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THE TENTH MONTH

Senne 24

(July 01)

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

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On this day Saint Abba Moses the Black became a martyr. Men have marveled at the spiritual fight of this man, for he seized the kingdom of heaven by force, even as the Holy Gospel saith (Matthew xi, 12). This saint was strong in body, and a mighty man in all his deeds. He ate, he drank, he killed, he fornicated, and no man could stand up before him. It is said of him that he could eat a whole sheep, and drink a skinful of wine at a sitting; he was the slave of a man who worshipped the sun, and he himself, on several occasions, lifted up his eyes to the sun and said, "O sun, if thou art God, make me to know it." And he used to say in his heart, "O thou God Whom I know not, make me to know Thee." And he heard some men saying that the monks of the desert of Scete knew God, and then he rose up, and girded on his sword, and went and came to the desert of Scete. And he found Saint Abba Isidore the priest, and when he saw him, he was afraid of him. And Abba Moses said, "I am Moses the Black, and I have come to you that ye may tell me about God, and make me to know Him." And Isidore took him to Abba Macarius, who admonished him, and taught him the Prayer of Faith (i.e. the Belief), and baptized him with Christian baptism. And he became a monk and lived in the desert, and he fought a fight which was greater than that fought by many saints; and Satan warred upon him because formerly he used to eat to excess, and commit fornication. And he informed Abba Isidore about everything which came upon him in his fight with the Enemy; and Abba Isidore comforted him, and taught him what to do. And in addition to his great fight he used, when the holy elders were asleep, to go round to their cells, and take their water-pots out of them, and go and fill them with water, and put them back in their cells; now the water was a long way off. And he continued his fight for many years. And Satan was envious of him, and he smote him severely with a severe disease in his foot, and he became very ill and lay down sick. And when he knew that Satan had smitten him, he increased his ascetic practices and spiritual fight, and his body became dried up like wood, which has been scorched with fire. And God saw his endurance, and healed him of his disease, and removed the sickness and the attacks of Satan; and the grace of the Holy Spirit descended upon him. And five hundred brethren gathered together to him, and he became their abbot, and they chose him to make him a priest. And when they set him in the sanctuary, the archbishop wished to try him, and to get knowledge of his spiritual fight. And the archbishop said unto the holy elders, "Why have ye brought this black man here? Take him away." And Moses went out reproaching himself, and he said, "They have treated thee rightly, O black man, O thou whose face is horrible," and after this the archbishop called him and laid his hand upon him, and made him a priest. And the archbishop said unto him, "Behold, thou hast become white, all of thee, within and without." One day the holy elders came to him, and he had no water with him, and they saw him go out and come in many times; and after this it rained a great rain which filled the skins in their cells. And the holy elders asked him, saying, "Why didst thou go out and come in many times?" And he said unto them, "I said unto God, If Thou dost not give me water wherewith to give Thy servants to drink, where am I to obtain water to give them to drink?" And in His mercy He sent us water. At that time Abba Moses went with the elders to Saint Abba Macarius, and Abba Macarius said unto them, "Behold, I see among you one to whom belongeth the crown of martyrdom." And Abba Moses answered and said unto him, "Peradventure I am he, O my father. For it is written, 'He who hath slain with the knife shall die by the knife'" (Matthew xxvi, 52). And when the Barbarians came, Abba Moses said unto the brethren who were there with him, "Behold the Barbarians have come; let him among you who wisheth to flee, let him flee"; and they answered and said unto him, "And wilt not thou, O our father, flee?" And he said unto them, "Behold, I have for many years been waiting for this day, because of the word of our Lord Who said, He who hath killed with the knife shall die by the knife"; and the Barbarians came and killed him. And with him were seven brethren who did not wish to flee, but one of them hid

himself behind a bed, and he saw the angel of God, with a crown in his hand, standing waiting for him; and he went out to the Barbarians, and they killed him. Observe, O our brethren, the power of repentance and what it doth. It changed a man who was an infidel, and a murderer, and a fornicator, and a thief, and made him a father, and a teacher, and a comforter, and a priest, and one who laid down the Rule and Canon of the monks, and one who is mentioned at the altar in all the churches. And his body abideth to this day in Debre Badremos in the desert of Scete, and many signs and miracles are made manifest through it. Salutation to Moses the Black. Salutation to the six brethren who died with him, and were slain by the Barbarians.

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