



# LENTEN DEVOTIONALS

## offered by Leaders of the Diocese of Toliara

### Reflection on the Communications Department and Parish Links

By  
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***"It is with joy that I pray, because of your partnership with us in the Gospel since the first day until now." Philippians 1:4b-5***

As Paul did at the beginning of his epistle to the Philippians, I greet all of you with joy. I would like to share my reflection from the Holy Bible following his letter.

The Communications Department of the Diocese of Toliara took this scripture as their motto. We see it at each link agreement between a Parish here in this diocese and a Parish in the EU, the UK, or the US. The links connect two Parishes, one here and one somewhere across the world, in a partnership of prayer and spiritual support of each other.

The Communications Department was created in 2013, after the first Diocesan Synod. It

was officially announced at the meeting of the Synod committee in 2014.

This brief history shows us that although this is the youngest department it plays a big role in the life of the Diocese; by seeking partnerships for each Parish, by representing the Diocese to promote good relationships with other institutions, different NGOs or churches. Relationship brings the Joy of a fraternal bond: "It is with joy that I pray, because of your partnership with us in the Gospel since the first day until now."

The prayer that Paul prayed with joy shows a close bond between himself and the Philippian believers, that he will always remember. This prayer of thanks illustrates the blessing brought by other believers (Phil. 1:3).

We, the Diocese and the believers of Toliara, thank God that we know you through brotherly communication in Christ, in prayer times together, in mutual sharing of news from each Church and country, and in the way that we support each other. Especially at this time of global health pandemic, we were still meeting together in worship when our partners around the world had already suspended worship services. We prayed for our partners as they endured this new challenge. Now, our services here have been suspended as well. Our partners now support us in prayer to get through this time of trial.

All of this establishes a joyful relationship in Christ which unites us as PRP stands for People Reaching People.

The relationship brings the Joy of New Birth: "It is with joy..., because of your partnership with us in the Gospel since the first day until now."

Paul wrote his epistle to the Christians of Philippi, expressing his joy at the way in which they worked with him in evangelism, from the first day in his ministry of the Gospel. The Diocese of Toliara was also born out of this ministry, bringing importance to evangelism, and enabling the birth of new churches up to this day.

In 2006, when Tulear became a Missionary Diocese there were only 7 churches. In 2020, there are 108. This Church flourishes through the ministry of spreading the Gospel that Christ commands us, Matt. 28: 19-20.

The relationship brings a Joy of freedom: "It is with joy that I pray, because of your partnership with us in the Gospel since the first day until now."

Even in prison, Paul showed his joy in the way that they met, from the first day of his ministry of the Gospel as he is happy to bring the Good News to the Philippians so that they receive freedom in Christ. During his time in prison "as they sang the praises to God... all the doors opened." Acts 16:25-27.

In spite of the distance between two countries, different languages, different cultures, the Gospel is brought to the distant country of Madagascar so that the Malagasy people receive Christ our Savior.

**Joy is one of the major themes in Paul's epistle:**

**\* it springs from our relationship with Christ as Paul was linked to the Church of Philippi (Phil. 1: 1-5)**

**\* it stems from new birth as Paul had his "beloved child" Timothy (Phil. 1:1 cf. I Cor. 4:14, 17)**

**\* it is always related to salvation as Paul brought the gospel of Jesus Christ (Phil. 1:5)**

If you would like information about how your Parish might link with a Parish here in the Diocese of Toliara, please send an email to me ([rev\\_herytiana@yahoo.fr](mailto:rev_herytiana@yahoo.fr)) and to Cheryl Harman ([cmh103@aol.com](mailto:cmh103@aol.com)) who is the coordinator for Parish Links on the People Reaching People Board of Directors.

If you would like to provide financial support for the continued work of Parish Links, please consider a gift to the Bishop Todd & Rev. Patsy McGregor Diocese of Toliara Endowment Fund by clicking the link below.

With the Joy of the Lord,

**Hery+**

The Venerable Hery Tiana Randrianavalona  
Archdeacon, Diocese of Toliara

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