

PEOPLE HELPING PEOPLE (PHP)



People Helping People is a small project founded in the Chapel of Penha de França by the late Father Bernardino Andrade 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...**

"What we're being asked to do is simple: to leave ourselves a little behind, to look and listen to the other person, to soothe their wounds... That we can make them feel as unique as they are close!" (from the book *Questions to God* – by José Luís Nunes Martins).

PEOPLE HELPING PEOPLE CONTACTS:

EUROPE: Alexandre Silva, Funchal, Madeira, Portugal.
Email: alex.lupus@gmail.com / penhafranca.php@gmail.com

>> 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 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: sineadmoynihn7@icloud.com

When making any donation, please send an email to penhafranca.php@gmail.com with the date, and name on the transfer so that Alexandre Silva is able to confirm that the transfer has been received. Thank you.

Tea and Coffee After Mass

Join us across the garden for a cup of coffee, cake, and a chat!

Please sign our Visitor's book in the Social Hall.....

leave us your comments, or suggestions, let us know where you're from! ☺ We also have a **map** where you can place a pin on where you are visiting us from! ☺



Our Social Hall has a Free Little Library: a **cabinet full of books**. You're welcome to take a book, borrow a book, leave one in exchange, or even bring in some books that you have lying around that you no longer want. ☺



Receive this newsletter by email every week. Email us at: penhafranca.newsletter@gmail.com to be added to the newsletter distribution list, or download them from the Chapel's website/blog: www.rcmassmadeira.org



JOYFUL GIFT

5th January 2025 – 10am Sunday Mass

Epiphany - Year C

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

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

f www.facebook.com/penhafrancachapel

i www.instagram.com/capela_penha_franca/

e penhafranca.newsletter@gmail.com



Holy Mass, Sunday
29.12.2024

THE CATHOLIC MASS IN ENGLISH

Good morning! Happy New Year! Today, on the second Sunday after Christmas, we celebrate the Feast of the Epiphany. Last Sunday we were blessed to have two priests celebrating Mass for us: Father Joseph Arun and Father Joseph Wilson. This morning, **Father Joseph Wilson**, (who is visiting Madeira) all the way from South Africa, will be celebrating Mass for us.

TODAY'S SCRIPTURE READINGS – Epiphany – Year C

(*Isaiah 60: 1 - 6; Psalm 71(72); Ephesians 3: 2 - 3a, 5 - 6; Matthew 2: 1 - 12*)

Third **Isaiah** was writing just after the Israelites had returned from exile in Babylon. After God promises to punish those who fail to keep his covenant, he offers participation in the future messianic salvation to all who believe in the Lord and keep his commandments. **Isaiah** visualises the new Jerusalem, illuminated by God, to which all peoples will stream, and a time when their offerings will be acceptable. **The Psalm** prays that the king's reign will be just, long, prosperous and glorious, with support for the poor. Paul sees the Church, Christ's body, as the new Jerusalem, part of God's plan for the whole of creation. Paul joyfully tells the **Ephesians** that God's plan was always to take the gospel message to all: Gentiles as well as Jews are to share equally in the inheritance promised by God. In Luke's Gospel an angel announced Jesus' birth to poor Jewish shepherds, excluded from Temple worship by their occupation. Today **Matthew** describes Gentile scholars travelling from afar to bring kingly offerings to the new-born child. God's plan is already becoming known beyond Israel. But the scholars needed the Jewish scriptures to help find Jesus. We too need the Old Testament to help us understand God's plan and what he has done in Jesus for our salvation.

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

PSALM RESPONSE: All nations shall fall prostrate before you, O Lord.

TODAY'S HYMN MUSIC:

By: *Fátima Cátia Marques*

- [1] **Entry Hymn:** "Hark, the herald-angels sing" – n.º 212
- [2] **Penitential Act:** "Lord, have mercy..." – n.º 663
- [3] **Gospel Acclamation:** "Celtic Alleluia" – n.º 679
- [4] **Offertory Hymn:** "How lovely on the mountains" – n.º 235
- [5] **Sanctus:** "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord" - n.º 704
- [6] **Agnus Dei:** "Lamb of God" - n.º 737
- [7] **Communion Hymn:** "Away in a manger" – n.º 53
- [8] **Thanksgiving:** Instrumental
- [9] **Final Hymn:** "Go, tell it on the mountain" - n.º 174





As we gather today in the Chapel at Penha de França, a sacred space that welcomes people from all corners of the globe to the feet of Christ, we reflect on the profound meaning of the Feast of the Epiphany. How fitting it is that we celebrate this feast here, in a place that echoes the truth of Epiphany: that God is the God of all nations, calling everyone into His light. **Thousands flock to Madeira for the New Year**, drawn by the stunning festive lights and the world-famous pyrotechnic displays. The fireworks light up the night sky in dazzling splendour, inspiring awe and wonder. Yet, as spectacular as these lights may be, they pale in comparison to the star of Bethlehem. That star was no ordinary light; it symbolised the ultimate revelation -the nations of the world coming to Christ, who is the true Light of the World.

The Magi, guided by this star, journeyed far to worship the Christ Child. Their story reminds us that the light of Christ transcends the fleeting beauty of earthly displays, illuminating the path to eternal truth. The gifts they brought - gold, frankincense, and myrrh - speak to us today, not only of who Christ is but of who we are called to be: **Gold**, reflecting the inherent value and dignity God has given each of us, and challenging us to honour that in others. **Frankincense**, rising like prayers and devotion, encouraging us to be a source of spiritual encouragement and hope. **Myrrh**, a reminder of sacrifice and selfless love, calling us to live for others in the way Christ lived and died for us.

The Chapel at Penha de França has a regular congregation of both Madeirans and expatriates. Yet it stands as a beacon of light, drawing pilgrims and visitors from across the world, much like the star of Bethlehem that guided the Magi. It serves as a powerful reminder of Christ's universal mission: to bring light and salvation to all people.

On this day, as we reflect on the Magi's journey and their gifts, we are also reminded of traditions that connect us to this feast. In Madeira, the *bolo de rei* - the "King's Cake" - is a popular treat during this season. Its circular shape symbolises a crown, honouring Christ the King, and the hidden surprises within the cake remind us of the unexpected joys and discoveries in our journey of faith. Sharing this cake with family and friends echoes the inclusivity of God's love, which brings people together in celebration and thanksgiving.



As we celebrate the Epiphany, let us take inspiration from the Magi and the gifts they offered. Let us seek Christ with the same fervour, and let us strive to be a reflection of His light in the world. No matter how dazzling the festive lights around us may be, they cannot compare to the light of Christ, who guides all nations to Himself and remains the true Light of the World.

Amen.

Happy and blessed New Year to you and your loved ones.

Rev.º Tito Pereira



Pope Francis opens the first Holy Door on Christmas Eve.

The Vatican announced that, for the 2025 Jubilee year (the Jubilee of Hope), 5 "Holy Doors" will be opened, beginning on Christmas Eve.

The first Holy Door was opened by Pope Francis at St. Peter's Basilica on Christmas Eve to usher in the beginning of the Jubilee Year worldwide. This door will be the last one to be closed on the feast of the Epiphany in 2026, marking the end of the holy year.

So far, 4 Holy doors have been opened. Today, January 5th, the Holy Door at the Basilica of St. Paul Outside the Walls will be opened.

So, what is a Holy Door?

The Holy Door or 'Porta Sancta' is only open during a Holy Year (Jubilee), which occur every 25 years (the last one in 2000). Pope Francis explains the tradition in official documents: "In Catholic tradition, the Holy Door represents the passage to salvation the path to a new and eternal life, which was opened to humanity by Jesus."

THE JUBILEE PRAYER

Father in heaven,
may the faith you have given us
in your son, Jesus Christ, our brother,
and the flame of charity enkindled
in our hearts by the Holy Spirit,
reawaken in us the blessed hope
for the coming of your Kingdom.

May your grace transform us
into tireless cultivators of the seeds of the Gospel.
May those seeds transform from within both humanity
and the whole cosmos
in the sure expectation
of a new heaven and a new earth,
when, with the powers of Evil vanquished,
your glory will shine eternally.

May the grace of the Jubilee
reawaken in us, Pilgrims of Hope,
a yearning for the treasures of heaven.
May that same grace spread
the joy and peace of our Redeemer
throughout the earth.
To you our God, eternally blessed,
be glory and praise for ever.
Amen

-Pope Francis

Holy Door History

Pope Boniface VIII inaugurated the "Holy Year" tradition, called a "Jubilee," in 1300.

It was not until over a century later that the Holy Door played an integral role. According to 15th-century documents, in 1423, at the Basilica of St. John Lateran, **Pope Martin V opened the Holy Door for the first time** in the history of the Jubilee.

Holy Years were celebrated every 33 years at that time, in commemoration of the years Jesus lived on earth.

Jubilee Years (when the Holy Door is opened) **now occur every 25 years.**

A Catholic Jubilee is considered a time of peace, forgiveness and pardon. This Jubilee, dedicated to the theme of hope, will run through to Jan. 6, 2026.

For more info:

<https://stpetersbasilica.info/Interior/HolyDoor/HolyDoor.htm>

<https://www.facebook.com/share/p/14iqzDdJFQ/>

IT'S STILL CHRISTMAS
A GUIDE TO THE LITURGICAL CHRISTMAS SEASON

 Dec. 24- Jan. 10 The Christmas season officially begins on Christmas Eve. It lasts until the Baptism of the Lord, which is usually the second Sunday in January.	 Dec. 25- Jan. 1 From Christmas Day until Jan 1st, the Solemnity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God, is the Octave of Christmas.	 Jan. 1 January 1st is the Solemnity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, where we honor her role as mother of Christ and His Church.	 Jan. 6 There are many feast days this season (Holy Family 12/30, Holy Innocents 12/28, etc.) The Epiphany, commemorating the visit of the Magi, always falls on Jan 6.
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OUR CHRISTMAS HAMPER DRIVE – A huge success!



A big thank you to all those who contributed to our Christmas hamper drive. We were able to make up a collection for 10 families this year which included dry goods, hygiene products and gifts for all the children, including gift vouchers for the older children.



Businesses which supported the drive included the “Why not?” restaurant in Avenida do Infante with a very generous supply of dry goods, and the supermarket “Supermercado Avó António” in the Lido.



Special thanks to Alexandre and his team who delivered the hampers on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day.



Also a special thank you to Jane House for running with the initiative this year. ❤️

Christmas Hamper Drive



DIA DE REIS (King's Day) – A tradition in Madeira

Every year on January 6th in Madeira, we celebrate *Dia de Reis* (“King’s Day”). According to tradition, it’s to celebrate the day when the newborn baby Jesus, the Saviour, the Messiah, receives the visit of the 3 Wise Men from the East. The night before, Madeiran families usually gather together with friends and neighbours, who go out and sing traditional songs door to door.

“Bolo Rei” (“King Cake”) is a traditional Portuguese cake that is usually eaten around Christmas, from December 25th until Epiphany, on the 6th of January. The cake itself is round with a large hole in the centre, resembling a crown covered with crystallized and dried fruit. It is baked from a soft, white dough, and in some of these cakes there is the characteristic dried “fava” (broad bean) or small Wise Man figurine. Tradition dictates that whoever finds the fava bean or the Wise Man figurine, must pay for next year’s cake!



A “fava” (broad) bean, and a figurine hidden in the Bolo Rei cake



“CANTAR OS REIS” – A Madeiran tradition on December 5th



This evening (January 5th), starting at 7pm, Praça do Povo near the Funchal harbour will be the stage for one of Madeira’s most emblematic traditions, the “*Cantar os Reis*”, (Singing of the Kings) which this year will be held for the first time in this part of the city.

This event is part of the Christmas and New Year’s Festivities and promises to bring the melodies and songs typical of this time of year. This celebration unites popular culture and the region’s hospitality. The festival, deeply rooted in Madeira’s Christmas traditions, is celebrated on the 12th night after Christmas and features groups from all over the island singing traditional carols in honour of the Three Kings (or 3 wise men).

“The “*Cantar os Reis*”, is one of the most special moments in Madeira’s Christmas calendar. It represents what is most genuine about Madeirans: the unity of our communities, the enhancement of our traditions and the spirit of sharing that characterises us...” - Eduardo Jesus (Regional Secretary for Economy, Tourism and Culture in the Regional Government of Madeira).



Go along and experience this unique tradition for yourself at 7pm tonight and be a part of what makes Madeira so special.

THE THREE WISE WOMEN – A little bit of Sunday humour



While they were talking about the story of the three wise men, a woman asked her parish priest this question: « *Do you know why God gave the star to the wise men?* »

When he professed his ignorance, she told him - « *God knows men are too proud to ask for directions. If there had been three wise women instead of three wise men, they would have asked for directions, arrived on time, helped deliver the baby, cleaned the stable, made a casserole, and given some practical gifts!* »



HAPPY
NEW
YEAR!!

2025