

PEOPLE HELPING PEOPLE (PHP)



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).

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

>> PEOPLE HELPING PEOPLE CONTACTS:

EUROPE: Alexandre Silva, Funchal, Madeira, Portugal.

Email: alex.lupus@gmail.com

USA: Larry Contreras, 60 Meeks Ln., Oakley, CA 94561. Tel. 707-333-5501

Email: l.a.contreras@sbcglobal.net

>> TRANSFER TO BANK ACCOUNT IN MADEIRA:

ACCOUNT NAME:

Associação Gente Ajudando Gente

BANK: Banco Santander Totta

ACCOUNT NUMBER: 0003 4938 1759020

IBAN: PT50 0018 0003 49381759020 94

SWIFT: TOTAPTPL

NIB: 0018 0003 49381759020 94

Bank Address:

Caminho de Santa Quiteria 46A,
9020-119, Funchal
Madeira, Portugal.



>> DONATIONS FROM THE USA:

Please contact Mr. Larry Contreras (contact info below) for instructions on sending funds to People Helping People in Madeira, Portugal, from USA.



Larry Contreras

Tel: 707-333-5501

Email: l.a.contreras@sbcglobal.net

>> DONATIONS FROM THE UK:

ACCOUNT NAME: Sinead Moynihan

BANK: Lloyds Bank

ACCOUNT NUMBER: 02461743

BRANCH: Univ. of Cambridge

SORT CODE: 30-13-55

IBAN: GB05 LOYD 3013 5502 4617 43

BIC: LOYDGB21035



The funds will then be transferred to Madeira. Any questions or concerns about transferring to this account, please contact Sinead Moynihan at: sineadmoynihian7@icloud.com



Food items are also appreciated and can be left in the basket at the Chapel door on Sunday mornings. When sending any donation, please send an email to penhafranca.newsletter@gmail.com with the date, and name on the transfer so that we are able to confirm with you as soon as the transfer is received. Thank you.

Older issues of the newsletter can be downloaded from the Chapel's website/blog: www.rcmassmadeira.org

JOYFUL GIFT

25th of February 2024

2nd Sunday of Lent - Year B

10h00 Sunday Mass



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

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

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CATHOLIC MASS – 10 AM (IN ENGLISH)

Good morning. Today is the 2nd Sunday of Lent.

Father Joseph Arun will be celebrating Mass for us this morning. Father Joseph is originally from India, and has been serving as a priest in the Carmo church (*Igreja do Carmo*) in Madeira since 2019.

TODAY'S SCRIPTURE READINGS – 2nd Sunday of Lent - Year B

(*Genesis 22:1-2,9-18; Psalm 115(116):10.15-19; Romans 8:31-34; Mark 9: 2-10*)

In **Genesis** God sets a greater test of Abraham's faith than might appear: Isaac seems now to be Abraham's only son. His wife, Sarah, had persuaded Abraham to drive out into the desert his other son, Ishmael, with her mother, Hagar, the slave woman. God had promised Abraham would be father of a host of nations, with as many descendants as stars in the sky. How could this now come about? On the way Isaac had asked "Where is the lamb for a burnt offering?" Abraham answered: "God will provide himself". Abraham's faith is rewarded and God renews his covenant. The **Psalms** offers sacrifice and grateful praise after God heard his prayer at death's door. Paul urges the **Romans** to have similar trust in God. That God gave up his only Son to death shows how completely God loves us. Paul insists that nothing can separate us from the love of God. In our last reading from **Mark's gospel** until the Ascension, the disciples appear confused by Jesus' transfiguration. Although God has again confirmed Jesus as his Son, they do not understand how Jesus relates to Moses and Elijah, representing the Law and the Prophets. After Jesus' resurrection they would realise Jesus had come to fulfil the whole of Israel's scriptures.

Brought to you by Chris Oliver - (www.bible-groups.info)

PSALM RESPONSE: I will walk in the presence of the Lord in the land of the living.

TODAY'S HYMNS:

- [1] **Entry Hymn:** "This is the day that the Lord has made..." – 574
- [2] **Offertory Hymn:** "Eat this bread, drink this cup..." – 128
- [3] **Peace:** "Shalom, my friend, shalom..." - 495
- [4] **Communion:** "Amazing grace!..." - 32
- [5] **Thanksgiving:** "O Lord, hear my prayer..." – 418
- [6] **Final Hymn:** "Give me joy in my heart..." - 161





LENT IS A SEASON FOR LEARNING ABOUT LOVE

As a Carmelite priest from Kerala, India, I arrived in Madeira in August 2019. Nearly a year after my arrival, while attending a meeting of the priests in the Diocese of Funchal, I had the pleasure of meeting a priest from Madeira who spoke English. He conversed with me warmly, showing care and concern. During our discussion, he asked me if I celebrate Mass in English, to which I responded affirmatively. He then proceeded to tell me about the English-speaking community at the Chapel of Penha de França. The priest I spoke with was Fr. Bernardino.

After that meeting with Fr. Bernardino, we began communicating through mobile phones and occasionally in person. On days when he was bedridden, he would call me to celebrate Mass at the Penha de França Chapel. Over time, my connection with Fr. Bernardino and the Penha de França Chapel grew stronger. I started learning and speaking Portuguese, and last year, by the grace and providence of God, I was appointed as the Superior of the Carmelite Monastery in Funchal, known as *Igreja do Carmo*. Despite my new responsibilities, my good relationship with Fr. Bernardino persisted. Myself and another community member, Fr. Thomas, were able to assist him while he was sick.



Igreja do Carmo



The news of the demise of Fr. Bernardino was a shock for me, as it was for all of us. We miss him dearly, and the Catholic Church has lost a humble, lovable, and good-hearted pastor. He considered everyone as his family member. I believe nobody can forget him if they spent even a little time with him. He used to transmit positive energy with his smiling face. Nobody can replace him. **Once, when he was sick, I visited him,** and the moment he asked for a blessing from me, I can never forget. He was such a humble personality. He used to write good thoughts in this newsletter. With that inspiration, I also share some



thoughts on the Lenten season with you through this newsletter.

As we embark on this journey through the season of Lent, it is a time for reflection, introspection, and growth. Lent is not merely about giving up something we enjoy; it is about delving deeper into our spirituality, our relationships, and our capacity to love. Allow me to share a personal story that illustrates the essence of Lent and the transformative power of love. Growing up, I often struggled with self-doubt and insecurity. I found it challenging to love others fully when I didn't fully love myself. However, as I matured and delved into the teachings of Lent, I began to understand that true love begins from within. During one particular Lenten season, I made a conscious effort to practice self-love and acceptance. **Through prayer, meditation, and acts of kindness** towards myself, I gradually began to cultivate a sense of worth and compassion. As a result, I found that my capacity to love others deepened exponentially. But Lent is not just about self-love; it's also about extending that love to others. It's about embodying the teachings of empathy, compassion, and forgiveness in our daily lives. It's about reaching out to those in need, lending a helping hand, and being a source of light in a world that often feels dark and chaotic. In this season of Lent, let us commit ourselves to learning how to love others more fully. Let us open our hearts to those around us, regardless of their differences or shortcomings. Let us strive to be beacons of love, hope, and understanding in a world that desperately needs it. **As we journey through Lent together,** may we emerge stronger, more compassionate, and more loving individuals. Let us embrace the lessons of this sacred season and carry them with us throughout the year, spreading love and kindness wherever we go.



with Love and prayers,
Fr. Joseph Arun, OCD

EASTER HAMPER APPEAL



Continuing with Father Bernardino's mission of love and support for those in need, we are collecting items to make up Easter hampers for those families we support with our *People Helping People* charity. Please bring along items of personal hygiene, non-perishable food items (tins and dried food) and sweets and chocolate Easter eggs for the children. Please bring in what you can spare and place in the basket at the entrance of the church. These will be distributed amongst families who need our help.

Collection is until **SUNDAY 24th of March.**

For further details please e-mail Debbie: deborahadajesus@yahoo.co.uk



MASS LAST SUNDAY IN "BICA DA CANA" – in honour of Fr. Bernardino

Last Sunday afternoon, a special Mass in honour of Father Bernardino's life was celebrated in the «Cantinho do Bom Pastor» a shrine located in *Bica da Cana*, in the forest area of Paul da Serra. This shrine, which has a small statue of the Good Shepherd inside, held a special place in Father Bernardino's heart. He had it constructed, and gave it the name of "Cantinho do Bom Pastor" (Little corner of the Good Shepherd), which was inaugurated by the Bishop of Funchal on September 12, 2020, in a special Mass.



Last Sunday's Mass was celebrated by Fr. António Paulo, the parish priest of Assomada. There were about 60 people who attended the Mass, many of whom were crying as they remembered Father Bernardino.



Afterwards some traditional music was played, and everyone enjoyed some Madeiran food and delicious homemade cake.



That was the way that Fr. Bernardino loved celebrating Mass there, and they did it the same way on Sunday!



PEOPLE HELPING PEOPLE (PHP)

Hello friends,

I'm sure many of you know that if you asked Fr. Bernardino what is "People Helping People", he would first tell you it is a way of life, and then he would tell you it is also a Charity...

His idea for this kind of Charity started in the US, when a lady that lived in a small home called him, and asked if he knew of anyone that had an old dryer she could have as hers was broken, and she couldn't afford to fix it. He said he didn't, but he would keep her in mind in case something came up. A few hours later, a man called saying he had an old, but still working dryer to offer in case he knew someone who needed it!

Of course, my Uncle was radiant with this coincidence! You all know how precious these "little miracles" were to him.

So in few weeks, he cleared a big space in the parish, and made known that everything that people didn't need, they could leave it there, and if anyone needed anything, they could simply come by and take what they needed, no questions asked. Of course, it evolved into something bigger than that, and eventually they were even distributing meals. And that is precisely what he felt was happening, it was simply *People Helping People* as a way of life.

So that was what he decided to do here in Madeira after those terrible floods in 2010, and the attention he had for our most fragile brothers and sisters.

Of course, we never had a big space we could use as warehouse as he did in the US. We don't even have a small space of our own! All we have is lent or offered.

His Charity is simply the intermediary between *People* who want to Help other *People*. That is why his favourite reference was the Good Shepherd Jesus, the One who taught us to care for each other, the One who reminds us that no one stays behind, the One who told us that whatever you do for your weaker brothers and sisters, you do it for Him.

We have all been mourning Fr. Bernardino for the last few weeks. It's been strange carrying on in his absence. But of course, the Charity he founded has continued its work. Many of you certainly heard about how he was afraid that "*People Helping People*" would end with his death. I promised him that I would not allow that to happen. Two weeks ago, I held a meeting with some volunteers, who are all dedicated to making sure it keeps on running, growing and flourishing into the Charity that Fr. Bernardino dreamt of. And so, it is my privilege and honour to announce that our charity's name will be changed to "Gente Ajudando Gente - Associação Pe. Bernardino de Solidariedade Social" meaning "People Helping People - Fr. Bernardino Social Solidarity Association".

I know he would plead to keep the "*People Helping People*" part. As for him, it was a way of life. It's simply what we should do when someone needs help. He would certainly be very embarrassed to see his name on it, but since he can't deny us, we're going for it. **It just feels right.** He is not only its founder, he is also the mentor at the heart of everything we do, and the way we do it in the Charity. It is truly *his* Association.

I know it is a big name, maybe even a bit clumsy, but there are things we can't take out legally (Social Solidarity Association), there are things we didn't want to take out (People Helping People), and something I feel strongly everyone agrees to add, is Father Bernardino's name.

I like it, and I hope you like it too.

See you soon, and **thank you all** for being *People Helping People*.

- *Alexandre Silva* (alex.lupus@gmail.com)



PHP BULLETIN

The committees for "People Helping People" (PHP) Have been hard at work. PHP will hold an Annual Appeal for the month of April, in honor and memory of Father Bernardino. This will include many events in which you, as attendees of this mass, and others in the community are encouraged to participate! These will be announced as the details are firmed up.



One of the first events will be a Walk-a-Thon, in Santa Catarina Park, on **Sunday, April 7th**. We're calling this the "*Orange Walk*", honoring the precious gift that Father Bernardino received as a Christmas gift as a young boy, when it was possibly his **only** Christmas gift. People are encouraged to solicit sponsors, to donate, to walk themselves, and encourage others to walk. In addition to raising funds for PHP, we see this as a way to raise awareness, of the poor in Madeira, the needs they are facing, and how PHP can make a difference.



A gift of an orange

We hope you will give prayerful consideration to getting involved in the events of the upcoming special Father Bernardino Memorial Appeal.



You can pick up a sponsor sheet, next Sunday, and get started!

Thank you in advance.

Jane House (janelh1945@gmail.com)

BLESSED ROSARIES

In the social room of the Chapel, there are some hand-made Rosaries for sale. These Rosaries were all made by Sofia, who is a member of our choir. She will be donating some of the proceeds to the "People Helping People" charity, and to the Chapel.



These Rosaries are all special as they were made with love, and also... they were all blessed by Fr. Bernardino when he baptised Sofia's son in 2012.

Lent IS A TIME TO
GROW
CLOSER TO JESUS

