

THE SYRO-MALABAR MAJOR ARCHIEPISCOPAL CURIA

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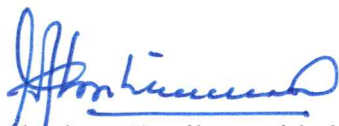
Fr. Mathew Nellikunnel CST Bishop of Gorakhpur Syro-Malabar Eparchy

The III Session of the XXXI Synod of Bishops of the Syro-Malabar Church elected Fr. Mathew Nellikunnel CST Bishop of the Eparchy of Gorakhpur in the State of Uttar Pradesh. The formal announcement of this appointment was done at 12 noon Italian time on Saturday, August 26, 2023 at the Vatican, at 3.30 pm Indian time at the Major Archiepiscopal Curia at Mount St. Thomas Kakkanad. The Major Archbishop Cardinal Mar George Alencherry made the announcement of this appointment at a public meeting held in the presence of the members of the Synod at Mount St. Thomas at Kakkanad. The new bishop was vested with the insignia of the Episcopal Office by Cardinal Mar George Alencherry and the retiring Bishop Mar Thomas Thuruthimattam.

Fr. Mathew was born on 13 November 1970 as the first child of Varkey and Mary Nellikunnel hailing from St Mary's Church, Mariapuram in the eparchy of Idukki. After the school studies, he joined the minor seminary of *Khrist Jyoti* Province, Punjab-Rajasthan of the CST Congregation and started the seminary formation. He did his First Profession in 1990 and the Final Profession in 1998. He was ordained priest on 30 December 1998 by Mar George Punnakottil, the Bishop *emeritus* of the Eparchy of Kothamangalam.

After Priestly Ordination, he served the CST Congregation in various capacities such as Assistant Novice Master, Rector of the Minor Seminary, Parish Priest, and School Manager. In 2005 he left for Rome for higher studies. After having secured Doctorate in Philosophy from Rome, he was appointed teacher at Little Flower Major Seminary, Aluva. Later, he undertook a three year term of pastoral ministry in the Diocese of Regensburg, Germany. In 2015, Fr. Nellikunnel was elected the Provincial of *Khrist Jyoti* Province, Punjab-Rajasthan. After the completion of the term in 2018, he was appointed Rector of the Little Flower Major Seminary. The call to be the shepherd of the Eparchy of Gorakhpur comes to him while serving as the Rector of the Major Seminary. The bishop-elect is proficient in many languages including English, Hindi and German and Italian. The details of the Episcopal Ordination are yet to decide. Mar John Nellikunnel, the Bishop of the Eparchy of Idukki, is the younger brother of the Bishop-elect.

It was in 1984 that the Eparchy of Gorakhpur was erected, Mar Dominic Kokkatt CST being its first Bishop. The retiring Bishop Mar Thomas Thuruthimattam CST assumed the responsibility of the Eparchy in 2006. It is with the satisfaction of the 17 years long of the pastoral ministry in the diocese of Gorakhpur, Bishop Thomas Thuruthimattam starts his retired life.



Fr. Abraham Kavilpurayidathil
Chancellor
26.08.2023

