



To say "going to church", you say MANDEHA MIVAVAKA or MANDEHA MIANGONA, which is literally "going to pray" or "going to meet together".

In this lesson I will take you through a typical church service, specifically a Baptist church which I am a member of, so that you do not get lost on your first Sunday here.

The bible is called BAIBOLY.

There are two hymn books:

1. Fihirana FFPM (Fiombonan' ny Fiangonana Protestanta eto Madagasikara) - the official hymn book of protestants throughout Madagascar.
2. ASAFA - the official hymn book of Baptist churches in Madagascar.

There is also the Fihirana FANAMPINY, which is also referred to as the second volume of FFPM

At church, you will commonly hear the following:

FFPM faha.....andininy faha..... (FFPM number....verse number....)

ASAFA faha..... (ASAFA number....)

Matio toko faha.....andininy faha.....hatramin'ny faha.....

(Matthew chapter.....from verse.....to verse.....)

With a sizeable Christian population, it is quite easy to make a distinction between those who go to church (not necessarily Christians) and those who do not.

Malagasy believe in the existence of the greatest of gods, the Creator God (ZAGNAHARY / ANDRIAMANITRA) with different attributes such as, God who blesses, protects, sees everything etc.

In general, Malagasy believe that those who die "are not dead" but they are in a better place, somewhere between God and the living. We say that deceased people are "called by their fathers" or "they have fallen asleep".

Church services (FANOMPOAM-PIVAVAHANA) usually start at 9am.

Here are the different sections of a typical service:

1. FIDERANA (Worship)

We MIHIRA (sing), MIVAVAKA (pray), MAMAKY TENIN'ANDRIAMANITRA (read God's word), MIJORO VAOLOMBELONA (give a testimony)

2. FANATITRA (Offering)

3. ANJARA HO AN'NY ANKIZY (Children's lesson)

4. VAKITENY (Bible reading, usually the sermon passage)

5. TORITENY (Sermon)

At the end of the service

6. FILAZANA VAOVAO (Announcements)

This includes welcoming first-time visitors, who usually stand up and give a short KABARY (see lesson 1a).

7. TSODRANO (Benediction, usually a blessing from scripture)

Before parting

8. MIFANDRAY TANANA (Shaking-hands with everyone)

Sunday school is usually at 8am before the service, and communion is after the service.

Reminder from Lesson 3:

In Malagasy, most verbs begin with the letter "m". For the past tense, "m" is replaced with "n". For the future tense, "m" is replaced with "h".

E.g.

Mitsangana -> Hitsangana

Mihira -> Hihira

Here is a list of useful verbs:

1. MITSANGANA (stand up). HITSANGANA ANTSIKA (Let us stand)

2. MIPETRAKA / MANTOTRY (sit down). AFAKA MANTOTRY - AFAKA MIPETRAKA - MAHAZOA TOERANA (We can have a seat).

3. MIHIRA (sing). HIHIRA ANTSIKA (let us sing).

4. HAMAKY NY TENIN'ANDRIAMANITRA ANTSIKA (We will read God's word together)

5. MIVAVAKA (pray). HIVAVAKA ANTSIKA (let us pray).

(Andriamanitra o.....Amen)

You will hear the pronoun ANTSIKA^{tsm}/ISIKA^{off} (inclusive we) used a lot during the service.

Vocabulary:

Miangona = meet together

Fihirana = songbook

Fanompoana = service

(manompo = to serve)

Fiangonana = church (building or congregation)

Afaka = can

Mahazoa = can / to be allowed

Toerana = place / seat

Mamaky = read



At this stage, you might remember the numbers in Malagasy, but hearing it reeled off quickly at church might require quite a bit more practice and time! Trying to figure out which song or passage during the service is really a challenge, but don't lose heart, as you'll soon get used to it. A helpful tip is to learn about Ordinal Numbers, e.g. first, second, third etc.

Ordinal numbers

We learnt about cardinal numbers in introduction lesson 4, e.g. iray, roa, telo etc. However, when we are referring to numbers that denote position or order, we add the word "FAHA" to the number. E.g. Faharoa, fahatelo etc.

The exceptions are the words for "first" and "last".

We say VOALOHANY for first, and FARANY for last. Faha-iray does not exist!

English	Malagasy		
First	Voalohany		
Second	Faharoa		
Third	Fahatelo		
Last	Farany		

In Malagasy, ordinal numbering is used for Bible references and songs.

In English, for John 3:16, we would say it as John chapter THREE verse SIXTEEN. However, in Malagasy, it would sound like this: John chapter THIRD verse SIXTEENTH.

JAONA TOKO FAHATELO ANDININY FAHA ENINA AMBIN'NY FOLO

The same goes for verses in a song.

ASAFA 34, 1st and 2nd verses = ASAFA FAHA EFATRA AMBY TELOPOLO ANDININY VOALOHANY SY FAHAROA

In church, just pay attention to the word for number: FAHA. This precedes every number that you hear to convert it into an ordinal number. If we spell it out in English, it would look like this:

Luke 13:4-5 = Luke chapter (NUMBER) 13, verses (NUMBER 3) to (NUMBER) 5.

Examples of songs and scripture read out at church:



- | | |
|---------------------------------|---|
| 1. FFPM 10 | FFPM fahafolo |
| 2. ASAFA 34, 1st and 2nd verses | ASAFA faha efatra amby telopolo andininy voalohany sy faharoa |
| 3. Jaona 3:14-21 | Jaona toko fahatelo andininy faha efatra ambin'ny folo hatramin'ny faha iraika amby roapolo |

Finally, one can broadly categorise numbering systems in Malagasy into 4 groups, which we will encounter in the future:



	nominal	cardinal	frequency	(number) by (number)
Question	Firy?	Fahafiry?	Impiry?	Tsifirifiry
Answer	Roa	<u>Faharoa</u>	<u>Indroa</u>	<u>Tsiroaroa</u> (animals entering two by two into Noah's ark)