

A Biographical Note On The Author

His Grace Mathews Mar Barnabas, affectionately called as Mathukutty, was born as the youngest of nine children of Mr. K. P. Koralla and Mrs. Mariamma Koralla Kidangeth Thombra-Kallarackaparambil, on August 9th, 1924 in Thuruthipty Vengola, Perumbavoor, Kerala, India. His house is close to the St. Mary's church, Thuruthipty. H. H. Mar Baselios Augen I, Catholicos of the East hailed from the same place. His mother was the daughter of Rev. Fr. Ittiyavirah Malpan (teacher) of Poikkatti, Kuruppampady. She was baptized by Parumala Thirumeni. She was always an inspiration to Mathukutty. It is worth mentioning that his great grandmother coming from Ayathukudy was a saintly person and influenced the whole family spiritually. At the age of seven, he and his twin brother were blessed by His Holiness Patriarch Ignatius Elias III by placing his hands simultaneously on the boys' heads at Thrikunnathu Seminary Alwaye.

After his basic education in Punoor Girls' School and Valayanchirungara School, he joined M. G. M. High School Kuruppampady, where the illustrious teacher Rev. Fr. P. A. Paulose Cheerathottam B.A., B.T. (later Chorepiscopa) was the headmaster.

Through the inspiration of his uncle Dn. K. P. Paulose B. D. (later a priest) a member of the Gethsemane Dayara (monastery or convent) at Piramadam, near Muvattapuzha and his sister Kunjilachy (later Sr. Mary), a member of the Bethlehem Dayara, Kizhakkambalam, near Alwaye, he decided to become a monk at the early age of seven. At that age he gave up eating meat and fish. It was only after getting ordained as a deacon that he started to eat fish again.

While he was studying in the M. G. M. High School Kuruppampady, he spent the midsummer vacations at the Gethsemane Dayara along with his twin brother, hoping to join the Dayara after his studies. Unfortunately by the time he finished the Matriculation the Dayara ceased to exist. Hence he chose to pursue the ordained ministry in the Church.

He was ordained a deacon by H. H. the Catholicos of the East, Geevarghese II Baselios in 1943 at his parish church, St. Thomas Cheriapally, Thuruthipty, Vengola.

During this period there was a great movement in the church under the leadership of H. G. Augen Mar Thimotheos, the then Metropolitan of Kandanad Diocese (later Catholicos Mar Baselios Augen I) to heal the division. Rev. Dn. K. P. Paulose, Mathukutty's uncle who conducted his own researches and was convinced that H. H. Abdul Messiah was the legitimate Patriarch and that the establishment of the Catholicate in Malankara was legitimate. Dn. Paulose thus became a staunch supporter of H. G. Augen Thimotheos in his pursuit of unity in

church. Mathews influenced by Dn Paulose decided to be ordained by the Catholicos and was ordained deacon (Koruyo) by H. H. Mar Baselios Geevarghese II in 1943.

He passed the Intermediate from the C. M. S. College, Kottayam and B.Sc. from the Madras Christian College, Tambaram. He served in the M. G. M. High School Kuruppampady as a teacher for two years. Then while he was studying Syriac under H. G. Augen Mar Thimotheos at Kottayam he simultaneously taught at the M. D. High School there. On completion of his Syriac studies, H. G. Thimotheos ordained him priest in 1951 at the St. Thomas Church, Muvattupuzha.

Newly ordained Fr. Mathews was appointed as the first Vicar of St. Andrews Orthodox Church, Secunderabad, where he served for four years. During this period, he managed to take M. Sc. Botany from the Osmania University. While serving there this period his uncle Rev. Fr. K. P. Paulose passed away in 1955 and he had to come back to Valyachirangara to take over the vicarship of St. Peter's and St. Paul's Orthodox Church, his second home parish, as the successor of Rev. Fr. K. P. Paulose.

Then he was appointed as the Vicar of the St. Thomas Orthodox Church, Calcutta. While serving in Calcutta he organized eight parishes in the suburbs conducting services once in two months in them as an assistant Vicar was appointed in Calcutta. During this time he studied under Rev. Canon Peter De May, principal of Bishop's College, Calcutta, as a private candidate and took B. D. from the Serampore College as an external candidate. Then he was transferred to St. George Orthodox Church, Jabalpur, where he served for two years. At Jabalpur he had his higher studies in Greek at the Leonard Theological College. Then he was transferred to St. Luke's Orthodox Church, Vellore. He served there for four years. His main work was among the patients of the hospital and the nursing and medical students.

In 1967 he was appointed on the faculty of the Orthodox Theological Seminary, Kottayam where he worked as the full time warden for five years. During this period he used to visit patients in the nearby hospitals daily, riding a bicycle. After five years, on his request he was appointed as the chaplain of the newly started Medical Mission Hospital, Kolencherry. It was during this time that he had to undergo a very critical surgery at the Vellore Hospital. He served in Kolencherry for six years.

He was consecrated Episcopa by H. H. Mar Baselios Mathews I Catholicos of the East, in 1978. While he was in the Angamaly Diocese as assistant Metropolitan, he helped the Diocesan Metropolitan in starting Catholicate Centers in different places. In 1979 he was appointed as the assistant Metropolitan of the Kottayam Diocese. In 1982 he became the first

Metropolitan of the newly formed Idukki Diocese where he served there for ten years. During this period he started Idukki Medical Center at Nettithozhu. He also served as the manager of the Corporate Colleges, the president of the Marth Mariam Samajam, the president of the Balika Samajam and the president of the Madyavarjana Samithi (Temperance movement) of the Church.

In 1992 he was appointed as the Assistant to the Catholicos for the American Diocese. He was appointed and enthroned as the Metropolitan of the American Diocese in 1993. The present headquarters of the American Diocese was purchased during his term. In 2002, H. G. Zachariah Mar Nicholovos was appointed as the Assistant Metropolitan of the Diocese. A new property in Muttontown, New York was purchased by the Diocese in 2007 and construction of a new headquarters is nearing completion there

In April 2009 the American Diocese is divided into two dioceses:

- 1) The Diocese of Northeast America
- 2) The Diocese of Southwest America.

Mathews Mar Barnabas continues as the Metropolitan of the Diocese of Northeast America. He is the author of some valuable books in Malayalam and English. He writes articles in Malankara Sabha Magazine frequently.

After a brother and two sisters who died in infancy, he had three brothers and two sisters:

- 1) Sr. Mary (Bethlehem Dayara)
- 2) Mr. K. K. Thomas
- 3) Mrs. Mariamma Kora (Kothedathil, Kottayam)
- 4) Mr. K. K. Paulose
- 5) Mr. K. K. Abraham (twin brother)

Zachariah Mar Nicholovos
Assistant Metropolitan
New York
May 1, 2009