

## PEOPLE HELPING PEOPLE (PHP)



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

*People Helping People* is a small project founded in the Chapel of Penha de França to help those in need. Our former 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 after the floods in 2010! In a short period of time we created partnerships with supermarket chains and restaurants; 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 from going hungry, getting their electricity cut off, running out of gas, losing their homes. **We have tried to keep them warm, keep them hopeful, and keep them dreaming...**

**The Mission Statement of People Helping People is...** through social solidarity, to mobilize many people to help many people in a combat against poverty, hunger, illness, exclusion, indifference, intolerance, and social injustice, with a special preference for the last, the least and the lost, having as a model the person of Jesus, the «Good Shepherd» (Gospel according to Luke, chapter 15). Our wish is that it may always be an open door when all the other doors close, building in this way, different feelings and acts of Mercy (Gospel according to Luke, chapter 6 and Matthew chapter 25).

### >> PEOPLE HELPING PEOPLE CONTACTS:

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**BANK:** Banco Santander Totta **ACCOUNT NUMBER:** 0003 4938 1759020

**IBAN:** PT50 0018 0003 49381759020 94 **SWIFT:** TOTAPTPL **NIB:** 0018 0003 49381759020 94

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Don't be afraid, for I am with you.  
Don't be discouraged, for I am  
your God. I will strengthen you  
and help you. I will hold you up  
with my victorious right hand.  
Isaiah 41:10

Bible Love Notes

“Do not wait for  
leaders; do it alone,  
person to person.  
Be faithful in small  
things because it is  
in them that your  
strength lies.”

— MARYSEI TORRES,  
BELGICUS SISTER

sheknows

**Newsletter from Madeira.** Keep in touch! **This newsletter is brought to you every week by a team of volunteers:** Father Bernardino (who writes our Weekly Column: *From my Heart to your Heart*); Chris (*Scripture Readings*); Larisa, Rui, Cátia and Helena (*Hymns*); Tracy (newsletter layout & stories of interest). **The newsletters are printed by Cartridge World Funchal**, in Rua Elias Garcia, nr 5. We can email this newsletter to you every week. If you would like to receive it by email every Sunday, just email the word "Newsletter" to: [penhafranca.newsletter@gmail.com](mailto:penhafranca.newsletter@gmail.com), or download it from the Chapel's website/blog: [www.rcmassmadeira.org](http://www.rcmassmadeira.org) which is updated every week by Debbie and Tony. ©

## JOYFUL GIFT

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5<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Lent, Year A

Chapel of Our Lady of Penha de França,  
Rua Penha de França 3, Funchal, Madeira

**Website and Blog:** <http://rcmassmadeira.org/>

**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/penhafrancachapel](http://www.facebook.com/penhafrancachapel)

**Instagram:** [www.instagram.com/capela\\_penha\\_franca/](http://www.instagram.com/capela_penha_franca/)



### CATHOLIC MASS IN ENGLISH, IN MADEIRA:

**Good morning! Two weeks ago we unfortunately had to suspend all masses** at the Chapel due to the current emergency situation (coronavirus pandemic) that the whole world is facing. As a result, we also stopped publishing of the weekly newsletter. However, to bring a little bit of comfort during these uncertain times, and as a way of us all keeping in touch and getting spiritual "food" and inspiration, we will be resuming the newsletter, but in a "digital" format instead of in the usual printed/paper format (although you can print this issue yourself at home).

Some of the regular parts of the newsletter will be "missing" of course (like the hymn numbers, and the Mass times), but most of the rest will remain the same. We hope you will enjoy reading it, and share it with others. *Have a blessed Sunday!*

### TODAY'S SCRIPTURE READINGS

(Brought to you by: Chris Oliver. [www.bible-groups.info](http://www.bible-groups.info))



**Ezekiel 37:12-14**

**Psalms 129(130)**

**Romans 8:8-11**

**John 11:1-45**

For the Jews after 597 BC, exiled in Babylon without their king, land, Temple, all seemed lost as a nation. **Ezekiel's** encouraging messages gave them hope that the nation would rise and live again, like a field full of dry bones coming to life. But this will be the Lord's doing, for the sake of his name, which they have profaned by their idolatry. In deep sorrow the psalm cries to the Lord, begging pardon for our sins, trusting in God's mercy and awaiting redemption in hope. Writing to the Jewish Christians in Rome, Paul has been puzzling over our human condition: "I do not do the good that I want, but I do the evil that I hate". Mortal flesh is weak. "But God sent his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh" so that the Son's Spirit might give us the strength to live according to His Spirit. Paul's conclusion: with Christ's Spirit in us we are given life reconciled with God both now and in bodily resurrection after death. These foretastes of resurrection prepare us for John's description of the raising of Lazarus, the third of the three beautiful Lenten readings from **John**. Perhaps we should ponder how difficult it is to believe, and how difficult it was for Martha to open the tomb?

### PSALM RESPONSE: **With the Lord there is mercy and fullness of redemption.**

\* These Scripture notes are sent to us every week by Chris Oliver from the UK. If you'd also like to have these included in your parish newsletter, or sent to you, please contact Chris at: [chris@chris-oliver.net](mailto:chris@chris-oliver.net)



1. A ROMANTIC PROPOSAL

Nobody knows *Her* age. Nobody has seen *Her* birth certificate or *Her* ID. But all the people who know *Her* are very sure that She was a very young girl. Nobody knows for sure what She was doing at that precise moment. Praying? Washing the dishes? Sweeping the floor? Cooking? Reading the Bible? Nobody knows, but all of these things are possible because She was a simple, poor girl, maybe doing «insignificant» chores. However, we all know a few things: we all know *Her* name and know the

place where She lived. **Her name is Mary and She lived in a town called Nazareth.**

One day, without warning, «*the Angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth to a Virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph... The virgin's name was Mary. The angel came to her and said «Rejoice, The Lord is with you»... She was perplexed... by his words... The Angel said to Her: «Do not be afraid, Mary, for You have found favour with God. And now You will conceive in Your womb and bear a son and You will name Him Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the most High... Mary said to the Angel: «How can this be since I am a Virgin? The Angel said to her: «The Holy Spirit will come upon You, and the power of the Most High will overshadow You: Therefore the child to be born will be holy. He will be called Son of God... Then Mary said: «Here I am, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word».* Lk. 1. 26-38.



On March 25<sup>th</sup>, the Catholic Church all over the world celebrates this great event of the Solemnity of the Annunciation. Nine months from that day, the Church and the world celebrate Christmas Day. The Baby is born. He is Emmanuel, God with us.

2. SAY YES, MARY... PLEASE SAY YES

Sometimes when I read this story I still feel as if am watching an intriguing movie. Each line is a surprise and keeps me on the edge of my chair as if I had never read it before, and biting my fingernails as if I didn't know the ending. And then She says yes. And then I clap my hands and say «*Thank you Mary*». I don't remember the name of the saint who said that during this proposal and this confusing dialogue between the Angel and Mary, all of creation, and all of the world, and all of the universe, were all looking at Mary saying: «*Say Yes, Mary. Please say yes*». And finally, when Mary said yes, all creation breathed a sigh of relief and started clapping and celebrating. And finally Mary said yes. And finally the Messiah was conceived. And finally a new era of hope had begun.

3. EXPECTING A MIRACLE

**The whole world is now facing a period of confusion and expectation.** The only word we hear is scary: it's all around *Corona virus*. People are asked to stay home. We are all shaken by fear of the unknown. On Wednesday, March 25<sup>th</sup>, the Cardinal of *Fatima* consecrated Portugal, and many other countries asked to be included in this consecration to the Sacred Heart of Jesus and Mary. All people are asking for a miracle. Miracles still happen, and this miracle *will* happen even if no one knows when, or how. And all creation is looking at Mary expecting Her to do what She did at the Wedding of Cana: «*Please Mary. Talk to Your Son. Say yes, Mary. Please say yes. Talk with Your Son*». And like at the Wedding of Cana of Galilee the «precious wine» will be served again.

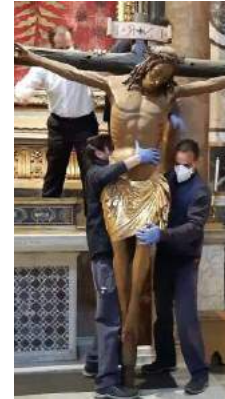
**God says in the Bible 365 times the words: «Do not be afraid. I am with you».**

Say Yes Mary... Please say yes!... We trust in you!

Love & Peace,  
Fr. Bernardino Andrade

March 29th, 2020, 5th Sunday of Lent

Two weeks ago, on Sunday March 15<sup>th</sup>, Pope Francis took a brief walking pilgrimage in the city of Rome to pray for an end to the coronavirus pandemic. He walked to the Church of *San Marcello al Corso* to pray before a miraculous crucifix, which was once carried in procession through the streets of Rome during the great plague of 1522. The crucifix was venerated as



miraculous by Romans after it was the only religious image to survive unscathed from a fire that completely gutted the church on May 23, 1519. Less than three years later, Rome was devastated by the "black plague." At that time, the crucifix was taken in procession to St. Peter's Square, stopping in each quarter of Rome. The procession continued for 16 days, and when the crucifix was returned to St. Marcellus, the plague had disappeared from Rome. This past Wednesday (March 25<sup>th</sup>), the miraculous crucifix was taken down from its altar and transported to St. Peter's Square so it could be present on Friday 27<sup>th</sup> during Pope Francis's "Urbi et Orbi" blessing and prayers for the world.



ALONE IN ST. PETER'S SQUARE – Pope Francis prays for the world

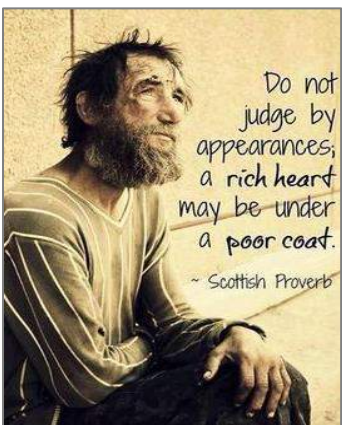
On Friday, before a completely empty Saint Peter's Square, Pope Francis prayed for the world. Also present in St. Peter's Square was a miraculous crucifix which the pope visited March 15<sup>th</sup> to pray for an end to the coronavirus pandemic which has already killed thousands all over the world. An image of the Byzantine icon of Mary as *Salus Populi Romani*, was also brought to the square for veneration during the prayer. At the conclusion of the prayer, Pope Francis gave an extraordinary *Urbi et Orbi* blessing, and gave benediction with the Blessed Sacrament while the bells of the basilica rang. In his meditation, Pope Francis entrusted everyone to the Lord through the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary. The Pope likened the



coronavirus pandemic to an "unexpected, turbulent storm" that brings us on "the same boat." He also expressed gratitude for the "ordinary people ... who do not appear in newspaper and magazine headlines" - doctors, nurses, grocery store workers and cleaners, among other essential employees working at the frontline of the pandemic.



## «PEOPLE HELPING PEOPLE»'S DRAMATIC APPEAL



### «CRIES OF THE POOR»

A few days ago I read in a publication that this tragedy of the coronavirus will be a genocide for the poor. Most of the poor don't get the necessary information and when they get it, they don't understand how serious it is. «Why do I have to stay home when I am not feeling sick»? Besides, the information constantly broadcasted, is given to people who are not able to understand and follow all the recommendations. A few days ago, before the emergency situation, I saw a young man, late at night, looking for food in a garbage can. I helped him but I had no courage to give him a «lecture» about the inconvenience or danger of looking for food in those places. My heart was broken. I told him that God loves him and so do I. I said good bye and came home in silence.

Our Association «People Helping People» has a good number of families that for years have depended on our help for food, medication, house rent, transportation and other basic needs. The

only regular source of income has been a collection taken at the end of the English Mass that I celebrate every Sunday, at the Chapel of Penha de França, and also a monthly donation from a generous couple who are the parents of three children.

**Now, since all the Masses have been suspended, for an undetermined period of time, we have lost this income.** The families who depend on us are desperate and we are more desperate than them. I have been thinking that these people probably will not die of the Coronavirus but will die of hunger, lack of medication or suicide. Recently a 15-year-old girl stole all the medicine her mother had in store for her mental problems and took all of them to end her life. Now we had this unexpected expense. Besides the pain and the agony of seeing a beautiful young girl about to die we had to find money to replace the medication she had stolen from her mother. And we had no money. They are constantly leaving voice mail and SMS messages. We are planning to compile their SMS messages and probably publish a book with the title of «Cries of the Poor». They are the real «Cries of the Poor» expressed by them, in their words. **The lack of the Sunday collection has been the main reason why I am writing this dramatic appeal.** The tourists attending the English Mass have always demonstrated a rare sense of generosity. Some have told me: «I want to leave Madeira a little better than when I arrived».

**I would like to suggest that you, please, talk with your friends and build a little «People Helping People» group in your neighbourhood to help «People Helping People» in Madeira Island.** We follow Mother Teresa's vision when she said: «What I do for others is just a little drop of water in the ocean, but without that drop of water the ocean is smaller». Together we will prevent a genocide among the poor. Together the poor and the rich will all be winners. Together, it will be like it says in the Book of Revelation: «God will wipe away all tears from their eyes. There will be no more death, no more grief or crying or pain. The old things disappeared... And now I will make all things new». (Rev. 21: 4-5)

Love and Peace,

Fr. Bernardino Andrade, March 29, 2020

Here are the banking details of "People Helping People" should you wish to donate. Any donation, no matter how small, can make a huge difference to someone who has nothing! Thank you for taking the time to read this appeal, and for caring. God bless you all.

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PayPal will also be available soon.

Many thanks to Anne O'Brien for sharing this lovely poem, below:

