

MADAGASCAR MISSION

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Diocesan Youth conference

The very first diocesan youth conference was held from August 18th -25th, 2013. Andranomena, in Toliara where the diocesan headquarters is situated was a bee hive of activity for that entire week. We had a total of 140 young people attending the conference.

The diocese of Toliara is the youngest and the largest diocese in Madagascar in terms of the area it covers. Youths from Fort-Dauphin for example had to travel 3 days by a truck on a very bad road to arrive to the venue. Youths from Morondava took 17-hours by road to arrive. The desire to be part of what God is doing and having an encounter with God was behind the zeal and all endurance of long journeys.

The Official Opening

The official opening ceremony was graced by the diocesan bishop of Toliara-The Rt. Rev. Dr. Todd Andrew MCGregor whereby he celebrated the Eucharist.

In the opening message, he clarified that the youth form a bigger percentage of the population both in the nation and in the church; hence they are and hold the future of the church. Citing the call of Jeremiah, he pointed out that the Lord cal-

led and appointed him for a great task despite him looking down upon himself and claiming that he is young and he does not know how to speak. (Jeremiah 1:4-10)

He further encouraged the youth that the Lord is yet to do a great thing with them and that they should not look down upon themselves but release their lives to be used of the Lord.

The Program

This year's theme was drawn from Mark 16, 15. ..Preach the gospel to all creation. We recognize that the Lord has chosen us and appointed us to preach the gospel and witness for Him to all nations.

Most evenings were left open for interactions and games that helped the young people to connect to each other despite their coming from different regions in the south.

We focused on sensitizing the youth of the diocese to be alert, passionate and sensitive when it comes to evangelizing the world.

This conference was one of a kind since we had our very own Mothers Union taking it upon themselves to cook and serve all the youth and clergy that had gathered.

We had Holy Communion services every morning after the morning devotions of which the youths from the different parishes were involved in leading and preparing for the services accordingly.

The conference was organized in such a way that 3 afternoons were left for the youth to practice and apply what was studied. And that is simply to evangelize. The other afternoons were slotted for a football tournament of which the winner carried home a prestigious prize.

The Topics Handled

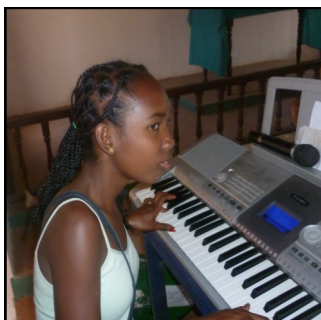
Some of the topics tackled included; the goal of evangelism, the content of the message, the result of evangelism, communicating the gospel effectively, the place of prayer in evangelism, tools of evangelism among others.

Alongside our bishop, we were blessed to have our Archdeacon- Vén. Theodore and other deans in our diocese teaching and spending time with the youth in the Bible studies and morning devotion. We were also honored to have our very first female theologian- Miss-Nolavy in the Anglican Church of the Indian Ocean as one of the speakers.

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Rév. Victor



A youth trying hands on the keyboard

Youth conference exclusive



Outdoor evangelism



Person-person outreach in Mitsinjo

« Investing in the youth is a worthwhile investment... »



A little jig by the youth



Rév. Victor interviewing Rév. Lova at the youth camp

As we went to do outdoor evangelism, majority of the youth were a bit afraid because it is something they had never done and always imagined that that is someone else's task. We walked for almost 1 and a half hour to arrive to Mitsinjo- our evangelism targeted area.

Mitsinjo is one of the densely populated areas here in Toliara and there are only a few churches there. For some, the trekking was a breathtaking exercise and for others- anticipation of what was going to happen in the field when they arrive.

The people were more than ready to receive us and were happy for our arrival. We divided the youths into groups and the work started.

Some of the tools that we used during the outreach included the four spiritual laws, the wordless book, the colored bangle and the evangelcube.

We got back home late in the evening at around 7.30pm. There was singing and dancing all the way home because the Lord had shown Himself mighty in battle and many people received Christ as Lord.

One youth gave a testimony saying 'I have never shared the gospel with anyone in my life and I was not sure I could do it. But today, I

bless the Lord because He gave me such courage that I was able to share the gospel with someone and I felt like crying when I saw this elderly man surrendering his life to Christ.' She continued to say that, that is something that brought her total joy in her life and that she would continue doing it because that is what the Lord desires from us as His disciples. By the third day, the youth were on fire and ceasing the moment to reach out for Christ.

New Believers

A church plant in Mitsinjo was the epitome of the youth camp. We had a wonderful Eucharistic service with the new believers in the area which was led by the Dean of Toliara- The Rev. Noely with the Bishop Todd preaching and celebrating Holy Communion. The service was held in the open air in the Mitsinjo High School. That would be a temporary meeting place until a permanent place is found. The delight of the believers could not be hidden from their faces of how the Lord had ministered to them. We received many testimonies of people who received Christ, delivered from demonic oppression and others healed of their infirmity. During that special service, the bishop offered a special altar-call for the youths to re-dedicate their lives to the Lord. The church was officially opened on the 25 August 2013 and a catechist

assisted by a student evangelist was appointed to take care of it.

Home Time

By the time we were having the closing ceremony the youth had so bonded that they still wanted the camp to go on...and on. Knowing that all the youths from around Toliara are to go home after the closing ceremony while the guests stay on for one more night as they sort out their travel arrangements, one youth from Toliara came to me and innocently she said, "Is it possible for me to return here tonight even after the closing ceremony is over?" For some, they just could not wait to get home and share the good news with the brethren who were unable to attend the conference.

Some were already asking where and when the conference will be held next year. It was evident that most of the youths had their lives changed and are looking forward to the next diocesan youth camp which will be held in 2016.

The future

Due to the logistics involved, annual youth camps are left for the deaneries to organize while the diocesan youth camps will be held every three years.

Investing in the youth is a worthwhile investment indeed. It is our goal and desire that we raise a young people who are committed to the Lord who will become responsible leaders both for the church and the nation.

Church Plants

With only 25% christian population , evangelism and church planting remains urgent in Madagascar especially in the south.

In the past few months, we have been able to plant 5 new churches in Antranokaky, Andranohinaly, Antsapana, Ambovombe-Androy and Mitsinjo.

We arrived in Ambovombe very tired from the 3day journey on rough road by a

truck. A team of 13 of us ministered in the region.

A team of christians from the parish of Fort-Dauphin were with us. It was really exciting to have representatives from the new church that was planted last year in Amboasary.

We praise the Lord that we have seen fast growth in that church and that the christians are zealous in serving the Lord.

The new christians in Ambovombe were very happy to have a close fellowship in which they could praise God express themselves freely. The locals led by the area chief then provided a temporary meeting place and donated a piece of land for the church to be built.

One of our student evangelists is currently there to continue with what the Lord is doing in the people of Ambovombe-Androy.



Yes to Jesus in Ambovombe



The mission team

No charms!

During the church plant in Antsapana word went round that 50 herd of cattle had been stolen in the area. The man hosting us at that time did not think that his cows also have been stolen since we were sharing the gospel with him in his house. It only occurred to him that his 25 head of cattle were among the stolen cattle

when a neighbor bumped into the house with the sad news. We prayed together with him and his family and trusted the Lord to bring back the stolen cows.

And truly indeed his 20 head of cattle were returned and later that evening, the remaining 5 cattle brought themselves back!

The other 25 cows were not traced at all. It is true that the Lord offers total protection to his children. « I trusted that the Lord will do it because I do not use any charms of protection like some of my friends here in the village, »he said; as we praised the Lord together with him.

*«... Go into all
the world and
preach the
gospel to the
whole creation »
Mark 16:15*

Prayer and Thanksgiving

- ◆ Pray for peace and serenity during the upcoming Presidential General Elections in October 25.
- ◆ Thank God for the newly planted churches and pray for the Lord to grow them.
- ◆ Thank God for a wonderful youth camp and ask the Lord to continue leading and directing all the youth in this diocese.
- ◆ Pray for protection on the roads due to a recent rise of attacks on road travellers by highway robbers.
- ◆ Pray for security especially for the recent rise of cattle rustlers in many villages.
- ◆ My financial support has gone down this year, so pray for the Lord to raise more prayer and financial partners.



Ev. Crescend making an altar call after showing the Jesus Film