



ROMAN CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF WHITEHORSE

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Memo for Public Release

Date: July 31, 2024

To: The Faithful of the Diocese of Whitehorse

From: The Bishop's Office

Re: Welcome to the Syro-Malabar Catholic Community

Most Rev. Héctor Vila would like to extend a warm welcome to the Syro-Malabar Catholic Faithful as we mark July 22nd, 2024 as the official establishment of the Syro-Malabar Catholic Community in the Diocese of Whitehorse.

This past Monday, July 22nd, Most Rev. Héctor Vila, along with the Most Rev. Jose Kalluvelil, Bishop of the Syro-Malabar Eparchy of Mississauga, con-celebrated Holy Mass at Sacred Heart Cathedral in Whitehorse, Yukon. Also in attendance, were Fr. Bartłomiej Palczewski (Rector of Sacred Heart Cathedral), Fr. Freison Kunnumpurathu, CMI (Associate Pastor at Sacred Heart Cathedral), Fr. Leo Llamas (Chancellor and Pastor of Our Lady of Victory Parish), and about forty Syro-Malabar parishioners. Mass was followed by a gathering in the CYO Hall. Photos of the event are posted in the photo gallery of the [Diocese of Whitehorse website](#).

Fr. Freison, who arrived in our diocese this past April 2024 from St. Paul's Province in India, has been given the ministry of caring for the Syro-Malabar Faithful, in addition to his other responsibilities in the parish. Fr. Freison will be celebrating Holy Mass in Malayalam with the Syro-Malabar Community the 1st and 3rd Sundays of the month at 5:00pm beginning August 4th, 2024. For current information on the Masses and other Syro-Malabar events, please refer to the [Sacred Heart Cathedral bulletin](#) or contact the parish office.

The Syro-Malabar Catholic Community has 80 + years of history in Canada and was erected as an Apostolic Exarchate in Canada by Our Holy Father Pope Francis on September 19, 2015, "*Desiring to protect and promote the spiritual riches of the Oriental churches...*" (Cf. *Decree of Erection*). A few years later, on December 22, 2018, it was elevated to an Eparchy. It is with this spirit of communion and unity with Christ that we celebrate the Syro-Malabar Catholic Community within our diocese, and are grateful to God for their presence. For more information about the Syro-Malabar rite, and the history and work of the Syro-Malabar Catholic Church in Canada, please visit the Eparchy of Mississauga website at <https://syromalabarcanda.com/>.