

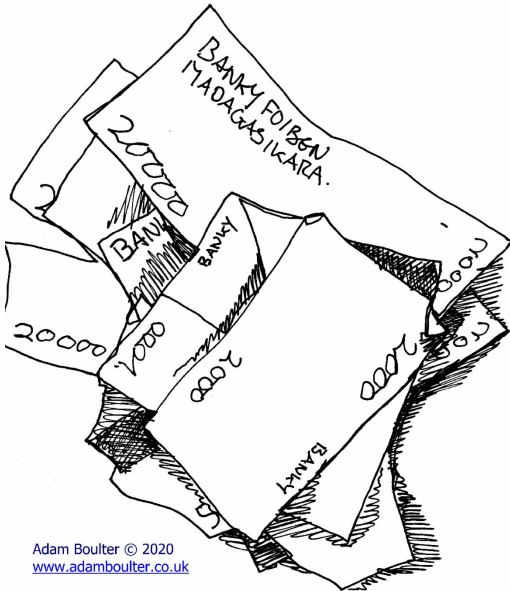


# LENTEN DEVOTIONALS

## *Check it out!*

By Bishop Todd McGregor  
Bishop of the Diocese of Toliara

## We need more Andrews in the World!



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***"He first found his own brother Simon and told him, 'We have found the Messiah!' (which is translated Christ). Andrew brought Simon to Jesus"***

***~ John 1: 41-42***

I love the story about Andrew listening to Jesus speak for the first time. We know he was deeply moved because he immediately went back to his home community and informed Peter about Jesus. Not only did he inform him, but he also persuaded him to come and see for himself. (*He first found his own brother Simon and told him, "We have found the Messiah".... Andrew brought Simon to Jesus. John 1:41, 42.*) Andrew's life was so transformed that he was compelled to share with someone else about Jesus. He convinced Peter to **check it out**, and go and see for himself!

I was reminded of this recently when two new donors contacted me about separate things out of the blue. One was a priest from Chicago and another was a woman from the West Coast of the US. The priest informed me a friend of ours shared with him about our ministry here in Madagascar. Their church has an endowment for evangelism and wanted to support the work in the Diocese of Toliara. The second contact was from a woman who had been a tourist to Madagascar last year and upon her return from vacation, was looking for a local charity to help support children's education and water projects. Longtime friends of ours who are her neighbors sent her our most recent newsletter and link to our website, and she contacted us.

Both of these interactions came to us as a result of a friend(s) sharing with a friend – like Andrew sharing with Peter. And like Peter, they had to **check it out**. As a result the Diocese is benefiting from two donations. I can't imagine the impact if 20 of our donors persuaded friends to **check it out** and research what God is doing in the Diocese of Toliara! What if 40 people did this? Like a stone thrown into a pond

sending many ripples, donors sharing with friends could have an amazing influence on the Diocese.

Lent is a time for us to reflect on our spiritual lives, clean out the cobwebs, and put a fresh coat of paint in our lives. I believe if an indigenous church is to survive it will need to be sustainable in three areas: growing, governing, and giving. The Diocese of Toliara is growing and beginning to self-govern. Financial sustainability however is a huge burden for the Diocese of Toliara. 70% of the people of Madagascar live below the poverty line, and this percentage is even greater in the south. As hard as we try, each year it is difficult to make ends meet.

The burden mostly lies with the operating budget. The annual operating budget of \$70,000 supports the salaries and benefits of education, health care, and pensions for approximately 40 clergy, evangelists, diocesan staff and their families. With abject poverty crippling the people in the south, less than 1/3 of this annual operating budget is able to come from within the Diocese. The church members in the Diocese of Toliara do sacrificially give from their hearts, but they are barely surviving in the 10th poorest country in the world. Thus, the Diocese needs to partner with outside friends to sustain the additional 2/3 of the annual budget.

Recently, The Bishop Todd and Rev. Patsy McGregor Diocese of Toliara Endowment Fund has set a goal of raising \$1,000,000 to help meet the financial needs of the Diocese. Currently, \$200,000 has been donated to this Endowment Fund. Now, we need your help. We can't do this by ourselves. We need people like you to help this wonderful Diocese become sustainable. Can you please spread the word, like Andrew spoke to Peter? Will you please be the one who will convince their family and friends to **check it out** and see for themselves, through links on websites, current newsletters, or personal testimonies of those who have visited the Diocese? Make a sustainable donation impacting the Diocese of Toliara for generations to come.

Serving Christ Together,

*+Todd*

The Rt. Rev. Dr. Todd McGregor  
Bishop of Toliara

Interested in joining us to support this great cause?

**Donate!**

People Reaching People: <https://www.peoplereaching.org>