

Number 3 · December 2022

Comunidades Vibrantes



For Portugal and through Portugal

Pray for the
Nations

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OM's Ships
Ministry

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

Ownership of Operation
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Director's Message

Givas José,
Director of OM Portugal

For several years already, OM has been looking at how we can create Vibrant Communities of Jesus Followers (VCJFs) especially amongst the least reached. Whenever I think about this objective, I reflect on the Thessalonian church and some of the parallels with the Portuguese church.

This church, which was planted by Paul and Timothy, has some fundamental characteristics that we can reflect on and apply to not only our individual lives and the Portuguese church, but also the global body of Christ. Right at the beginning of the letter, in 1 Thess. 1:3 there are three important traits mentioned: **faith, love and hope.**

Faith in what Jesus did on the cross and the salvation received. **Love** which is active and not passive and that reaches out to others and isn't just inward focused. And **hope** which is anchored in the second coming of Christ and that one day He will return for His bride.

These three characteristics which Paul saw in the Thessalonian church, are the same which can be used for corporate and individual reflection. Where is our faith placed? Where is our love rooted? Where is our hope anchored? As the church in Portugal and as a follower of Christ I genuinely pray that the answer to this reflection is founded on Jesus Christ.

Looking deeper at the Thessalonian church, we also realize that they too had different phases in their faith journey where: the Gospel came (1 Thess. 1:5), the Gospel was received (1 Thess. 1:6), and the Gospel went out again (1 Thess. 1:7-8). Applying this directly to the nation of Portugal, we know that there are still places where the Gospel has not yet been proclaimed or received. Places which are isolated, places where people don't have hope, and places where people haven't had the opportunity to see what a vibrant life with Jesus truly looks like.

The church has been commanded to go out and not to just remain within its four walls. We have had the Gospel come, we have received it – even if under persecution, and now it is time for it to spread to others. So let us throw off worldly temptations and frustrations and choose to follow Jesus and obey His command to go to all people, nations and tongues. This includes our neighbors in Portugal and this includes the ends of the Earth.

It is with faith, hope and love (as we witness in the Thessalonian church) that we as OM Portugal seek to accomplish this mandate of seeing VCJFs.



Key Areas of OM Ministries in Portugal

It is estimated that less than 1% of the population in Portugal has a relationship with Jesus.

Which means that **more than 9 million Portuguese urgently need to hear the good news.**

Therefore, as OM, we want the Portuguese to know and live the message of Christ. Only then can we see vibrant communities of followers of Jesus. Because of the lack of Bible knowledge and geographical dispersion, there are still places where there is not a single follower of Jesus or community that follows Jesus.

God calls us to make disciples everywhere. For this, OM in Portugal has as key ministry areas

- **Evangelism:** A lot of our evangelisation efforts are focused on Fátima, as this is the main place of pilgrimage and people are more open

to spiritual conversation.

- **Church Planting:** Through church planting in underserved areas and training ministry leaders, we aim to serve and motivate followers of Jesus to seek service in places where access to the message of Jesus is scarce.
- **Youth Ministry:** We want to walk with teenagers and local churches 365 days a year. Adolescence is a time of character and value formation. By investing in our teens today, we will be investing in the future of our country. That's why TeenStreet 365 came into being.

In the pages of this magazine, you can see how these ministries are being developed in our country and around the world.



Mobilising the Portuguese people

As part of the ministry in Portugal, we want to mobilise the Portuguese to get involved with missions in Portugal and abroad. For this, we count on the collaboration of Andrea Ramos, our OMer in Torres Vedras.

"I joined the OM team in Portugal in 2020.



Through writing, God has given me the opportunity to impact the lives of many children and young people. With them I address practical everyday issues and Christian values.

"The field is the world" and society needs to know the Creator God. With Jesus we learn compassion. And it is this compassion that makes me desire to reach out to people who need to hear "you have value".

Furthermore, I want to provoke a missionary sense in young people. Once

a young man, after I had been singing the music from one of the books I wrote at school, told me that's what he was going to do - inspire people.

In addition, I've also been involved with TeenStreet, as a coach and in fundraising for RAG. It is so good to see God transforming the lives of teenagers.

I have also been challenging young people to get involved in missions, to go to TeenStreet Europe, to do a season on the Logos Hope Ship and in other short-term missions.

I ask God that in everything I do, He will be magnified. May His love be revealed to each person who reads one of my texts or any of my books. I believe it was not in vain that He gave me this gift. To my God I give thanks."



Evangelism in Portugal and Around the World

In Portugal

There are two main dates for pilgrimages to Fatima: 13 May and 13 October. Thanks to the collaboration with local churches, believers have joined together to distribute literature and talk to pilgrims there. Our desire is to also reach out to the people living in Fatima and motivate the local churches to join us in this effort to bring the love of Jesus along the pilgrims' way to Fatima.

Also, through the **children's ministry** - Vibrant Kids - this year, using current themes, Jesus was shared in public schools, mainly in the Leiria area. Our wish is that more Portuguese would get involved in this ministry, so that more children can be impacted with the Gospel message.

In Belgium

Many Belgians grew up with tradition but know little about following Jesus. Using a maze of biblical paintings, OM in Belgium wants to proclaim the Gospel so they can really get to know Jesus.

Many modern Belgians have forgotten the Bible stories that inspired their ancestors to create masterpieces over 500 years ago. So OM wishes to invite Belgians to rediscover the biblical messages behind these paintings through an exhibition in a portable labyrinth that will travel to various parts of the country. Their purpose is to expose people to the Gospel through the paintings and to ask visitors deep questions. Through the course of the exhibition they will be invited to examine the meaning of life. In addition, they intend to invite local churches to get involved in this project and equip them to evangelise and build connections in a

unique way.

Along the way, Pepijn the Giant Rabbit storyteller, will guide visitors through the exhibition and explain each masterpiece and the Bible story behind it. The plot in the labyrinth will take the visitor along the main themes of the Bible. **The exhibition will culminate with Jan van Eyck's masterpiece, the Lamb of God, which today finds its home in Ghent Cathedral.**

OM Belgium has chosen to highlight Jesus as the victorious lamb so that visitors will reflect on what the significance of the Lamb of God is today in their lives.

You can read more at:

<https://actie.operatiemobilisatie.nl/lamvangod#description>





TeenStreet 2022



From 7 to 13 August we were able to participate in the TeenStreet UNFOLD, event in Spain. About 7 countries were present and from Portugal we were 110 people (among adolescents, coaches and service team).

We were able to go deeper into the Revelation (UNFOLD) of the Word of God. During 5 days, we studied the Psalms and heard about characters from the Bible that taught us about Waiting; Identity; A Way Back; Obedience; and Choosing Worship.

Here is a testimony from Miguel (who participated as an adolescent) and Priscila (who was serving with us).

Miguel Alves, 15 years old

"My experience in TeenStreet was something unique. In this week, I met people who share the same faith as me and I could see God's action not only in



in my life, but also in the lives of my friends. We were really impacted by the presence of God and it was a very good time.

It was truly a 'watershed' moment for me! And since TeenStreet, my relationship with the Lord has grown more and more. I am very grateful to the whole TeenStreet team for this incredible experience."

Priscila Rodrigues, 19 years old



"This was my third time participating in a TeenStreet Europe event! I was part of the Service Team and served on the Boulevard. That week, I made new friendships, reconnected with friendships from previous TeenStreets, and all together had an incredible week of growing and

fun!

There, God also spoke to me and gave me the direction I needed about difficult decisions in my life. And I am so grateful to TeenStreet for being an instrument of God in my life and in everyone else's who went."



As OM in Portugal we have a dream of having TeenStreet 365. With that, we aim to walk together with local churches and Portuguese teens 365 days a year, offering mentoring, trainings and TeenStreet Portugal retreats.

Save the date: July 29 to August 5, 2023 - the next TeenStreet Europe.

Follow us on our social media:

- Instagram: https://www.instagram.com/teenstreet_portugal/
- Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/teenstreetportugal>
- YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLjdylw4sGyllINUOoFeKlbv0Fcwt8Hu806>





Interview with Pedro Costa

Pedro Costa shares with us his experience with OM. He is 47 years old, married, has 2 daughters, is an elder at the church in Águas Santas, is the current president of CIIP and is the manager of the company Sponsored Links. He received Jesus as his Saviour at the age of 14 after an evangelistic film.

When did you first hear about OM?

When I was a child I heard about the ministry of the ships. When they passed through Porto I had the opportunity to visit them.

What attracted you to that ministry?

When I was a child, what attracted me a lot were the children's books and the biblical materials. Besides that, I also got to meet people from other countries who are fulfilling Jesus' command to go all over the world taking the Gospel.

When did you start to get more involved with OM?

I started to get involved with OM in October 1995 in the Northern Bible School on Monday evenings. God gave me an answer what to do, when I read in the OM newspaper that the ship Logos II was coming to Porto, In December 1995 I went as a volunteer on the ship Logos II for 15 days. And in January 1996 I signed up for 2 years as an OM missionary aboard the ship Logos II.

What did you do with OM?

During my time on the ship, I have ministered the Word of God, witnessed, participated in the worship team with music, dramas and mimes, rope tricks, paintings, and puppets among other creative evangelism techniques. I also distributed literature, helped in technical sound and multimedia situations, organised events, did translations, visited several churches and schools, among other things.

What impact did OM have in your life?

It was a very practical school where I could develop myself and be used by God. I grew a lot spiritually in a very intimate and intense relationship with God.

Can you give a testimony about how you saw OM's ministry impacting the life of Portuguese people?

The greatest impact of OM I saw in the Portuguese was when the ships visited the country; in summer campaigns

(youth teams participating in Love Europe); and local evangelistic campaigns. These were frontline actions where Christ's challenge and call was fulfilled, in going and announcing the Gospel, leaving an example for Christians and salvation for non-Christians.

Can you give a message of encouragement to those serving with OM in Portugal?

Do not lose time, nor focus! May you be the good servants of the parable of the talents. Where with your gifts you can, in an intense way, invest and gain, leading more people daily to know God's will (John 6:40).

Can you give a message of encouragement for more Portuguese to get involved in OM in Portugal?

Jesus challenges us to leave our selfishness and comfort to practice Christianity as His good disciples. OM is a very practical way where you can have a true missionary experience that will lift you into a more intimate relationship with God, because you will be fulfilling and obeying His word more completely. Talk to your family, local church and their leaders. You can be a good and useful contribution to the Kingdom through OM, where you can get involved by going, praying and contributing.

Is there any other moment of your life with OM that you consider important to share?

The stories are many as I have been with OM in an intense way. But for me personally it was being able to tell Jesus what Peter said in Luke 18:28: "We have left everything to follow you". Can you say the same?



OM's Ships Ministry

Since 1971, the ministry of OM Ships has shared knowledge, help and hope among the people of the world. Even today there are about 3 billion people who do not know Jesus or know a single follower of Jesus. Therefore, the ministry of Ships desires to make more vibrant communities of followers of Jesus among the least reached.

And it is with great joy that OM Portugal is pleased to share with you two great pieces of news.

Portuguese in Logos Hope

One of the programmes that they Ship Ministries offers is STEP - Short-Term Exposure Programme. This lasts about 3 months aboard Logos Hope, where crew members serve on the ship and in the surrounding communities.

After a few years without Portuguese aboard Logos Hope, this year there will be 3 participants from Portugal.

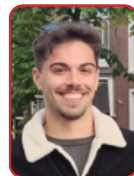
They are:

Dânia Rodrigues – 19 years old



"I decided to take a break from my studies to understand if the path I was taking for my life was the right one. I have high expectations for this time and I believe I will grow a lot in my relationship with God and people during the program."

João Esculcas – 22 years old



"I believe that to lead you need to serve first, and STEP is an excellent opportunity to do that. I think it will help me develop as a person and understand my purpose and path."

Rute Vivas – 28 years old



"I applied to STEP because I want to learn new ways to bring the good news of Jesus to others. Also, I want to learn new ways to motivate others around me to do missions."

The adventure for these 3 young people will start in Montenegro, on the 10th November and will last until the 18th January, with the remaining ports still to be confirmed.

God willing, next year another young man - João Lino - will also join the STEP Programme:

João Lino - 23 years old



"I want to expand my vision of God's work and deepen my relationship with God through serving others. This is the reason I applied to STEP."

OM's new ship

Operation Mobilisation has expanded its fleet with a new ship, the Doulos Hope. It will aim to reach new regions, and share knowledge, help and hope with vulnerable or marginalised communities.

Doulos Hope ('servant of hope') is smaller than Logos Hope. This will allow it to operate in shallower waters and travel to new regions. It will be based in South East Asia and will remain in ports for extended periods so there is greater cultural engagement.



It will start sailing in 2023. Like the Logos Hope, the Doulos Hope will be equipped with a floating bookshop, bringing Christian and educational literature to the ports where it stops.

You can support the ships ministry by: Pray, Give, or Go. Contact us to find out how you can get involved. Also subscribe to Currents - the ships' ministry prayer letter.

Новий Завіт
і Книга Псалмів



Ministry with Ukrainian Refugees in Portugal

Due to the displacement of refugees from Ukraine, the OM teams in the countries bordering Ukraine; Poland, Moldova, Romania, Czech/Slovak Republic and Hungary - have mobilized to welcome those fleeing the war.

In view of the large displacement of refugees, OM in Portugal realised the need to start a ministry to support all those who had to leave their countries due to crises there.

"Dealing with war refugees can be very stressful. But seeing God's action in the midst of so much need is always an encouragement and a privilege to be able to be part of that action. And as OM, we are grateful for that."

In Mora, Alentejo, a refugee family - Eugenia and 4 children - has received support from the local community at all levels. The children were able to be cared for at the Oficina da Criança in

August, where transport and all the logistics were done by neighbours and friends. While Eugénia was able to work at the old people's home.

Recently, we received 1,100 copies of New Testaments (and Psalms) in Ukrainian to distribute to Ukrainians and churches that are supporting refugees. Above all we pray that they, in the midst of this horrible situation, may find comfort and hope in the Almighty!"

- Rosario Zhuravlyov.



Short-term Mission Opportunities



Luke 24 Journey - Namibia

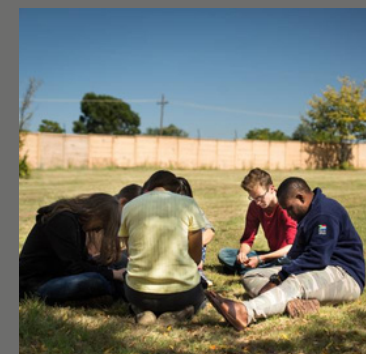
Purpose | To support Christians to understand God's call on their lives in order to make disciples wherever God calls them.

Ministry details | Bible teaching about Jesus through the Old and New Testament, identity and destiny in Christ. Practical evangelism.

REACH South Africa

Do you have a desire to grow in your faith? Do you want to be trained in practical ministry skills and be challenged to put your faith into action? Come and be part of our REACH programme!

Together with people from all over the world, you will be discipled and equipped to know how to make Vibrant Communities of Jesus Followers among the Least Reached.



Come and serve at Logos Hope or Doulos Hope

STEP (Short Term Exposure Programme) is a unique opportunity for you to serve God on board ships. Many who have been on STEP testify to the huge impact it has had on their lives and how God has worked in and through them.

Come with a servant's heart, an attitude to learn and a willingness to be flexible. This can be the experience of a lifetime.

5 OM Spotlight Regions

Currently we have a focus on five regions of the world where the majority of the population has not had the chance to hear the Gospel or meet a follower of Jesus.



- 1 - Sahel
- 2 - Arabian Peninsula
- 3 - North Caucasus
- 4 - South Asia
- 5 - Mekong



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