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JOINT COMMISSION FOR DIALOGUE BETWEEN
THE CATHOLIC CHURCH AND THE MALANKARA MAR THOMA SYRIAN CHURCH

Kerala, December 14, 2023
REPORT

The first meeting of the bilateral dialogue between the Catholic Church and the Malankara Mar Thoma Syrian Church took place at Santhigiri Ashram, Aluva, Kerala, on 14 December.

The beginning of this new dialogue follows from the visit of Suffragan Metropolitan Joseph Mar Barnabas to His Holiness Pope Francis, on 23 November 2022, and that of Bishop Brian Farrell, Secretary of the Dicastery for Promoting Christian Unity, to His Beatitude Theodosius Mar Thoma, Metropolitan of the Syro-Malankara Mar Thoma Church, on 15 December 2022 in Thiruvalla.

This first meeting, introduced by His Beatitude Theodosius Mar Thoma, included a presentation on the history (Rev. Dr John Philip) and ecumenical relations (Bishop Joseph Mar Ivanios) of the Mar Thoma Church. For its part, the Catholic delegation presented the Catholic principles of ecumenism (Bishop Brian Farrell) and the developments in the dialogue of the Catholic Church with the Malankara Orthodox Churches (Rev. Fr. Hyacinthe Destivelle). The commission then exchanged views on the prospects and agenda of the dialogue, the next meeting of which will be held on 12 December 2024.

The Catholic delegation included: Bishop Brian Farrell, Archbishop Thomas Mar Koorilos, Bishop Joseph Kallarangatt, Rev. Philip Nelpuraparampil, Rev. Jacob Thekkeparampil and Rev. Fr. Hyacinthe Destivelle (Co-Secretary).

The Mar Thoma Church was represented by: Metropolitan Theodosius Mar Thoma, Suffragan Metropolitan Joseph Mar Barnabas, Bishop Zacharias Mar Aprem, Bishop Joseph Mar Ivanios, Bishop Mathews Mar Seraphim, Rev. Dr. V. S. Varghese, Rev. Dr. John Philip. A, Rev. Shibi Varghese P, Rev. Sibi Mathew, Rev. Arun Thomas (Co-Secretary).

The Syro-Malankara Mar Thoma Church, an Oriental Reformed Church, is in full communion with the Anglican Communion, the Church of South India (CIS), the Church of North India (CNI) and the Old Catholic Bishop's Conference of the Union of Utrecht. Its former primate, His Grace Philipose Mar Chrysostom, attended the Second Vatican Council as an observer.

[<http://www.christianunity.va/content/unitacristiani/en/news/2023/2023-12-15-primo-incontro-con-la-chiesa-mar-thomas.html>]