



ASIA/INDIA - The new Indian Cardinal comes from a Church "that does a lot for Evangelization"

Vatican City (Agenzia Fides) - Joy, congratulations, hope, are expressed by the Indian Cardinals for the appointment of His Beatitude Baselios Cleemis Thottunkal, Major Archbishop of Trivandrum of the Syro-Malankars (India), who will be elevated to Cardinal by Pope Benedict XVI in the consistory to be held on 24 November.

Asked by Fides Agency, Cardinal George Alencherry, Major Archbishop of the Syro-Malabar Church, said: "We are very happy and we express our congratulations. The appointment is the recognition to a small Church, the Syro-Malankara Church, which works a lot for evangelization."

Even Cardinal Telesphore Toppo joins in the joy "so that the Pope's thought looks at the Indian Church," while Cardinal Oswald Gracias, President of the Episcopal Conference, on expressing his personal satisfaction, said to Fides "the recognition of the contribution of the Syro-Malankara Church to the universal Church. "

The Syro-Malankara Church, an ancient Eastern Church, founded by the preaching of St. Thomas the Apostle, has more than 410,000 members throughout the world, most of whom reside in the Syro-Malankara eparchies in Kerala. More than 6,200 Syro-Malankara families live in other parts of India where the spiritual, catechetical and sacramental care is secured in its own rite, in cooperation with the Bishops and Latin priests. Many immigrants receive pastoral care in missionary centers, such as the United States, Canada, Germany and the Gulf countries. The vitality of the Church is revealed by the abundance of vocations to priesthood and religious life. Currently about 600 priests serve the Syro-Malankara people, while the seminarians are nearly 500. There are also 2,000 nuns in 16 different religious institutes and 480 charitable agencies, and almost as many formation institutes. (PA) (Agenzia Fides 25/10/2012)