



JOYFUL GIFT

Sunday 8th May 2016, **Ascension**, Year C

Newsletter from Madeira. Keep in touch:

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The Roman Catholic English Service Mass in Madeira

Welcome to the **Chapel of Penha de França**. This small Chapel was founded by Antonio Dantas in 1622, almost 400 years ago, and built on a "penha" or peak, by the sea. It was originally built to minister to the soldiers of the small garrison at the Pontinha Redoubt (stronghold) in the bay of Funchal, but the Chapel soon became so famous a shrine that people came to it on pilgrimage from all parts of the Island. When the Diocese of Funchal took possession of the chapel it was used as the Bishop's Summer Residence for many years. In the meantime, the Franciscans had been coming to Madeira to carry out apostolic duties, and in 1935, they founded the Franciscan Residence of Our Lady of Penha de França, at the request of Bishop D. Antonio Ribeiro. The nave roof has recently been repaired and the ceiling restored through the generosity of a frequent visitor to our English Mass. Father Bernardino de Andrade is the presiding priest for the English Service Mass on Sundays.

Today's Scripture Readings

(Acts 1:1-11; Psalm 46(47); Heb 9:24-28, 10:19-23; Luke 24:46-53)

Twice today we hear about the ascension of Jesus into heaven, where the letter to the Hebrews tells us that as "the supreme high priest" he gives us "the right to enter the sanctuary" where "he appears before God on our behalf", after shedding his own blood in a sacrifice that need never be repeated.

Luke's Gospel opens in the Temple in Jerusalem with the angel appearing to Zechariah. On Easter Sunday, after Jesus walked with two disciples to Emmaus and then appeared to the Eleven, he ascended to heaven. The gospel ends with the disciples joyfully praising God in the Temple, in Jerusalem. Acts starts in Jerusalem with Jesus' ascension after appearances over 40 days but finishes in Rome. Jesus' earthly ministry was "to go to the lost sheep of the house of Israel". His ministry started and finished in Israel. But gradually the Apostles, guided by the Holy Spirit, came to realise that they were to preach "repentance for the forgiveness of sins" "to all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem". Acts tells us how Jesus Christ continues his presence through the Church, spreading the gospel worldwide. Christianity could not be contained within Judaism, it had to break away from the Temple, with its daily sacrifices. "No one puts new wine into old wineskins".

- Brought to you by Chris Oliver

Psalm Response:

God goes up with shouts of joy; the Lord goes up with trumpet blast



Hymns:

Entry: 419 (*O Lord, my God!*)

Offertory: 21 (*All that I am, all that I do*)

Exit: 39 (*As I kneel before you*)

Music: Larysa Makarova

I was attending a youth meeting in my parish. I had invited the members of the group to complete a sentence starting with one of the gifts of the Holy Spirit, like for example: "Love is _____" ... "Joy is _____". The participation was excellent. Then the word "Peace" came up and all tried to share what they felt Peace was. This happened many years ago but I will never forget 17-year-old Joel's answer: «Peace... is what I feel when I forgive someone».

Two World War II veterans, a German and an American, were attending a three-day seminar. As they were washing dishes, one evening after dinner, they exchanged stories about the war. The American told of the horror he felt as a young pilot during the particularly savage bombing of a city in Germany. He had orders to bomb a hospital, which he would know by the huge Red Cross painted on the roof. The German - somewhat shocked by the story - revealed that his wife had been giving birth to their baby in that very hospital when it was being bombed, resulting in the death of the mother and the baby. After a few minutes of silence the two men fell into each other's arms weeping.



«God gave me freedom to forgive my enemies» (Carla Rodrigues).

Love and Peace,
Fr. Bernardino Andrade

Swiss Guard recruits pledge to protect the Pope with their lives

Source: Zenit – The World Seen From Rome (www.zenit.org)

In the Vatican's San Damaso Courtyard on May 6th, 23 recruits were sworn in to the Swiss Guard. New recruits are sworn in every year on May 6, commemorating the date in 1527 when 147 Swiss soldiers died defending the pope during an attack on Rome. Known locally as the Guardia Svizzera, they are responsible for the safety of the pope. Often called "*the world's smallest army*," they serve as personal escorts to the pontiff and as watchmen for Vatican City. During the swearing-in ceremony, with their left hands clutching a standard and their right hands raised with three fingers open symbolizing the Holy Trinity, the new recruits pledge to "*faithfully, loyally, and honorably*" serve and protect the pope and, if necessary, sacrifice their lives for him.



WHAT IS THE FEAST OF THE ASCENSION?

Today we celebrate the Feast of the Ascension, where we commemorate the **bodily Ascension of our Lord Jesus into heaven.**

In today's scripture reading from the book of Acts (chapter 1: v1-11), we read about the time when Jesus was talking with his disciples, and how he was taken up to heaven in a cloud, before their very eyes.

Ascension Day is traditionally **celebrated forty days after Easter**, on a Thursday, but is transferred to the following Sunday (today) in Portugal, England, Wales, Ireland, and many other countries around the world.



Especially for Catholic Astronauts – Holy Communion in space

Source: *Catholic News Agency* (www.cnstopstories.com)

For Catholic astronauts, flying to space doesn't mean giving up the faith. On the International Space Station (a habitable artificial satellite, in low Earth orbit) there's a place called the Cupola, where astronauts like to hang out. It's a small module with seven large bay windows that give crew members a panoramic view of Earth.



Astronaut Mike Hopkins

On his first mission into space in September 2013, astronaut Mike Hopkins was eager to find the Cupola...it was there that he found himself praying and at times taking Communion. Under a special arrangement with the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston and with the help of Father James H. Kuczynski, his parish Priest, he took with him to space a *pyx* (a small round container used to carry the consecrated host (Eucharist) to the sick or those unable to come to a church to receive Holy Communion) with six consecrated hosts broken into four pieces. It was enough so that he could take Communion once a week for the 24 weeks he was aboard the ISS. « *It was extremely important to me,* » said Hopkins. On long-term missions to the International Space Station, schedules give astronauts blocks of private time daily, allowing them to pray, read the Bible or other inspirational works, write in a journal or reflect on God. Hopkins used some of his time to keep up with the Sunday readings and his pastor's weekly homily, both of which he received via email from the support person for his family assigned by NASA who was a member of his parish. « My crewmates knew I had the Eucharist with me, » Hopkins said. « In fact, I coordinated with my Russian commander. He knew everything going on. They were all aware of that, but I never tried to make a large deal about it and publicize it and they didn't either. They respected my faith and my desire to follow that faith even when I was in orbit. ».

Let's keep in touch!



If you would like to receive our newsletter in your inbox every Sunday, send an email to: penhafranca.newsletter@gmail.com and your name will be added to the weekly distribution list.

PEOPLE HELPING PEOPLE



"You should wash each other's feet"
(John 13:14).

People Helping People (PHP) is a small project founded in the Chapel of Penha de França to help those in need. Our Bishop D. António once said, "One must find new ways of helping the poor". A very small group of people attending the English Mass decided to do just that! In a short period of time we have created partnerships with restaurants and supermarket chains, we have paid dozens of medical prescriptions, we have spent gallons and gallons of petrol riding across the island giving lifts, we have prevented families to lose their homes, get their electricity cut off, run out of gas. We have tried to keep them warm, keep them hopeful, keep them dreaming....

DONATIONS - please help:

Moynihans Bar, on the corner up the road from the Chapel, accepts Donations of food, toiletries or clothes for PHP.

CONTACTS:

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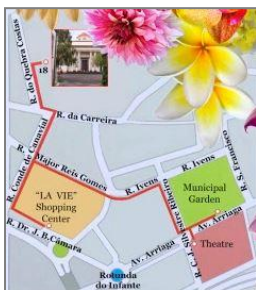
Bank: Banco Santander Totta

IBAN: PT50 0038 0000 40900916771 75

BIC (SWIFT): BNFPTPL

ACCOUNT NUMBER: 000409009167710

Bank Address: Caminho de Santa Quiteria 46A, 9020-119, Funchal, Madeira, Portugal



Bible Group

Joint Anglican - Roman Catholic Bible Group:
THURSDAYS - 2pm in the English Church Library.

Mothers' Prayer Group

Last Thursday of each month
11-12 am at the English Church
Mothers & Grandmothers of all ages welcome.
More information: <http://www.mothersprayers.org/>

**Tea and Coffee
After Mass in the
meeting room
across the garden
- please join us.**



Tall?
Please beware low
door lintels



Don't forget to leave your
yellow *Hymn Book* and
Order of the Mass sheets at
the Chapel entrance after
mass ☺

