

Comunidades Vibrantes



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TeenStreet

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

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Mensagem do Diretor

Givas José,
Diretor da OM Portugal

Missions and Spiritual Warfare

Often, when people speak about Spiritual Warfare, we see the two extremes represented: those who almost deny its existence, and those who value it too much. The reality of it is either underestimated or overestimated. Many people place

these viewpoints as the church of the Global North (underestimate) and the Global South (overestimate).

Jesus tells His disciples in Mark 13:33 to be on guard and to pray. We have an enemy who is trying to stop the advancement of the Kingdom. Paul also talks about spiritual warfare in Ephesians 6:10-20, when he points out who the enemy is, how he acts, and how we need to be prepared for the battle.

My background is from Latin America, but I have lived in Muslim nations and am now living in Europe for the past decade. I have witnessed how Satan has been on the attack, and often times how he uses the lack of spiritual maturity of believers to attack the Church in the advance of the Gospel. I would say that now, more than ever, if we want to 'win' in missions and see the Great Commission fulfilled it is imperative that we spend time exercising these two powerful tools: **prayer and fasting**.

It's interesting to look at Daniel in chapter 10, where he was fasting and praying, but behind the scenes there was strong warfare happening. We see that Daniel had already been fasting for a number of days when an angel came to explain what was happening and why he had been delayed in giving his message. An interesting note is that the other men that were with Daniel when the angel appeared did not see anything, but what they did experience was an intense fear (v. 7). It was so intense that they fled and hid themselves as they could not remain in the presence of the angel. The spiritual realm affected these men, even though they themselves did not see the vision only Daniel.

My intention is not to force this text, but I can say with confidence that many believers react as these men did. They run and hide. There are so many obstacles and fears which can overwhelm the church and its mission. And this natural reaction of fear cannot be overcome by a force of will, but only through the empowerment of the Holy Spirit working in us.

Fasting and prayer are tools which we have been given as a way to connect with God, but also enable us to see His power work in situations that are beyond our control. These disciplines are ones that Jesus Himself modeled in His relationship with the Father. As we seek to see the Kingdom growing and expanding, it is best to imitate Jesus and practice as He did.

One thing which emboldens me in my walk with God is the knowledge that the battle is won! The winner has been declared from before time began. May the knowledge that the battle is won embolden you to keep pressing on, and may prayer and fasting be markers of the church in Portugal.

"Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. Put on the full armor of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes." (Ephesians 6:10-11)



Why do we do Missions?

It all starts with a commandment of love: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your strength and with all your mind; and, love your neighbor as yourself" (Luke 10:27). We do missions because we love God and missions are in His heart (Matthew 28:19).

And just as Christ loved us by giving his life on the cross to have our sins forgiven and a relationship with the Father, we must also make this love known to all nations.

Today, more than 3 billion people in the world have never heard Jesus' message of hope or experienced His love through the life of a believer... And this number increases by around 60,000 every day.

We want to see God's love shared in places where no-one shares the life and teachings of Jesus - like in Afghanistan, where an ordinary person hears the

Gospel once every 30.5 years. We want to share the good news where there is no local community of Jesus-followers - like in Japan, where more than 1,700 towns and villages don't have an evangelical church. We want to see God's love shared in places where culture, language and other barriers separate people from local followers of Jesus, such as among the 1 million Syrian refugees in Europe.

"He [Jesus] said to them, 'Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature'". (Mark 16:15).

And we invite you to be part of that. **GO:** we need more followers of Jesus who want to make disciples. **GIVE:** if you can't go, support a ministry or missionary financially. **PRAY:** if God doesn't go with us, everything is in vain, for it is He who empowers and directs (Psalm 127:1-2).

"We love because God first loved us." (1 John 4:19)



Why Pray for the Nations?

The task of reaching the least reached is spiritual in nature. We ourselves can accomplish nothing. In Ephesians 6:12 we read: "our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world, and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms." Prayer allows us to be used by God for His grace and mercy to flow amongst the least reached.

Therefore, breakthrough is 100% dependent upon God's intervention. In prayer, we acknowledge that by ourselves we cannot bring about the transformation we long to see. We long to see His miraculous work unfold, and that is why we seek, through prayer, His intervention and His touch upon lives in ways we can't even imagine.

Also, prayer has the power to soften and change hearts. As we lift up the least reached in prayer, we ask God to work

within communities, breaking down barriers of resistance and cultural strongholds that hinder the acceptance of the gospel. Hearts that once seemed impenetrable can be softened (Ez. 36:26).

And prayer has the power to soften and change our hearts. God loves all people, regardless of their background or location. In John 3:16 the term "world" encompasses every tribe and nation. God's heart is deeply concerned for the least reached, and in prayer, we align ourselves with His love and compassion.

The Invitation

Often we can't go on missions or we don't have the financial resources to give to missions. But nothing and no one can silence our mouths and hearts from praying for missions.

Keep an eye on our social media, where we share prayer requests. Download the Prayer Reach app, where you can find prayer topics and information about the spotlight regions.



Church Planting in the Minho Region

Carlos and Laura (from Paraguay) are missionaries from the Portuguese Baptist Convention and joined the OM Portugal team in July 2020 to support more local churches with church planting and revitalisation. Text written by Carlos Martínez.

The Minho Valley is formed by the cities of Melgaço, Monção, Valença, Vila Nova de Cerveira and Caminha. According to the 2021 census, this region has approximately 64,000 inhabitants*. However, there is still no local community of followers of Jesus meeting in the cities of Caminha, Cerveira and Melgaço; and there are only 4 local churches in Monção and 6 in Valença, with around 20 to 25 members.

Because of this, we saw the need to develop a movement of church planting and revitalisation in this region. Our purpose is to share the good news of Jesus to the point that people are transformed spiritually, socially and culturally.

With this in mind, we have promoted a number of initiatives that have brought us closer to the local population:

- In February, in partnership with OM Portugal, we were visited by a team

of 14 teenagers from Canada, who participated in evangelistic activities in schools and outdoors.

- In July we took an active part in the evangelisation programme organised by the Northern Baptist Association, called 'Heading to the North'.
- Also, in partnership with the International Mission Board, we received a team of 8 brothers and sisters from Cross Church NRH and Cross Church NFW for a week of English teaching. To do this, they used the Bible as a manual and handed out leaflets.

And we have seen fruit

And by God's grace and for his glory, we have seen fruit from the work in these places. In August we celebrated the 95th anniversary of the Valença Church and the 38th anniversary of the Pias Church with an open-air public service.

But what marked this date most was the baptism of six believers and the arrival of two new members to our family of faith.

With God's help, we started Sunday School at Valença Church, where we are studying Spurgeon's Baptist Catechism. In September, we began training for future preachers and teachers of the Word of the Lord at Monção Church. Also, in Caminha, in partnership with the Evangelical Baptist Church of Viana do Castelo, we began planting a new church, where every Sunday we are having services of praise and preaching the Word of the Lord.

Next steps

We rejoice in the wonders that God is doing in our midst. And in order to continue and prosper the ministry that God has started there by using us, we want to invest in the development of new faithful leaders and prepare them.

We also want to constantly seek new opportunities to preach the Gospel in cities where there is still no biblical testimony.

Special thanks

We would like to thank all of our partners for their support and trust throughout this journey. We are excited

about what the Lord has planned for us and we are committed to working so that the name of our God may be glorified in this region of our beloved Portugal.

Thank you! 🙌

- This data was taken from the website <https://www.pordata.pt/censos/resultados>, on the 18th of October 2023.

Contact us to find out how you can be part of this ministry: info.pt@om.org.





Evangelism and Teams

After a season without hosting short-term teams in Portugal due to the pandemic, this year we were able to host two teams.

Teenagers from Canada

From the 14th to the 23rd of February, we welcomed a team of young people from Canada to the north of the country, namely Viana do Castelo and Braga. In these regions there are cities without communities of followers of Jesus.

There, they were able to show Jesus' love by teaching English in different schools; participating in Christian Moral and Religious Education classes, motivating students to have a real relationship with Jesus. They also shared their testimonies and the Word of God in local churches. They interacted with children and teenagers through sports and crafts. They also got to know some specific areas of these districts, where they were able to pray and give out literature.

"One of the most impactful things for me was meeting the local people and the OM team. Even though we were strangers we shared one thing in common instantly, and that was the love of God. Your beautiful country and culture are so welcoming and inclusive! I'll always hold a special place in my heart for Portugal!" - Uday, 18 years old.

"For me it was really encouraging to experience how God's love connects us as a family all across the world. Meeting people for the first time and immediately feeling like family is very special!" - Rebecca, 17 years old.

"It was a very blessed experience - to see young people committed to Jesus and His Church; doing street evangelism without shame; interacting with people and showing Christ's love through hugs and conversations when communication was possible." - Carlos Martínez, OM Portugal.

Young adults from Switzerland

From the 15th to the 23rd of July, 7 young people and adults from Switzerland were able to serve our country in a partnership with Centro Bíblico de Esmoriz (CBE) during Children's Week. Through their lives and work, they impacted those around them and also experienced God's grace.

"It was great to see how God connects us with other people we don't know, even if we don't speak the same language." - Eliane, 17 years old.

"One of the things God spoke to me this week was that it doesn't matter what role we serve in, whether it's cleaning toilets or washing dishes. What really matters is our heart. If we have a servant's heart, God uses that for the best." - Tom, 25 years old.

"It was a great blessing for us to receive this team. They were very kind, always helpful and very humble. They were always ready to help with whatever we needed." - Micaela Mateus, Centro Bíblico de Esmoriz.

God calls everyone to serve Him

It was a blessing for us to see how these teams were willing to serve in our country, especially among the children, without knowing the language and culture. And they did it out of love for both the children and those who were

the link between the teams and the children.

When you place yourself in God's hands, it doesn't matter how old you are or what circumstances you're in, whether you're a teenager, a young adult, a 40-year-old or even a 65-year-old, God wants to use you just as you are.

Have you thought about serving on short-term missions - 1 week, 3 weeks or 3 months - in Portugal or another country in the world?

Get in contact with OM Portugal to receive more information or find opportunities to serve:
info.pt@om.org



Come & Serve

Megan Dalby - 26 years old - USA



While I was in Mexico, helping to lead a dance team, I asked Jesus on my birthday where to go next and he said: Portugal.

So I searched on the internet about Portugal and missions and discovered OM. I liked its mission statement and realised that this was where God wanted me for at least two years! From then on, every year on my birthday, I celebrate the fact that Jesus was faithful to bring me to this country!

One of my biggest challenges has been learning the language. Despite this, I decided to stay in Portugal for another 3 years, because the Portuguese need to know Jesus and how He can change their lives, give them hope and love! And I didn't see Him asking me to leave.

Acts 1:8 and Matthew 28:18-20 speak of God's call to missions and to go into all the world to make disciples. He promises to be with us wherever we go. So let go of your fear and embrace the adventures God is calling you to! **Give your burdens to the Lord, trust that He will fulfil your needs and seek first the Kingdom of God (Luke 12:22-34).**

Marta Silva - 25 years old - Portugal



I was born into a Christian family and God has always been, and He is, the most important thing in my life.

I got to know OM through Givas José. A few months ago, God placed in my heart the desire to volunteer at OM. I contacted Givas, who helped me realise what I could do according to my abilities. At the moment, I help with content for social media and translating content. It has been very rewarding to use my talents for the Kingdom of God and to reach people for Christ.

Social Media Manager



Do you have skills in graphic design, animation, video editing? Do you like to work with Instagram, Facebook and Youtube? And would you like to see more Portuguese people mobilised for missions?

Use your creativity and skills to mobilise the Portuguese for Christ's mission through high-quality print and digital media in Portuguese and English. You will develop new and fresh content for our social media and design our magazine.

Church Planting and Revitalisation

Would you like to see the north and interior of Portugal reached by the Gospel of Jesus? Then come and serve!

We need more church planters to work with other missionaries and local believers to build and strengthen the Church. We especially need church planters who are willing to live in the villages and towns of the north and interior to build closer relationships and be salt and light in them.



TeenStreet Team Member

Do you believe that God wants to use teenagers in their daily lives to grow His Kingdom?

Join the TeenStreet team in Portugal as we serve to inspire, mobilise and equip teenagers to have a personal relationship with Jesus, and make Him known wherever they are.

We work together with local churches in Portugal.



Children's Ministry

Do you like to work with children and make Jesus known to them? Do you believe that God wants to use them to influence those around them with the message of Jesus?

Join the OM team in Portugal to share the good news with the children.

We work together with local churches in Portugal.





TeenStreet 365

This ministry began in Germany in 1993. Since then, thousands of teenagers have taken part in TS events all over the world (this year there were more than 40 countries).

TeenStreet works with churches around the world to equip, motivate and support Christian teenagers, so that they can have a real relationship with Jesus and reflect Him daily in their world.

How do we do this?

We challenge youth to find their relationship with Jesus. We equip and empower youth leaders in a practical way, breaking down barriers between cultures, denominations and generations. And we prepare teenagers to engage and invest more in their local church and the people around them.

Our practice of empowerment comes from the TS Core Values of: Have Fun, Go Deep and Be Bold.

TeenStreet's values

These values help provide a safe space for teenagers to grow as followers of Jesus.

And these are best experienced in the

life of a Small Group - 4 to 6 people, including 1 trusted adult of the same sex, who walk together in discipleship.

HAVE FUN. GO DEEP: Love God and each other. BE BOLD: Take Action.

Within TeenStreet's vision, the small group is the most important aspect of discipleship. It allows them to grow in faith together (encourage each other in their relationship with Jesus), talk about the Bible, share how God is speaking to them, pray together, and help others in their communities to begin or grow in their understanding of Jesus' great love for everyone.

Therefore, the Small Group Leader has a key role in discipleship.

Training for Small Group Leaders

So, we want to equip and motivate both youths and adults in Portugal to invest in our teenagers, by creating and multiplying biblical small groups.

As part of this vision, one of our first initiatives was the Training for Small Group Leaders in Lisbon on the 20th and 21st of October. With us were Will (USA) and Ger (France) - from TeenStreet International - and Rúben and Paula Rodrigues - co-workers in this ministry in Portugal - facilitating the training. It took place for people in Lisbon and the south of the country. Now we're dreaming of having the training in Porto - for people and churches in the centre and north of the country - and other activities.

TeenStreet Europe Seen

From the 29th of July to the 5th of August we took part in the TeenStreet SEEN event. Around 25 countries were represented in Offenburg (Germany), with 111 people from Portugal (including teenagers, coaches and the service team).

Over the course of five days, we were challenged to Have Fun, Go Deep and Be Bold, while learning how to be in the Empire (the world) but live the values of the Kingdom of God. In the mornings, during Mainhall, we learnt about how Daniel and his friends were an example to us. And in the Small Groups we went deep into the Sermon on the Mount, where Jesus Himself teaches us to live as His Father wants us to live.

"I've had the opportunity to meet Christians from all over the world; to hear the Word of God in a very glorious way; and to witness God's presence in a way I never imagined would be possible." - Liara, teenager.

Follow us on social media:

- Instagram:
https://www.instagram.com/teenstreet_portugal/
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<https://www.facebook.com/teenstreetportugal>
 - YouTube:
<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLjdylw4sGyllNUOoFeKlbv0Fcwt8Hu806>
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OM's Ship Ministry

Doulos Hope, the new ship

The 5th to 7th of May marked a historic weekend in the life of the Ship Ministry, as our fifth vessel, Doulos Hope, was commissioned and officially opened to the public for the very first time.

A commissioning service was held on Friday, 5th of May, in Singapore, with OM's International Director, Lawrence Tong in attendance to help unveil the commissioning plaque. He was joined alongside other OM leaders and the President of the Council of Churches of Singapore, Lu Guan Hoe.

On Sunday 7 May, a ceremonial ribbon cutting took place to officially open the ship's floating bookfair to the public. Alex and his family were excited to be the first in the queue to be welcomed by Managing Director Pil-Hun Park (Korea), master of the vessel, Captain James Berry (UK) and CEO, Seelan Govender (South Africa).



Pil-Hun Park said, "It is very exciting to see Doulos Hope now open to the public... We want to share knowledge, help and hope with a spirit of generosity and hospitality, in collaboration with the countries in Asia that we hope to visit. We look forward to many partnerships here and I am excited to see how Doulos Hope will be used in the future."

On the 17th of September, Nathan and Ruth Schmutz were officially welcomed aboard the Doulos Hope, when Nathan was appointed the first official director of the vessel! They take over the role from Mark (UK) and Kathy (Australia) Knight, who are currently serving on

board as community leaders, and who helped prepare the vessel for service and her launch last May.

"Nathan and Ruth are resilient leaders and committed to seeing people flourish," shared CEO, Seelan Govender (South Africa). "I am excited and look forward to the impactful leadership they will bring to advance the role of Doulos Hope in Asia."

Portuguese aboard the Logos Hope

On the 10th of November 2022, Dânia Rodrigues (19 years old, Leiria), João Esculcas (22 years old, Ponte-de-Sôr) and Rute Vivas (28 years old, Gaia) embarked on the Logos Hope to serve for 3 months... but two of them stayed for 6 months. During this time, they shared knowledge, help and hope with countries around the Mediterranean Sea and the Middle East.



"In Lebanon, while I was wiping down a table [in the ship's café], there was an old lady and probably her granddaughter, I asked the lady how she

was. She got up crying and hugged me. Her granddaughter translated that she said to me: 'The presence of the ship is a beam of light in the country and your service inspires us and gives us hope to continue fighting and persevering!'" - João

And this year, in November, **another Portuguese arrived on the Logos Hope** for the 3-month STEP - Short-Term Exposure Programme.

André Ramos - 18 years old



"The motivation for taking part in STEP is to help as many people as possible."

Have you ever thought about serving on one of our ships in the short or long term? In order for us to continue sharing knowledge, help and hope, we need people like you to join us on this adventure.

"I strongly advise you to join this project, you won't come back the same." - Dânia

Contact us to find out how you can be part of this ministry:
info.pt@om.org.

"Literal adherence to the principles laid down by Jesus Christ would, without a doubt, result in world-wide revolution. A revolution motivated by love; a revolution executed by love; and a revolution culminating in love."

GEORGE VERWER,
co-founder of OM,
1938-2023

We praise God for George Verwer's radical life dedicated to sharing God's love throughout the world.



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