

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.**

"In fact, Jesus did not simply appear on Earth, He did not just give us a little of His time, but He came to share our life, to welcome our desires. Because He wanted, and still wants, to live here, with us and for us. He cares about our world, which at Christmas became His world. The nativity scene reminds us of this: through His mercy, God came among us to remain with us forever." (in "Natal é Todos os dias" [Christmas is Every Day] – Pope Francis)

>> 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 Quitéria 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

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 we are able to confirm that the transfer has been received. Thank you.

BLESS YOURSELF WITH HOLY WATER



As you go inside the Chapel just under the archways on either side of the door, you will find a small font on the wall with Holy water inside which you can use to bless yourself with, before and after Mass. 🙏🙏🙏🙏

Tea and Coffee After Mass

at Moynihans Irish Pub... up the road from the Chapel.



Please sign our Visitor's book or leave a message

We'd love to know which country you are visiting us from!



Receive this newsletter by email. Ask to be added to the newsletter distribution list by sending an email to: penhafranca.newsletter@gmail.com or alternatively, you can download them from the Chapel's website/blog: www.rcmassmadeira.org/newsletter-downloads/

JOYFUL GIFT

4th January 2026 – 10:30 am Sunday
Epiphany – Year A

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

THE CATHOLIC MASS IN ENGLISH

Happy New Year!! 🎉

Welcome to the Chapel of Our Lady of Penha de França. We are blessed to have **Fr. Joseph Arun** celebrating Mass here in English for us every Sunday. In addition to this English Mass, Fr. Joseph also celebrates Mass in Portuguese at the Carmelite church in Funchal (*Igreja do Carmo*).

TODAY'S SCRIPTURE READINGS – Epiphany - Year A

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

Third Isaiah was writing just after the Israelites had returned from exile in Babylon. Participation in the future messianic salvation is offered 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. This is good news for the whole world. **The Psalm** offers coronation wishes to a king – more than an earthly king, and so seen as Messianic. The vision of the universal Church Paul describes in **Ephesians** matches Isaiah's image of the new Jerusalem. Paul sees the Church, led by the Spirit, as Christ's body, part of God's plan for the whole of creation. And Paul joyfully realises that it was always part of God's plan that the gospel message is to be taken to all: Gentiles as well as Jews are to share in the inheritance promised by God. In Luke's Gospel, an angel announced Jesus' birth to poor Jewish shepherds, excluded by their occupation from Temple worship. Today we hear **Matthew's** description of Gentile scholars travelling from afar to bring kingly offerings to the new-born child. But they needed the Jewish scriptures to help find him. We too need the Old Testament to help us understand God's plan and what he has done in Jesus for our salvation.

- By: Chris Oliver - www.bible-groups.info

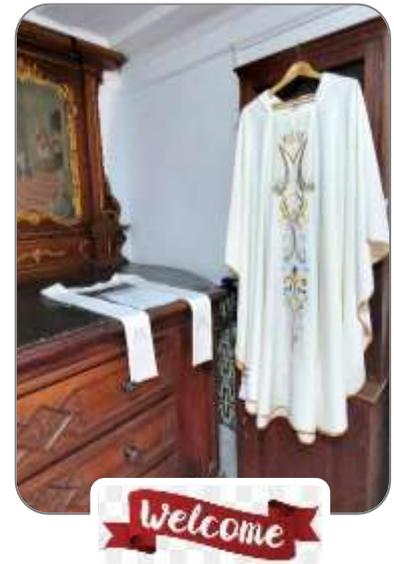
PSALM RESPONSE: All nations shall fall prostrate before you, O Lord.

TODAY'S HYMN MUSIC:

By: Fátima Cátia Marques



- [1] **Entry Hymn:** "The first Nowell..." – n.º 541
- [2] **Gospel Acclamation:** "Aleluia..."
- [3] **Offertory Hymn:** "Silent night..." – n.º 498
- [4] **Communion Hymn:** "Away in a manger..." – n.º 53
- [5] **Thanksgiving:** "Adeste Fideles"
- [6] **Final Hymn:** "Hark, the herald-angels sing..." – n.º 212



HAPPY NEW YEAR!**How long should Christmas last?**

In Madeira, among all the Christmas lights and decorations, you will still find the *Menino Jesus* on his little steps, the *escadinha* or *lapinha*. This standing image of the Christ Child is traditionally the heart of the Christmas decorations in many

Madeiran homes. What most people do not realise is that, in many houses, the *Menino Jesus* is not packed away with the tinsel in January. He simply remains there throughout the year, a quiet and reassuring reminder of Christmas.

That simple image invites a question for us. How long is Christmas really meant to last?

Not long ago I saw, on 26 December, a picture of a Christmas tree already being advertised for sale. It raised a smile, yet it also revealed how Christmas is often experienced today.

For many people it can feel like only a single day. It arrives quickly and it disappears just as quickly. The decorations go back into their boxes and life moves on almost immediately. As Christians we know that the Church continues to celebrate Christmas beyond the day itself. However, the deeper question is a personal one. How long does Christmas last in my own heart? How long does the reality of God with us, stay with me, in my prayer and in my everyday choices?

It is comforting to remember that God is patient with us. The Incarnation was not a moment that began and ended in one night. The Son of God came among us as a child and the Gospel tells us that He grew in wisdom and stature, finding favour with God and with others. He learned, He worked and He lived our ordinary human life in all its simplicity.

Perhaps this shows us how we are invited to live Christmas too. Not as something intense for a short time, but as something that is allowed to grow gently. Our relationship with Christ does not become complete all at once. It unfolds gradually. Some days it may feel small and fragile. On other days it feels steady and encouraging. God gives us time and space for this. He does not rush us and He certainly does not set us aside once the season ends.

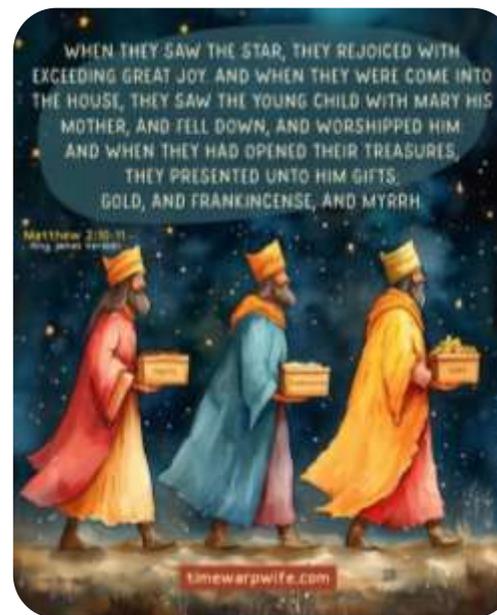
The Madeiran custom may have something beautiful to teach us. Keep the *Menino Jesus* before our eyes, not only on the *escadinha*, but in daily life as well. Allow Christmas to become more than a date in December. Let it become a way of seeing the world, knowing that God has entered our humanity and remains close to us.

In this way Christmas is not only a feast to be celebrated. It becomes a life that is lived, with Christ born among us, growing within us, and gently leading us nearer to the Father day by day.

- Deacon Tito



A Christmas tradition in Madeira: The *Menino Jesus* (boy Jesus) on the *escadinha* (little steps)

**“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 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!

“BOLO REI” (King’s Cake) recipe**Ingredients:**

150 g butter
150 g sugar
5 eggs
25 g fresh baker’s yeast
Zest of 1 orange, to taste
Zest of 1 lemon, to taste
750 g plain flour
500 g dried fruit and candied (crystalized) fruit
Port wine, to taste
Icing sugar to taste

**Method of preparation:**

Start by beating 150g of softened butter with 150g of sugar. Add 4 whole eggs and beat again.

Next, dissolve 25g of fresh baker’s yeast in 100ml of water. Mix and add to the bowl. Beat and add the zest of 1 orange and 1 lemon. Mix and place in an electric mixer.

Add 750g plain flour. Beat and leave to rest for 1½ to 2 hours in a warm, humid place. Cover with a cloth.

Once the dough has risen, add the dried fruit soaked in port wine to taste, followed by the candied fruit, keeping some aside for decoration. Leave to rest again.

Next, remove part of the dough, shape it, place a cylindrical cutter in the centre and add the fruit for decoration. Brush with 1 beaten egg.

Bake at 180°C on a perforated tray for 30 to 45 minutes.

Finally, sprinkle with icing sugar.

A SPECIAL APPEAL

One of the families supported by our charity, “People Helping People” is in need of an iron.

If you have an extra one at home that is still in good condition, and are willing to donate it to this family, or would like to get them a new one, please contact:

Carla Rodrigues (967214835)
or by email: fcarla.mrodrigues@gmail.com

