

## The Tanôsy (Antanôsy) of Madagascar



The Tanôsy people, numbering more than 600 000, live primarily in the Anôsy region in south-west Madagascar, between the Mandrare and the Manantenina rivers. *Anôsy* means “the island region”, and *Tanôsy* means “the people of Anôsy.” Fort Dauphin is the main city in the area, also called Taolañaro or Faradofay.

Around 1845, after the Merina people from central Madagascar conquered Anosy, a large group of Tanôsy emigrated westwards towards the Onilahy river, where they settled on land seized from the Bara and Mahafaly people. The Tanôsy are increasingly infiltrating the land in between these two areas, which is traditionally a Tandroy area.

Their main economy lies in cattle-raising, agriculture, and fishing. They are known to be hard-working, and have often been taken to the Mascareignes to work on the plantations there.

The literacy rate is estimated at less than 30%. Some church schools and NGO's complement the inadequate governmental structures in providing literacy training.

The Tanôsy originally followed a strong caste system, the noble caste being descendants of Zafi-Raminia, a dynasty of the 13th century, who were immigrants from the Middle-East. Their kings held absolute power. In time however the different castes have tended to even out.

Most Tanôsy practise a traditional religion, praying to *Zañahary* and to their ancestors. There are many different religious and cultural ceremonies and rituals for every area of life, including marriage, birth, healing, spirit (*tromba*) possession and death. *Famorana*, the circumcision ceremony, is held every 7 years.

Today it is estimated that about 40 percent of the Tanôsy practice Christianity, mostly Roman Catholic and Lutheran. There seems to be a historic resistance to what is seen as a Merina religion, as the Merina conquered and dominated the region in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

**Primary Religion:**

Ethnic religion

**Disciples (Matt 28:19):**

3%

**Churches:**

Yes

**Scripture Status (Matt 28:20):**

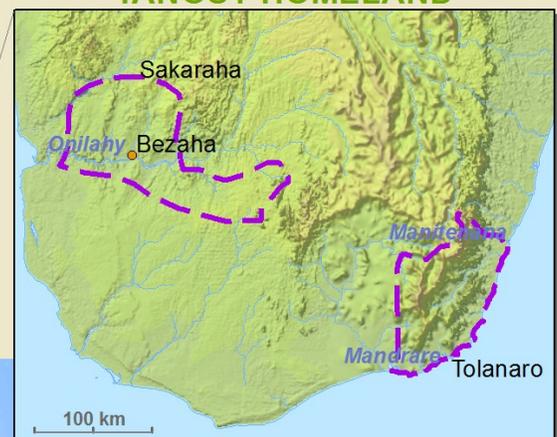
Translation begun

**Population (date):**

600,000+ (2014)



**TANÔSY HOMELAND**



## The Tanosy of Madagascar

### Have They Heard The Gospel?

Have they Heard the Gospel?

*Who is Jesus Christ to them?*

40%	Are Christian Adherents, members of a church
2 to 3%	Have Jesus as their God and only Savior*
A few	Believe Jesus is a prophet, a good man, but not the only Savior
~60%	Believe in local, traditional religion

Is the Word of God Translated?

The first known translation of scripture into the Tanôsy language was a Catechism done in about 1648 by Lazarist missionaries. Since 2006 a team of Tanôsy translators has been working with The Luke Partnership (an initiative of The Seed Company). They plan to finalise the gospel of Luke in 2014.

Other Forms of Gospel Presentations

The Jesus Film, recorded in 2012, and some scripture extract booklets from the gospel of Luke. .

Audio Recordings of Gospel Available

No (but the Gospel of Luke will be recorded with specially composed Tanôsy songs before the end of 2014.)

History of Christianity

Lazarist priests were the first missionaries to come to Anosy, in the seventeenth century. Protestant missions arrived in the 19th century; the American and Norwegian Lutheran missions were particularly active in the area until the 1990's.

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*\*One who has Jesus as their God and only Savior, here, is a person who 1) believes that Jesus Christ is the sole source of salvation through faith in Him, 2) has personal faith and conversion with regeneration by the Holy Spirit, 3) recognizes the inspired Word of God as the authoritative basis for faith and Christian living, and 4) is committed to biblical preaching and evangelism that brings others to faith in Jesus Christ.*