

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.**

"We believe that the Church is either People Helping People or the Church is nothing. To choose the gospel is to choose the poor." - (Fr. Bernardino)

"Our existence is similar to that of the beggar who extends his hand to whoever he can... keeping hope alive, despite the many who pass by and don't even look. Some look, others look and give, others look, give and touch our hand... still others look and give us their hand." (José Luis Nunes Martins in the book 'Céu').



>> 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: sineadmoynihnan7@icloud.com

PEOPLE HELPING PEOPLE CONTACTS: Alexandre Silva, Funchal. Email: alex.lupus@gmail.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.

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! ☺



After Mass

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



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. ☺



JOYFUL GIFT

4th May 2025 – 10am Sunday Mass

3rd Sunday of Easter – Year C

Chapel of Our Lady of Penha de França

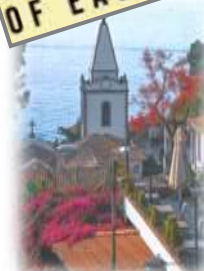
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THE CATHOLIC MASS IN ENGLISH

Good morning. If it's the first time that you are here at the Chapel... **welcome!** Our small Chapel is 403 years old this year (it was founded in June 1622) and is the only Catholic church on the island of Madeira where an English-language Mass is celebrated (every Sunday at 10am). We are grateful to Father Joseph Arun, who will be celebrating Mass for us this morning. Father Joseph is a Carmelite priest, originally from Kerala, India. *The special intention of today's Mass* is for the soul of **José Alberto Gomes** who passed away 5 years ago. **May he rest in peace** ☩

TODAY'S SCRIPTURE READINGS – 3rd Sunday of Easter

(Acts 5:27-32, 40-41; Psalm 29(30); Rev 5:11-14; John 21:1-19)

After the healings we heard in last week's reading from the **Book of Acts**, the Apostles were again arrested, but miraculously freed. They immediately continued teaching in the Temple, and were again brought before the Sanhedrin, where they defended themselves strongly. Omitted from today's reading is Gamaliel's urging that they be released because if their activity "comes from God, you will not be able to destroy them". **The Psalm** thanks God for rescue from a sudden illness. In the **Book of Revelation**, John sees God seated on a throne, with praises rippling out through widening circles of heavenly creatures. The one on the throne holds a scroll written on both sides and sealed with seven seals. An angel proclaims "Who is worthy to open the scroll?" But everyone is in despair because there seems to be no one worthy to break the seals and open the scroll. But then someone says "The lion of the tribe of Judah, the root of David has triumphed". Instead of a lion, a slain lamb steps forward to receive the scroll. After the reading last week of the first ending to **John's Gospel**, we hear today most of the second ending. With his three repeated questions, Jesus forgives Peter's three denials, and insists that the essential pre-condition for authority is love.

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

PSALM RESPONSE: I will bless your name for ever, O God my King.

TODAY'S HYMN MUSIC: By: Fátima Cátia Marques

- [1] **Entry Hymn:** "Alleluia, sing to Jesus..." – n.º 29
- [2] **Penitential Act:** "Lord, have mercy..." – n.º 659
- [3] **Gospel Acclamation:** "Celtic Alleluia..." – n.º 679
- [4] **Offertory Hymn:** "Spirit of God..." – n.º 514
- [5] **Sanctus** - "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord..." – n.º 704
- [6] **Agnus Dei** - "Dona nobis Pacem" – n.º 126
- [7] **Communion Hymn:** "As I kneel before you – Ave Maria gratia plena..." – n.º 39
- [8] **Thanksgiving** – Portuguese Hymn
- [9] **Final Hymn:** "He is risen, tell the story..." – n.º 216



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Penha de França Chapel, Funchal
"Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you." (John 21:17)

My dear friends in Christ,

Here we are once again, gathered in this beautiful chapel by the sea - a place where many of us have prayed, reflected, and simply sat quietly in the presence of God.

From Penha de França, we look out over the water, where the waves roll in faithfully, day after day. It's hard not to feel a sense of peace here - and a reminder of just how constant God's love is.



Today's Gospel takes us to another shoreline - the Sea of Galilee - where Jesus and his disciples share a meal. It's such an ordinary setting: a beach, a fire, some fish and bread. And yet, what happens there is something deeply moving. Peter, still carrying the weight of his failure, meets the Risen Lord. And Jesus doesn't scold or shame him. He simply invites him to speak from the heart: *"Do you love me?"*

Three times, that question comes - echoing the three denials that must still have stung Peter's memory. But Jesus isn't there to wound him. He's there to restore him. To remind him that love is always stronger than failure. To give him a new beginning.

And maybe that's what we all need to hear today. That no matter how things have gone - whether we've been faithful or fallen short - the Lord still comes to meet us. Not with lectures, but with breakfast. With kindness. With the same question: *Do you love me?*

It's a gentle question, but it's also a challenging one. Because to say "yes" to Jesus - really say it - means being ready to change, to follow, and to serve. That's what Peter learns. And that's what Jesus asks of us too.

From our place here in Funchal, where the sea is never far from sight, we're reminded that following Christ often means letting go of our own plans and casting the net where *He* tells us - even when it doesn't make sense to us. That was Peter's moment: tired from a long night of catching nothing, and yet still trusting Jesus enough to try again. And it made all the difference.

As a community, we find ourselves at a bit of a crossroads too - discerning whether to continue gathering here at Penha de França, or to move our worship to the Cathedral. It's not an easy decision. Places matter. Memories live in walls and windows. But we must keep asking the deeper question: where is Christ asking us to cast our nets now? Where will our "yes" to Him bear the most fruit? Not just for us, but for others too?

We also hold in our hearts today the memory of Pope Francis, who now rests in God's peace. Like Peter, he was a man who knew weakness, but was transformed by grace. He often reminded us that God never tires of forgiving - it's we who grow tired of asking. His life pointed us back, again and again, to the mercy of Jesus, and the call to live that mercy in action.

So let's take courage from Peter's story - and from the peace of this Easter season. Let's be willing to ask, like Peter: *"Lord, what would you have me do?"*

And let's not be afraid if the answer sends us in a new direction. Because the One who calls us is also the One who cooks breakfast on the beach, who knows our hearts, and who never stops loving us.

May we follow Him - not perfectly, but honestly. And may our "yes" become something real: a life that feeds, serves, and loves, right here in this place He has given us.

Amen.

- Dcn Tito



My name is Carla Rodrigues; I'm 47 years old and I've been a volunteer at the People Helping People Association for 15 years, together with its founder, Fr. Bernardino Andrade. I took the Christianity course at *Terreiro da Luta* in 2010 where I met Fr. Bernardino. He gave the morning meditation at the Course 90 retreat. Fr Bernardino used to collaborate in the retreats of the Christianity Course. I really enjoyed his meditation at the retreat and went to congratulate him, and that's when he invited me to found the People Helping People Association with him in Madeira. That day he had asked me to help buy milk and bread for a mother of four who was starving. It was with great privilege and joy that I worked with Fr. Bernardino helping people and fighting for the poor. I saw many miracles happen in the lives of the poor and in our own lives.

From a very young age, I always wanted to volunteer and do something good for others, and God gave me the opportunity and the good fortune to work with Fr. Bernardino. I've been very happy volunteering with Fr. Bernardino, and today I'm a better person, more fulfilled and happier. I'm a better Christian today.

How did the "People Helping People" Association come about?

"After the 2010 floods that destroyed a large part of Madeira Island, we became more aware of the special needs and challenges that the poor have to face in their daily lives. A small group of people decided to start a project to help people in need, especially people who, due to sometimes cruel regulations, don't have the necessary requirements to be helped by church or state institutions." We named it People Helping People!

How we started

One of the first things we had to do was to collect, feed and look after single mothers. We tried everything, but we couldn't find any institution in Madeira or on the mainland that would take single mothers over the age of 18 off the streets and into care. The first single mother we found on the street, homeless, was 27 years old and the only alternatives she had were the street (sleeping under cars), suicide (she had already planned how) or prostitution (which she denied). As a solution, an institution recommended the horror of abortion, which she refused. I'm a witness to that. It was said in front of me and Fr. Bernardino that this recommendation had been made. We reached out to help her. The baby was born and the mother started receiving milk and nappies from an institution. But on its first birthday, the baby lost the right to milk and nappies. We felt angry at these institutions that put *rules* before *people*. We asked if there was any other alternative. The answer was simply a cold and indifferent "no". One of the things that most hurts and angers the poor and all those who care about the poor is the bureaucracy that the poor have to deal with.

People Helping People is primarily a project whose aim is to mobilise a lot of people to help a lot of people with the minimum of expense, work and time for everyone who helps.

Father Bernardino believed that the Church is either *People Helping People* or the Church is nothing. One of Fr. Bernardino's missions and the vision he had for "*People Helping People*" was to free the poor from poverty.

We're helping families with house rents, dentist appointments, medicines, water and electricity, transport, gas for cooking and heating water and all kinds of bills. These things can only be done with cash in hand. We don't know of any institution that helps the needy with money, even though we know that some institutions have money available. But to them, rules are rules and people are just people.

A "People Helping People" success story... no longer living on the streets. We "proved" that homeless people are never homeless because they **want** to be. No one wants the "hell" of the streets.

I learnt a lot from Fr. Bernardino. He was a very good and humane person and he always taught us to be good, humane, and not to judge anyone. Thank you so much Fr. Bernardino for everything! For making the world a better place.

- Carla Rodrigues -

'Do good, walk happily and make the birds sing' (St. John Bosco)



Fr. Bernardino and me at the inauguration of the Shrine: "Cantinho do Bom Pastor" (Little Corner of the Good Shepherd)
 12/09/2020.

