

Chris and Rachel

Location: **Porto, PORTUGAL**

Mission: **Church planting**



As we approach Easter, we will see many celebrations here in Portugal. Processions with crucifixes, special breads being baked in bakeries, and for some, going to mass for one of the few times in a year. Easter is an important celebration in a country that is very religious. But for those celebrating, how many truly know Jesus?

We see this same flawed, or only partial, understanding of who Jesus is throughout the gospels - when the religious leaders and crowds followed Jesus around asking questions on who he was and what he was doing. When John the Baptist sent messengers to Jesus asking if he really was the messiah or should they look for another, or when the thief dying beside Jesus on a cross mocked him, telling him if he really was the Messiah, to save himself and them.

Some of them were only looking to mock him, others only interested in him as a current topic, and still others who were very sincere in following Jesus.

But the problem was that many of them misunderstood either who he was, or what he came to do. The light had not yet been switched on. It would only be after his ascension, and when the Holy Spirit came, that they would truly, fully, see who their Messiah is and what he had accomplished.

And we see the same problem in Portugal today. Everyone here knows of Jesus. He is a familiar figure in churches and households. He hangs on a cross on the walls of churches, his name is uttered frequently as a curse word. For some, he is a historical figure, but not the Messiah. For others he is the son of God, but at a level that doesn't affect their daily lives. They don't yet know that he is the only way, the truth

and the life. They don't yet know they can have a personal relationship with him, without the need for intermediaries in the form of priests, saints, or Mary. They have not yet come to know who he truly is.

And so we pray. We pray that the light would dawn in Portugal, that there would be an outpouring of the Holy Spirit, that those who are seeking will find, that those who are bound in chains of unbelief would be set free and that the people of Portugal would be able to answer Jesus' question of 'Who do you say that I am?' as Peter did - "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God".



An Easter procession

Prayer points

- Pray for our Good Friday service with food and fellowship afterwards, that it would be an opportunity to invite friends and family along to hear the good news of Jesus.
- On Saturday 16 April we plan to show the film 'The Case for Christ' in Comunidade Pedras Vivas (CPV). Pray for those who have doubts about Jesus and what he came to do would be challenged to come along and hear more about our risen Saviour.
- Pray for a softening of hearts upon the Portuguese people and for the light of Christ to shine in their hearts during this Easter season.