

Number 1 • December 2020

Comunidades Vibrantes



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OM Ships
50 years

Datasheet

Periodical that aims to present OM ministry opportunities for the glory of God.

Ownership of Operation Mobilization Portugal

EDITION

Year 1 Number 1
December 2020

Print: Flyeralarm S.L.

Number of examples: 1.000

Director:

Givas José

Editorial Team:

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Thanks to:

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Message from the Director

Givas José,
Director of OM Portugal

“Missions starts where we are
but will end wherever God wills.”

2020 has been a year that no one will forget anytime soon, and COVID-19 will leave a lasting mark for years to come. Many speculations have been made about the meaning behind the pandemic. But one thing which cannot be denied: the Gospel has not stopped being spread in different ways.

We as OM Portugal can testify that 2020 has been a year of growth and we have seen our team double in size. Our church planting ministry partnerships have seen baptisms and disciples made, particularly in the north and centre of the country. Our youth ministry, TeenStreet, had more participants than ever before despite being an online event. But how are things moving forward in the middle of a global pandemic? It's simple. The mission that God has never stops. When we are planting seeds, God will make things happen (1 Corinthians 3:6). While this is our OM Portugal experience, I am confident that other organizations and churches globally would be able to also testify and share similar experiences of growth.

God is calling each of us to be part of His mission, to be Salt and Light, starting where we are (Matthew 5:13-16). We all need to reflect, have we been Salt and Light? This world is broken, and Jesus is the only one who can bring restoration. We need to start living and being this Light where we are. It's quite easy to think beyond our borders to nations far away, but God wants us to start in our own Jerusalem, and He will move us wherever He wants from there.

As OM, we want to continue to reach out the least reached areas in Portugal. God is calling each of us to start with our neighbors and our region. And as God moves in Portugal, we will see Him doing things through Portugal; because Missions starts where we are and will finish wherever God wills it. We pray that God will use our lives **to see more Vibrant Communities of Jesus Followers in and through Portugal.**

“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you;
and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and
Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” (Acts 1:8)

Ministry of OM in Portugal

Operation Mobilization is a movement committed to world evangelization. Its purpose is to challenge and train Christians to live a life of faith, love and prayer; providing means for Christians to have a missionary vision and to get involved and support cross-cultural evangelism; and express Christ's compassion physically and socially to the needy.

OM's Vision

"We want to see vibrant communities of Jesus followers among the least reached"

These are sustainable communities, relevant to their culture, that reproduce, bear witness to the transforming power of the Gospel and make a visible and sustainable difference in society. They are motivated to reach the least reached, which include, for example, peoples where Jesus followers, who live the Gospel, face geographical or

cultural obstacles. This is the case in Portugal.

OM Portugal

Officially established in 1994, for a long time it was a small team, which now is growing. Our focus is to strengthen and equip the Portuguese Church to evangelize, disciple and serve our nation and beyond. We also want to motivate believers to love all peoples and to mobilize them for world mission and prayer.

Therefore, some of the main ministries of OM Portugal are:

- Ministry in Fátima/Leiria;
- Sending teams in short and long term missions;
- Training in missions and leadership;
- Children's ministry with puppets;
- Sport's Ministry;
- Discipleship one by one;
- TeenStreet;
- Church planting and revitalizing (mainly in the interior).



George Verwer, The Man Used by God

On July 3, 1938, the man that God would radically transform and use to found Operation Mobilization was born - George Verwer.

OM's history began in the 1950s, with Dorothea Clapp praying faithfully for students at the local school.

Five years later, Dorothea's son offered the Gospel of John to one of his fellow students, named George Verwer. Later, when he gave his life to the Lord, George begged him: "I want to learn to pray, to love you, to know you and to have fellowship with you".


In college, George and two friends prayed together. And God led them to Mexico, in the summer of 1957, where they distributed the Gospel of John. This was the first of many summers abroad to speak of Christ. Then, in

1961, George, his wife and his friends traveled to Spain to proclaim the Gospel in Europe.

But because they realized that alone they would not be able to proclaim the good news across Europe, they began to share their vision with hundreds of Christians. That was how the **Send the Light** movement was born, which in 1981, would come to be called **Operation Mobilization**.

Soon after, George began to motivate Christians to go anywhere in the world. And shortly afterwards he had the idea of transporting literature globally on a ship.

Currently, George is no longer the international leader of OM, but with his wife, he is involved in Special Projects Ministries full time and gives talks where God guides him.



António Calaim, has served for 4 years as president of the board for the Portuguese Evangelical Alliance. He is Cristina's husband. Physician by profession, having participated in Doctors Without Borders of Portugal.



Fátima and Leiria Project

Interview with the President of the AEP

How do you describe the growth of the Church in Portugal?

Slow, but with some spikes. For example, with migrations; the arrival of refugees, Ukrainians and Chinese; and with immigration from Brazil and PALOPS.

What barriers and driving factors do you intend to contribute to this?

Some barriers have been the conservatism of older generations and humanism/secularism. However, openness to spiritual issues has contributed to the advancement of the Gospel.

And how has this motivated the Portuguese Church to carry out missions even in times of pandemic?

Currently, we have seen Portuguese people going abroad with the intention of spreading the good news and Portuguese people investing in their own country.

With the pandemic, some have resumed family services and technologies have helped to reach many people. And although we have been deprived of regular face-to-face interaction, many Christians have responded to the needs of theirs and their neighbors.

"Missions is the expression of our obedience to the GO commandment. Some obey the GO, others GIVE to those who are in front of the battle and still many PRAY. There is much to do, especially since the Sabbath day is approaching. Maranata!"

The year was 2002, when Natália (my wife) and I (João) through OM Portugal, started the "Fátima Project", for the glory of God. With some young people and Teen Challenge we set up a tent near Fátima where we provided basic health care and food. Sometimes, some pilgrims would stay overnight with us, and we always wanted to be intentional in speaking and showing Jesus' love.

I remember a lady who, on one of the pilgrimages, received the Gospel of John. After reading it intensely, she wished to know more. Even with the difficult situations in her life, we prayed and saw God's move in response to our prayers.

And this is not a unique example. During these years, we have observed many things and each volunteer, in one way or another, has seen God moving in people's lives. Therefore, what number

of converts (even though it is important), but to see Christians having a real experience with God and seeing him move in their lives as they share His love with others.

Even so, we have had two major challenges that prevent us from moving further and better: lack of financial support (for personal support and for the expenses of this ministry) and lack of human resources.

Jesus himself said: "The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few" (Matthew 9:37). Therefore, we also want to mobilize the Church in Portugal for evangelization and mission. The thousands of people who go to Fátima each year come from many different

municipalities, often where there isn't a local church or even a Christian near their home. This reveals that we need to raise our arms for harvest (John 4:35).

However, this year another great challenge arose: as this work involves physical contact, with confinement, we were unable to act as we have in the past. This prompted us to develop new strategies for being in contact with pilgrims who continue to travel to Fátima and beyond.

It is wonderful to see the movement of God in the lives of pilgrims, but also in the lives of all the volunteers who have been with us in realizing how God uses each one in sharing His love with each pilgrim. **So I want to encourage every Christian to get involved in this work, to see God moving through your life so that others may see God in you.**



PLANT is a Gospel-centered Church Planting Network, which acts in a spirit of total dependence on the Holy Spirit.

It facilitates ongoing training, mentoring, resources for planters and moments of sharing, always focusing on the vision of OM – *wanting to see vibrant communities of Jesus followers*. Based on the New Testament, planted churches seek to have healthy local leadership, members meet regularly to worship God and be nourished by the Word of God - for the edification of one another, and celebrate baptism and communion.

In Portugal, although the evangelical presence is small, the desire for change and growth is not! For this reason, we have trained around 120 leaders from all over the country to plant, revitalize and replant churches. And we want to provide continued training.



TeenStreet, in partnership with the Church, wants to motivate, equip and walk alongside teenagers to have a real friendship with Jesus and reflect Him 365 days a year

This is one of the main ministries of OM Portugal, which sends teenagers to Germany every year.

Due to COVID-19, TS was cancelled and unable to happen in a physical event. This motivated the TeenStreet Europe team to launch an online platform and event, TeenStreet Life. Thus, teenagers, from all over Europe, from 4 to 8 August, were encouraged to be **CURIOUS!** (this year's theme) about Jesus. They asked God questions about who they are, what their purpose is, their experiences, the world they live in and going to Him while looking for answers.

“One of the things that caught my attention this week was the relationship with God: we must trust Him more and give Him all our worries.”

From Portugal there were 170 participants, where 7 local churches gathered their **teenagers** and joined us, there was also a group from Brazil and another from Luxembourg.

Moving forward, our desire is to continue this journey 365 days a year. That's why, we dream of TeenStreet Portugal. We want to continue working with the Church in Portugal to invest in the lives of our teenagers to have a real friendship with Jesus for the glory of God.

“The part that most impressed me was being in NET groups and also in Shh Time, where I was able to think about the wonderful things that God did.”



OM Zambia has school ministries, HIV/AIDS help centers, proclamation through sports, support for street children, people with disabilities, mobilization of local churches, training and skills development.



OM in the World - Zambia

Nigel and Holly with their children Asha and Justus serve in Operation Mobilization in Kabwe, Zambia. Nigel joined OM in 2007 and Holly in 2008 and is currently involved with TeenStreet International and AIDSLink (in the HIV/AIDS Help Center called Subilo (Hope) House).



"We have known people who, because they are HIV positive, are stigmatized throughout their lives by their own people" - comments Nigel. "This is the case

"We have known people who, because they are HIV positive, are stigmatized throughout their lives by their own people"

with *Natasha. Three years ago, she discovered that she was HIV positive. It was her alcoholic husband who, after cheating on her, brought this disease to home. He hit her and blamed her for their illness. Natasha wanted to commit suicide and was seriously underweight. We were able to provide her with vitamins to boost her immune system. When Natasha was pregnant with her sixth child, we taught her to take care of him (who was HIV negative). Today, Lushomo (Faith) has hope for tomorrow and there is hope for Jesus."

In Zambia, many people are living with HIV/AIDS. Because of this, OM Zambia started an egg business, called *Subilo Eggs*, to provide low-cost protein to

HIV-positive people. Nigel comments: "together with some local residents, who we trained to work with, we sell eggs as a small business, but a great ministry. Almost everyone buys eggs. Hindus, Muslims, people who would not normally enter a church invite us into their homes, into their lives."

Ministry and Pandemic

Zambia is an underdeveloped country and the COVID-19 pandemic has further aggravated the economy.

Unfortunately, OM schools, the private tuition program and the children's safe home had to be closed. But the team has been ministering remotely and giving food baskets.

The women's skills development program made masks and distributed

them among the most vulnerable. Although there were challenges, the OM Zambia team found a new way to continue the ministry.

The Mission

The girl from the village who was never able to go to school, the street child who begs for strangers, the disabled adult who gets help because of OM, everyone needs Jesus. There are Chinese, Lebanese, Indians and other foreigners who need Jesus.

Zambians in general are very relational. Each of them has a story. And you, are you willing to listen? Are you willing to relate? Are you willing to give them your heart so that through you they can be saved?



*The names have been changed for reasons of confidentiality.

OM Ships - 50 years

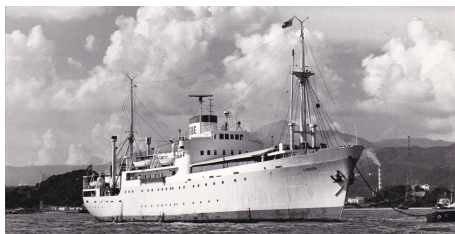


October 15th of 2020 marked the 50th anniversary of the purchase of the first OM ship.

It was George Verwer who came up with the idea of using boats as a ministry, for wanting to take books and supplements from Europe to India. At that time, it was a fast and economical way to transport materials and people.

After having shared this idea with other OM leaders and several local churches, on October 15, 1970, OM acquired the Danish ship **Umanak**, calling it **Logos** (Greek expression meaning “word”).

Logos made its first trip on February 26, 1971, from London to India. When



stopping at various ports to refuel, the crew held evangelistic events and visited local churches and schools. And inside the ship, the bookshop could be seen. What they did not expect was the large number of visitors to each port.

This prompted the leaders of OM Ships International to acquire **Doulos** (Greek term for “servant”) in 1977.

Eleven years later, in January 1988, the **Logos** sank on the south coast of Argentina. What motivated, in 1989, the acquisition of **Logos II**.

Thousands of people visited the two boats every year. Then, in April 2004, OM Ships bought **Logos Hope**, which started operating in February 2009, in Koege, Denmark. Currently, only Logos Hope continues to serve OM Ships - **Logos II** made its last voyage in 2008 and **Doulos** in 2010.

Logos Hope

This is the largest ship that OM Ships has ever had, capable of supporting around 400 crew members. So far, it has visited 181 ports and 74 countries. It received about nine million visitors and ten million books were sold.

Its main objective has been: to impact each individual with the Gospel, while motivating Christians to participate in the local and global mission. Crew members have had experiences of demonstrating God's love through construction works, disaster relief, medical aid, HIV/AIDS awareness, food, clothing and books donations in developing countries and visits to prisons. In addition, on board, its bookstore has provided quality Christian and educational resources and conferences are offered to

pastors, couples, youth and children in order to motivate them to follow Christ.

Where is the Logos Hope

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, in March, Logos Hope was closed to the public, anchoring in Jamaica. Trips to Europe have been postponed. And the crew stayed a few months inside the ship, while they were being trained.

After four months, in July, it traveled to Curaçau and there the crew was able to get off the ship for the first time. The ship is currently in the Bahamas, where it will remain until December 8.

MDT Eastern Europe (MDT e³)


(Moldava and Romania; January to July 2022, 5 months or 1 year)

At MDT e³ you will experience how God calls ordinary people to do extraordinary things, while you take a step of faith, grow in your relationship with the Lord and try to be His hands and feet for the nations.

MDT+

(South Africa; February and/or September, 6 to 12 months course)

You will learn how to use arts, sport, business, agriculture and community development as a basis for ministry. And you will be able to use your gifts and interests in various ministerial areas.



We want to see Portuguese youth equipped to serve where God calls them. That is why we want to give you tools in discipleship and ministry in a cross-cultural environment - the foundations of MDT (Missions Discipleship Training).



Short Term Missions

Equip to Serve

“MDT gave me tools to deepen my relationship with God and to have more devotional discipline. It challenged me to improve some areas of my life, such as teamwork. It gave me new methods and tools for evangelism in different cultures and religions.”

Asaph is 20 years old, passionate about Christ and making him known, and in September 2019, we sent him to MDT South Africa, for 5 months.



MDT is an intensive course that aims to equip Christians for a missionary life to disciple others, wherever God calls them. It offers mentoring, cross-cultural community life and ministerial experience.

“I decided to participate in this course, because I wanted to gain experience in different areas of ministry, in which God could guide me.

I participated in different evangelism activities - at the university, with drug addicts, door to door, etc. But what I liked most was having lived an intensive cross-cultural mission. I also learned

more about the reality of persecuted Christians and it impacted me, because I realized the price these followers of Christ have to pay. With this, God taught me that He is faithful, guides us, He is an ever present companion and He provides, when we decide to obey Him from the heart.”

Asaph has already had the privilege of doing MDT. Now it's your turn...

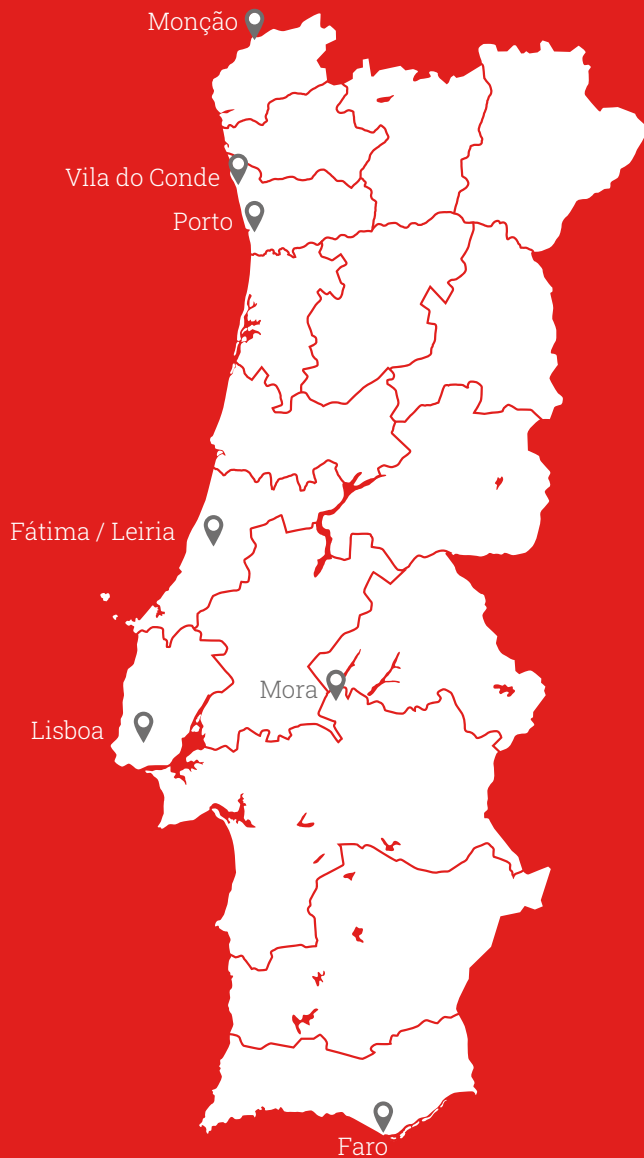
Today many people are looking for experiences and quick-fixes, moments of temporary highs; this can also be said of some Believers too. But what if we as Jesus followers chose differently? What if we chose life-long transformation for ourselves and others? What if we chose Kingdom impact and self-denial, while being challenged alongside a team and learning, laughing and growing together? This is what Short Term Missions (STM) is. It can be the start of transformation and a life-changing journey in those we serve, but also in ourselves.

STM can last from 1 week up to 6 months and can be done locally or internationally. From children's ministry, involvement with refugees, street evangelism, loving the marginalized, interacting with other faiths and so much more, with STM the possibilities are endless.

Last year our OM Portugal team received dozens international individuals and teams from countries such as Canada, Sweden, South Korea, and Trinidad and Tobago. These people came to work alongside the Portuguese church in various ways. But we don't just receive, **our aim is also to see Portuguese believers motivated and engaged with outreach locally and abroad. We are excited to have partnered with well over 150 Portuguese believers from a number of different churches and different denominations last year.**

Want to know more and discover how you can be involved locally or abroad? Contact us! Let's journey together to see God's Kingdom grow.

OM Portugal Team



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