they did so], and he commanded them to strip off his tunic so that they might see his back, and by the Will of God his raiment dropped down and he found that he was a eunuch. And Abba John wept and removed from their offices those men who had brought him and beaten him, and he prohibited them the Eucharist for three years. And he wished to give the eunuch one hundred dinars, but he would not accept them from him; and Abba Tewashi departed to his monastery and died fighting strenuously as it were to-day.

And on this day also are commemorated the deaths of Milases and Tawfya.

Salutation to Paul who lived in the desert and despised earthly riches. [This and the preceding paragraph are wanting in the Bodleian MS.]

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