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# Acta of the Holy See - ASIA/INDIA - Erection of the Diocese of Sultanpet and appointment of the first Bishop

Vatican City (Agenzia Fides) - On Saturday, 28 December the Holy Father erected the new diocese of Sultanpet, India, with territory taken from the dioceses of Coimbatore and Calicut, making it a suffragan of the metropolitan church of Verapoly, and he appointed Rev. Peter Abir Antonisamy as first bishop of the new diocese.
Rev. Peter Abir Antonisamy , was born on October 14, 1951, in Sathipattu, Archdiocese of Pondicherry and Cuddalore. He studied first at the R.C. Elementary School in Sathipattu and then at St. Joseph's Higher Secondary School in Cuddalore. Subsequently, he attended St. Joseph 's College, in Trichy. In 1970 he entered the St. Agnes minor Seminary in Cuddalore and from 1971 to 1979 he studied at the Sacred Heart Seminary in Poonamelle, Chennai .
He was ordained a priest on May 1, 1979 for the Archdiocese of Pondicherry and Cuddalore.
He holds a master's degree in Biblical Theology from St. Peter 's Pontifical Institute, Bangalore, and a master's degree in Literature and History from the University of Titrupathy, a licentiate in Sacred Scriptures from the Biblicum in Rome, and a doctorate in Sacred Scriptures from the Gregorian Pontifical University (1994-1996).
After ordination he has served in a number of pastoral and academic roles: 1979-1981: Assistant parish in Athipakkam; 1981-1983: Studies at St. Peter 's Pontifical Institute, Bangalore; 1983-1984: Secretary to the Archbishop of Bangalore and Chancellor of the Curia; 1984 - 1986 Professor of Sacred Scriptures at the Good Shepherd Seminary, Coimbatore; 1986-1987: Parish priest of Kurumbagaram; 1987-1990: Director of St. Paul's Bible Institute, Poonamelle; 1990-1996: Studies in Rome, residing at the Pontifical College St. Peter the Apostle; 1996-2004: Director of the St. Paul's Bible Institute, Poonamelle; 2002-2004: Deputy secretary of the Tamil Nadu Bishops' Council; 2002-2008: Co-ordinator of the Catholic Biblical Federation of South Asia; 2004-2010: Director of the Tamil Nadu Biblical, Catechetical and Liturgical Centre; since 2010: Director of Emmaus Spirituality Centre, Sithanagur, which he founded in 2004.
The new diocese of Sultanpet (Latin name Sultanpeten/sis/) consists of the civil district of Palakkad in the state of Kerala, in the southwest of India and borders with the Diocese of Coimbatore and Calicut. It is a suffragan of the ecclesiastical province of Verapoly. The parish church of San Sebastian, in Sultanpet in the city of Palaghat, becomes the Church Cathedral of the new diocese. (SL) (Agenzia Fides 02/01/2014)

*> LINKS*

*Statistical data of the new diocese:* http://www.fides.org/ita/attachments/view/file/Dati_statistici_Sultanpet.doc:

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