

# *The Holy Ghost Discovers Florida*

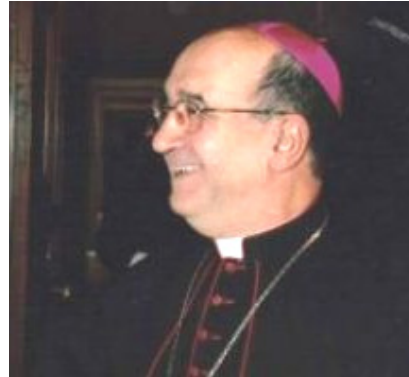


**A brief history of the Holy Spirit Feasts in Florida**

**Produced 2011**

## O «IMPÉRIO DO ESPÍRITO SANTO»

Vou partir, mas não vos deixarei órfãos – garantiu Jesus. Hei-de enviar-vos o Espírito Santo, para estar sempre convosco e sereis Minhas testemunhas até aos confins da terra. De facto, após a Ascensão, Jesus deixa de estar presente fisicamente no meio dos discípulos. A sua, desde então, torna-se é uma presença «espiritual», porque se realiza, precisamente, através do Espírito Santo. O Tempo da Igreja é, pois, o Tempo do Espírito Santo. Aqui o herético Joaquim di Fiore tinha as suas razões, quando resumia assim a História da Salvação: à Idade do Pai e do Filho, segue-se a Idade do Espírito Santo, que é, precisamente, a que a Igreja vive, entre a 1ª e a 2ª vindas de Cristo.



Por isso, o culto popular ao Divino Espírito Santo não é uma devoção qualquer. Coloca-nos no cerne do Mistério cristão. A Antropologia esforça-se por relacionar os «Impérios do Espírito Santo» com ritos de religiosidade natural. Isso poderá explicar alguma simbólica ritual. Não as suas raízes cristãs. Efectivamente, o culto ao Divino Espírito Santo, sob a forma de império, nasce em ambiente cristão e para exprimir conteúdos da mensagem cristã, naturalmente incarnada na cultura humana. A Encarnação de Deus não é mito. É realidade. Elimina, de algum modo, a distinção entre «sagrado» e «profano». O que chamamos «festa profana» é, afinal de contas, a dimensão humana da celebração festiva.

No caso concreto dos Açores, a devoção popular ao Divino não se explica apenas com as condições duras da vida, em ambiente agreste, com sismos e calamidades naturais. É que esta devoção não nasce nos Açores. É trazida pelos povoadores. Mantém-se nas Ilhas, devido ao prolongado isolamento e porque não foi objecto de intervenções drásticas da autoridade eclesiástica. Os primeiros Bispos da Diocese, imbuídos do espírito da reforma tridentina, intervieram fortemente nalguns domínios da vida cristã, mas foram relativamente benignos em relação aos «Impérios do Espírito Santo». Terão visto aí uma expressão «inculturada» da fé cristã. Ou não ousaram tocar numa tradição de tão forte enraizamento popular.

Seja como for, o facto é que o culto ao Divino marca profundamente a alma açoriana e a sua identidade cultural. Mantém-se e desenvolve-se em ambientes tocados pela presença açoriana. O que é uma originalidade, no contexto da Igreja latina. Normalmente, a religiosidade popular tem, como objecto, Cristo, a Virgem Maria e os Santos, traduzindo-se em gestos de penitência corporal. Para os açorianos, o interlocutor divino, por excelência, é a Terceira Pessoa da Santíssima Trindade. E as obras de penitência desta devoção popular traduzem o que há de mais essencial na mensagem cristã: o amor, concretizado na convivência fraterna e na solidariedade, na gratuidade e na partilha.

Ao fim e ao cabo, as festas populares em honra do Divino são uma amostra da «utopia» da fraternidade universal, ainda não realizada plenamente, mas esperança certa de que é possível, na medida em que vivermos, cada vez mais e em todos os aspectos da vida, sob «o Império do Espírito Santo». Como afirma o Papa Bento XVI, a globalização faz-nos vizinhos: sabemos na hora tudo o que acontece no mundo; mas não nos faz irmãos. O Espírito Santo é que nos faz irmãos. Por isso, podemos bem dizer, no meio de toda esta crise generalizada, que o futuro é o «Império do Espírito Santo».

### **The “EMPIRE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT”**

Translated from Original Message in Portuguese



I will be departing, but I will not leave you orphans – guaranteed Jesus. I will send you the Holy Spirit, to always be with you, and you will be My testimonies through the ends of the earth. In fact, after Ascension, Jesus is no longer physically present among the disciples. His presence becomes a spiritual one, because it happens through the Holy Spirit. The Time of the church is thus the Time of the Holy Spirit. Here the heretic Joaquin di Fiori had his reasons, when summarizing the History of Salvation: After the Age of the Father and the Son, follows the Age of the Holy Spirit, which is

precisely the one in which the Church lives, between the first and the second coming of Christ.

Therefore, the popular cult to the Divine Holy Spirit is not just any devotion. It places us at the core of the christian Mystery. Anthropology tries to correlate the “Empires of the Holy Spirit” with rituals of natural religion. That may explain some ritual symbology. Not its Christian origins. Effectively, the cult to the Divine Holy Spirit, under the form of empire, is born from a Christian background and to express contents of the Christian message, naturally incarnated in the human culture. The Incarnation of God is not a myth. It’s reality. In a way, it eliminates the distinction between “sacred” and “profane”. What we call “profane feast” is, after all, the human dimension of the festive celebration.

In the concrete case of the Azores, the popular devotion to the Holy Spirit is not explained only by the hardships of life, in harsh environment, with earthquakes and natural calamities. This devotion was not even born in the Azores. It was brought over by settlers. It has been maintained in the islands due to their prolonged isolation and because they were not an object of drastic interventions by the ecclesiastic authorities. The first bishops of the Diocese, embedded in the spirit of Tridentine reform, strongly intervened in some domains of the Christian life, but were relatively benign in regards to the “Empires of the Holy Spirit”. They would have found there an “uncultured” expression of the Christian faith. Or did not dare to touch a tradition of such strong popular roots.

In any case, the fact is that the cult to the Divine profoundly marks the Azorean soul and its cultural identity. It is maintained and it develops in places touched by the Azorean presence, which is original in the context of the Latin Church. Normally, the popular religion has Christ, the Virgin Mary and the Saints, as objects, translated in actions of corporal penance. For the Azoreans, the divine intermediary is the Third Person of the Holy Trinity. And the works of penance in this popular devotion, translate that which is most essential in the Christian message: love, cemented in the social fraternization and in solidarity, in thanksgiving an in giving out.

In the end, the popular feasts in the honor of the Divine are a sample of the “utopia” of universal fraternity, not yet fully reached, but in sure hope of its possibility, in the way that we live, stronger in all aspects of life, under “the Empire of the Holy Spirit”. As pope Benedict XVI states, globalization makes us neighbors: we know on the hour everything that happens in the world; but this does not make us brothers. The Holy Spirit makes us brothers. That’s how we can say, amidst this entire generalized crisis, that the future is the “Empire of the Holy Spirit”.

+ António, Bishop of Angra (Azores, Portugal)

## Feast of the Holy Spirit – Brief tradition History



There is indication that the tradition of the feast of the Divine Holy Spirit, a celebration initially practiced by nobles and the rich, has its origins in Germany, in an institution formed to help the poor devastated by hunger during the reign of Otto IV. Initially it was a simple feast, distribution of alms/donations to the poor with joyous charity as a sentiment of profound religiousness on the part of the kings and nobles. The Feast developed to include attending a mass, a procession of the court and the crowning of the “emperor or empress”.

The custom spread throughout Europe and was made popular in Portugal by Queen Isabel in the 13<sup>th</sup> century. Known as the queen of peace, and for the *Milagre das Rosas*,

Miracle of the Roses, Queen Isabel was canonized as a saint in 1625. The tradition was carried to the Portuguese Territories and colonies via the Orders of Christ in the exploration era. It then disseminated to the countries and communities where the Portuguese have migrated. The tradition is maintained in certain areas of mainland Portugal, such as Tomar, where it is known as the Feast of the Trays. In recent years, the tradition has been revived in the town of Alenquer, where the Feasts originally started in Portugal. It holds deep roots in the islands of the Azores, where it has become an integral part of the Azorean life. In the U.S., the celebrations are usually held throughout the summer, starting with Pentecostal Sunday (Holy Spirit Sunday), particularly in the Portuguese communities of New England and in California.



Bread Trays in Tomar



Procession in St. Pete

The tradition continues with variations of original elements, such as the mass, crowning, processions, and free serving of the soup and breads to all who come – no invitation necessary. Participating in the procession are members of the



Bread Trays in St. Pete

organizing committee, members of the clergy, leaders of Holy Spirit organization(s), the queen (representing queen saint Isabel), people carrying trays of sweet breads on their heads or shoulders, bottles of wine, and participants, who wish to join in the celebration. The hymn of the Holy Spirit, *Alva Pomba* (white dove), is played and sung with deep jubilee and reverence. The festivities also often include live bands, folk dancing, live auctions, and other cultural activities. The Feasts in general no longer feed the poor on the day of the Feast, but they retain the charitable significance, donating proceeds to causes of the needy. Three key elements are always part of any Holy Spirit Feast.

**Crown and Flag:** An imperial crown with the scepter is the most important symbol of the Holy Spirit Feast, the center of the ceremonies and festivities. A flag normally accompanies the crown in the liturgical ceremonies of the Holy Spirit. The silver crown is a royal crown topped with a golden silver globe on which a dove spreads its wings. The crown always has a scepter with a dove at one end. The crown set is complete with a tall silver tray. The doves represent the Holy Spirit and the crown set represents the empire of the Holy Spirit. The flag of the Holy Spirit is made of red fabric with a dove in the center. Carrying the flag in the procession is considered an honor.



**Altar of Holy Spirit:** Traditionally, a separate room is dedicated to the altar. At PASA, the altar is built right in the hall, near the entrance. The altar typically consists of a few tiers, with the crown on the top tier. The altar is decorated with candles and flowers and the flag stands next to the altar.

**Crowning** is a religious ceremony at the end of the liturgical mass, whereby the priest places a crown over the head of the person(s) being crowned accompanied with prayer or chant. Being crowned is considered a special blessing. Typically the people being crowned are the queen, or someone chosen by the *mordomo*, *imperador*, those holding *Domingas*, or guests carrying their own crowns.



## Feasts of the Divine Holy Spirit - Festas do Divino Espírito Santo - FLORIDA 2011

	SOUTHWEST FLORIDA	ST. PETERSBURG	PT. RICHEY	PALM COAST	WEST PALM BEACH	PORT ST. LUCIE
<b>Dates</b>	April 3	April 30 / May 1	May 6 / 7 / 8	May 28 / 29	June 4 / 5	June 5
<b>Contact Person</b>	Rui Moniz 239-989-3398	Angelina Phelan 941-730-8816	Marta Chapell chappellmarta@yahoo.com	Jose Eduardo Chaves 386-215-9663	Fátima Chaves 386-338-7106	Tina Cardoso 774-229-7368
<b>Mordomo/ Imperador</b>	Roque and Liceria Avelar	Manuel and Ana Cabral	Maria Botelho	Vitorino and Conceição Andrade	Fátima Chaves	Carlos and Gina Machado
<b>Location</b>	608 Max Road Venice	P.A.S.A. 7808 46 Ave N St. Petersburg	P.A.C.A. 11205 Areca Drive Port Richey	P.A.C.C. 1200 Palm Harbour Pkwy Palm Coast	P.A.C.S. 13265 Okeechobee Blvd Loxahatchee	P.A.C.C. 1482 SE Village Green Dr Port Saint Lucie
<b>Event Details</b>	<p><b>SATURDAY 3/2</b></p> <p>6pm – Rosary followed by Dinner and live entertainment by Sweet Sounds</p> <p><b>SUNDAY 3/3</b></p> <p>11:00 Mass by father Pereira, followed by Procession, Traditional Soup, and Entertainment by Sweet Sounds</p>	<p><b>SATURDAY 4/30</b></p> <p>11:00am Blessing and distribution of pensões</p> <p>5:30 – Rosary Followed by Food Variety and Live Entertainment</p> <p><b>SUNDAY 5/1</b></p> <p>10:00 Mass by Bishop Antonio Sousa Braga, Procession, Traditional Soup, Folk groups (St. Pete, Port Richey, Palm Coast) and Horizonte band</p>	<p><b>FRIDAY 5/6</b></p> <p>6:00pm Rosary Followed by Blessing of pensões, then a variety of food and music by Horizonte.</p> <p><b>SATURDAY 5/7</b></p> <p>6:00 Rosary Followed by dinner dance with special appearance of a group from MA, PRO-Mix.</p> <p><b>SUNDAY 5/8</b></p> <p>10:00 Procession Followed by mass, traditional soup, PACA's folklore group, auction, music by Horizonte</p>	<p><b>SATURDAY 5/28</b></p> <p>4:00 Procession to bring breads and meats to Club</p> <p>6:00 Festivities start: Entertainment by Kenny Real, Variety of foods</p> <p><b>SUNDAY 5/29</b></p> <p>10:30 Mass, Followed by Procession, Traditional Holy Spirit Soup, Dancing music by Horizonte, Palm Coast Folk Group</p>	<p><b>SATURDAY 6/4</b></p> <p>2pm - Festivities start with entertainment and variety of food</p> <p>5pm – Rosary 7pm – Dinner, Entertainment by Victor Ponte</p> <p><b>SUNDAY 6/5</b></p> <p>Mass followed by Procession, Traditional Soup, Entertainment with Folk Groups</p>	<p><b>SUNDAY, 6/5</b></p> <p>Procession, followed by Mass, then traditional Soup, Auctions and Domingas</p>

For more current information visit <http://portuguese-suncoast.org/HolySpiritFloridaInfo.htm>

### HINO DO DIVINO ESPÍRITO SANTO

1

**Alva pomba que meiga apareceste  
Ao Messias no Rio Jordão  
Estendei vossas asas celestes  
Sobre os povos de orbe Cristão.**

Coro

**Vinde ó vinde entre nuvens de Glória  
Entre os anjos com bênçãos de amor  
Entre canticos de eterna vitória  
Que os querubins vos elevam Senhor.(Bis)**

2

**Quem aos pobres seus braços estende  
E quem veste os que os ombros tem nus  
Achará que tudo isto só tende  
Para glória e honra da cruz.**

3

**Vinde irmãos vinde todos contritos  
Uma esmola de amor ofertar  
E de ver consolar os aflitos  
E a fome ao pobre matar**

4

**Ofertai as mais belas oferendas  
Ofertai-as em nome de Deus  
Colhereis lá um dia mil prendas  
Quando entrares no Reino dos Céus.**

### HOLY GHOST HYMN *translated*

1

White dove so peacefully gliding  
On the Jordan down to the Messiah  
Extend thy celestial wings  
Over the Christians, in tongues of fire

Refrain

Come oh come through the clouds of Glory  
Amidst angels with blessings of love  
In chants of eternal victory  
As the cherubim exalt Thou Lord. (Bis)

2

Whoever extends their arms to the poor  
And whoever dresses the naked  
Will find that these acts will yield  
In Glory and honor of the cross.

3

Come all you sorrowful brothers  
Extend an offering of love  
Consoling those in affliction  
And satisfy the hunger of the poor

4

Bestow your most beautiful offers  
Dedicate them in the name of God  
You will harvest a thousand rewards  
When you enter the kingdom of heaven.

## Acknowledgment / Reconhecimento

"The Holy Ghost Discovers Florida" was originally presented at the *IV INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT FEASTS* in San Jose, California, in June 2010. I am thankful to Tony Goulart and Jose Rodrigues, the coordinators, for invitation to participate in the conference, allowing me to share the history of the Feasts in Florida, and learning about the Feasts in numerous other locations of the globe. Recognition is due to the Portuguese American Suncoast Association, P.A.S.A., known as the Portuguese club in St. Pete, for sponsoring my participation in this forum.

The work was published by "Portuguese Heritage Publications of California, Inc", along with the works of the other conference speakers. Of special note, among the speakers, was the mayor of Alenquer (outskirts of Lisbon) who presented "A Terra do Espírito Santo" (The land of the Holy Spirit), describing how the Feasts of the Holy Spirit started in Portugal.

This booklet contains the original work with minor alterations, mainly to include the new Feast in West Palm Beach and an update on Southwest Florida. The work is dedicated to fellow Holy Spirit Committee members at P.A.S.A., leaders and coordinators of Holy Spirit Feasts in the Portuguese communities in Florida, who provided information assembled in this work, and to all who in one form or another, have contributed towards spreading the faith through the traditions of the Holy Spirit Feasts, which are such a fervent pillar of the Portuguese culture. It is also a dedication to my father and late mother, for their faith in the Holy Spirit and in His living miracles. To my sister for her special trips to help with the Feasts, and to my family as well, for their support of such a foreign experience outside of the Portuguese communities.

I hope to have this work available in Portuguese in the near future. Stay tuned to the website <http://portuguese-suncoast.org/HolySpiritFlorida.htm>.

Este trabalho "O Espírito Santo Descobre a Florida" foi apresentado no *IV CONGRESSO INTERNACIONAL DAS FESTAS DO ESPÍRITO SANTO*, que se realizou em São José na Califórnia, no fim de Junho de 2010. Estou grata aos coordenadores do Congresso, Tony Goulart e José Rodrigues, pelo convite para participar na conferência, permitindo a apresentação sobre a história das Festas na Florida, e tomar conhecimento sobre estas Festas em numerosas paragens do globo. Agradeço ao Portuguese American Suncoast Association, P.A.S.A., conhecido como o clube português de St. Pete, por patrocinar a viagem ao congresso.

Este trabalho está incluído no livro "IV Congresso Internacional sobre as Festas do Espírito Santo" publicado pela "Portuguese Heritage Publications of California, Inc", juntamente com trabalhos de todos os demais conferencistas. É de salientar que, entre os conferentes, o presidente da Câmara de Alenquer (cidade nos arredores de Lisboa) apresentou o trabalho "A Terra do Espírito Santo", descrevendo como se teriam iniciado em Portugal as festas do Espírito Santo.

Esta revista contém o trabalho original com pequenas alterações, maiormente para se incluir a nova Festa em West Palm Beach e se actualizar a do Sudoeste da Florida. O trabalho é dedicado à comissão da Festa do Espírito Santo do P.A.S.A., líderes e coordenadores das Festas do Espírito Santo nas comunidades da Flórida que proporcionaram a informação para este trabalho, e a todos os que de uma forma ou outra têm contribuído para a expansão da Fé através das tradições das Festas do Espírito Santo, as quais são um grande pilar da cultura portuguesa. É também dedicado ao meu pai e à minha falecida mãe, pela fé exemplar no Espírito Santo e os nos Seus milagres vivos. À minha irmã, pelas viagens especiais de assistência nas festas, e também à minha família pelo seu apoio a um evento tão desconhecido fora das comunidades portuguesas.

Espero completar a tradução a português em breve. Visite a seguinte página na internet para actualidades: <http://portuguese-suncoast.org/HolySpiritFlorida.htm>.

*Angelina Leandres Phelan*

April 2011





## SUMMARY

The Portuguese communities of Florida are small but span large geographical areas. Yet, the faithful to the Divine Holy Ghost travel far to unite and celebrate our modest feasts, which are now held in nearly half of the Portuguese communities. At the heart of the feasts, there are personal testimonies of faith in the Holy Ghost, memories of childhood *festas*, or a lifetime of dedication in previous communities.

The Portuguese clubs of St. Petersburg and Port Richey, held their first feasts in May 2007. St. Petersburg, with a membership essentially of mainland Portugal origin, has grown to embrace this new and unfamiliar event, after some initial resistance and low interest. Port Richey has the advantage of its majority membership being Azorean origin, who carry in their blood the understanding of the Purpose of the Feast, and know the personal investments needed to carryout this function.

The success of these two feasts inspired other communities to launch celebrations in their areas. Palm Coast and Port St. Lucie, both on the east coast of Florida, held their first feasts in May 2009. Also in 2009 and 2010, Port Richey held the Holy Ghost Feast of *São João* at the end of June, known as "*Império das Crianças*". Southwest Florida has just held its first Feast this April, and West Palm Beach is planning its first one in June 2011.

This tradition has brought together Azorean communities, strengthening faith and building relationships across the state of Florida. The dedication and hard work of the pioneers and volunteers, and the visibly distinguishing characteristics of this type of function has astounded bystanders from all origins and inspired some to more actively participate in this event. For despite gaining deep roots in the Azores, the Feasts of the Holy Spirit are known to have origins in the mainland Portugal, in the town of Alenquer, where they have been revived in 2007 after centuries of inactivity.

The "Holy Ghost Discovers Florida" is thus a brief history of the Holy Spirit Feasts in Florida, with information collected from leaders and volunteers within these communities.



# HISTORY OF PORTUGUESE COMMUNITIES IN FLORIDA

## BACKGROUND -

History shows that Florida was discovered in 1513 by the Spanish explorer Ponce de Leon, after the second voyage of Columbus, and then explored in 1539 by Hernando DeSoto. It was named after its lavishing landscapes and flowers. Florida, one of the 50 states, is located on the southeast region of the continental United States, and is also known as the “sunshine state” for the abundance of sun all year round. It enjoys a warm weather, predominantly humid subtropical in the north and center, and fully tropical climate in the south.

The state of Florida has twice the area of mainland Portugal, and nearly twice the population (estimated 18 million in 2009 residents of Florida). It is estimated that over 30,000 people of Portuguese origin live in the state. The general Florida population is moderately concentrated in cities and towns, and much of it widely dispersed along the gulf and Atlantic coastlines, and diagonally from Tampa Bay through Orlando to Daytona.



A retirement home in a warm place has been the main contemporary driver for the Portuguese who seek Florida, typically moving away from the cold New England States and Canada. You will find them scattered all over the state, with the vast majority in the following communities: St. Petersburg, Port Richey, Cape Coral, Orlando, Palm Coast, Port St. Lucie, Ft. Lauderdale, and West Palm Beach. Most of these communities congregate in a club owned or leased by the membership, which composition varies, in demographics and Portuguese region origins. Due to their dispersion, most communities span their reach to surrounding cities. A brief portrayal of each of these communities follows.



## ST. PETERSBURG -

St. Petersburg (St. Pete, for short) is located on the west coast (gulf coast) of Florida (also known as suncoast), in the Tampa-Bay area, in a peninsula between Tampa and the Gulf of Mexico. The city was founded at the end of the XIX century, and is the fourth largest city in Florida.





The Portuguese club was founded in 1979 as the Portuguese American Suncoast Association, and it was the first Portuguese club established in Florida. It was created as a result of a SPIFS requirement. SPIFS stands for St. Petersburg International Folk Fair, a non-profit organization, composed of clubs representing international communities. A few Portuguese people, namely Josephine and Alfred Enos, Evelyn and Ceasar Lourenço, and Alice and Larry Terra, after attending a SPIFS annual folk festival and seeing folk dancing from so many countries of the world, became interested in participating with Portuguese folk dance. The requirement was that participants had to be associated with a local ethnic organization, and provide food and cultural displays at the fair. This then led them to establishment of the Portuguese Club, of which they were the founders.

Like most organizations, PASA has experienced times of great involvement and participation. In addition, membership has seen recent erosion from three main factors: reduction in new movers to the area; the passing of older members; and growth in other communities (Cape Coral 120 miles south, and Port Richey 30 miles north). Membership reached over 300 in 1990's and at present it counts circa 270, mostly retirees living in the city as well as neighboring cities. While many members live within 15 minutes of the club, a good number consistently drive one hour or more, to attend the regular functions. A significant ratio of the membership is second and third generation, with many of the descendents not fluent in Portuguese. Much of the retired community is made-up of "snow birds", who live in Florida in the winter, and move back to the northern region (New England and Canada) for the summer. The origin region is by far from northern mainland Portugal, counting a handful from Madeira and the Azores.

PASA holds monthly events celebrating diverse cultural elements of Portugal, and our adopted land, the United States. After summer breaks, they re-open in September with a picnic event, then follow with the theme of *Vindimas* in October, Halloween also in October, Chestnuts and wine on *São Martinho* in November, Christmas Party (not Winter Party) with live Nativity and Santa Claus, New Year's party, Night in Portugal with folk group in January, Super Bowl in January, Night of Roses (after the Holy Queen Isabel – miracle of the roses) in February to raise funds for the Holy Ghost feast, Fado in March, Anniversary in early April, Feast of the Holy Ghost at the end of April, Lady of Fátima in May, and Portugal Day in June. Most events involve Portuguese cuisine and live entertainment. Though Florida has produced a few music bands, they are insufficient to maintain the variety expected by the attendants, which leads to periodic out-of-state and sometimes out-of-country bands. This extravagance is limited due to prohibitive costs of travel.

All major events are published in the *LusoAmericano* and/or *Portuguese Times* by the local correspondent Mr. Henry Chipelo, who through the years, has been the key liaison with the international folk fair community (SPIFS – St. Petersburg International Folk Fair), providing the opportunity to participate in the annual event with Portuguese folk dance, traditional foods, display and sale of Portuguese articles.

#### **PORT RICHEY –**

The city of Port Richey as well as many neighboring cities and towns, have a relatively short history, with less than a century. It is located on the gulf coast of Florida, north of St. Petersburg, and is in the Tampa-St. Petersburg metro area. The lower population density of these cities and lower real estate values have lured the settlement of new comers, including the Portuguese.

The first Portuguese club in Port Richey was founded in 1996 by Abel Ferreira, Manuel Mendes, Lucy Botelho, Al Dias, and Mr. Gomes. The membership has grown rapidly over the years, having seen a highest of 295 in 2008. The demographic profile ranges from retirees to young families, with the majority in their middle age, and over 70% of Azorean origin.

The Club in Port Richey also holds monthly functions, most of which with similar themes to St. Pete. It does remain open for the summer as most of the membership lives in the area year-round. Being geographically close, the two clubs attempt to plan events with least conflict to provide maximum participation of members from both organizations.



### **CAPE CORAL / SOUTHWEST FLORIDA–**

The gateway to south Florida, Ft. Myers has long been known as a resort and major tourist destination. Though it was established at the end of XIX century, its satellite city, Cape Coral, is only 50 years old. Built as a planned community with 400 miles of waterfront and canals, it is known as the “water-wonderland”, and it is the third largest city in Florida by area.

The Portuguese Club of Cape Coral was founded in 2002 by Mellie Raposo and Jaime Diogo. Their celebrations have taken place in a rented hall, and work is in progress to secure own facility in the southwest region. The membership has rapidly grown to 140, with about 70% Azorean origin, and consisting by far of retirees and snowbirds.

### **PALM COAST –**

Palm Coast is located on the Atlantic coast of Florida, and is considered a bedroom community of Jacksonville and Orlando, at approximately 60 and 80 miles from each, respectively. It is geographically located 200 miles northeast of St. Petersburg. Palm Coast became a city only slightly over ten years ago, although its development began 30 years prior. It is possibly the northern most community in Florida with a large concentration of Portuguese, where the climate offers slightly cooler temperatures.

The Portuguese club of Palm Coast was founded in 1987 by Armando Henriques, António Amaral, Manuel Martins, José Almeida, Joe Portal, and Ramiro Aguiar. The club owns its building in same city, and it is comprised of 700 members, mainly year-round residents. The demographics is mixed of young families, retirees, and middle aged members. Their origins vary, with an estimated 80% mainlanders, and the remaining from Azores and Madeira.

### **PT. ST. LUCIE –**

The city of Port St. Lucie is less than 50 years old. It is located on the east coast of Florida, nearly 200 miles south of Palm Coast, and similar distance from St. Petersburg.

The Portuguese club is also very young, and was founded in 1993 by mainly Olimpio Filipe, Brasilino Filipe, Jaime da Rocha, Cesar da Silva, and Tony Ruela, though its management and survival is entirely owed to Albertina Nunes. The Portuguese community has over 200 members, with a preponderance of retirees, and approximately 80% from mainland Portugal origin.

### **WEST PALM BEACH –**

Also located on the Atlantic east coast, a more mature city born also in the XIX century, West Palm Beach, is another 50 miles south of Pt. St. Lucie, and 70 miles north of Miami. The Portuguese have settled throughout the Palm Beach county, and founded the Portuguese American Cultural Society, PACS, in 1981. The meeting facility is located in Loxahatchee (name meaning river of turtles), 17 miles inland of West Palm Beach.

The Portuguese community of around 250 members, of 80/20 mainlanders/Azoreans, is very active, holding traditional festivals, and privileged with a soccer field and private grounds for outdoor festivities. Of special note is their school to teach Portuguese, English, and Information Systems to adults and children.



## HISTORY OF HOLY GHOST FEASTS IN FLORIDA

The Holy Ghost Feasts of Florida are still in their infancy and childhood stages. This document briefly describes the history of each one of them, elaborating more on the one in St. Petersburg.

It may be useful to relate that the organizers of the feasts in Florida, bear a strong influence from their places of origin, from their first adopted lands in the New England states, or a combination of the two or more. While it is well established that this tradition in Portugal has its origins attributed to the Holy Queen Isabel, it is also known that the Azores is where the roots were deeply replanted and spread to every island of the archipelago hundreds of years ago. And while it is celebrated in isolated pockets of the mainland Portugal, such as Alenquer and Tomar, it continues to thrive today, in every town of every island, where it has become a way of life. Being such an inherit component of the Azorean soul, it is not surprising that the emigrant carried it to many parts of the world. Celebrations of the *Festas* have interestingly acquired a character of their own in each community or sub-community, impacted by factors such as: integration into a new community in a new country, and melding with people from different villages in the new land.

The myriad of symbols and array of elements makes for a uniquely rich tradition. Each area identifies with and proudly displays their own, in the name and devotion to the Holy Ghost. In the islands, most often the feasts result from promises to the Holy Spirit, by a person from the Parrish, who, on moments of difficulty, asked for help from the Third Person of Trinity. This person is called the *mordomo*, in some islands (such as *São Miguel*) and in Tomar (mainland), while it is called *imperador* (emperor) in others (*Flores*, *Corvo*, *Santa Maria*). It is also common, especially in the Portuguese communities in the United States, to have a brotherhood, from which the *mordomo* for the following year is chosen in raffle form. In the islands, the majority of the parishes celebrate the feast on one day, with mass, crowning, and *sopas*, while others rejoice for two days with entertainment and dancing in the streets (*Flores*) and others with bull fighting (*Terceira*). The feasts take place around the local chapel, called “*império*”. In *Santa Maria*, the term “*império*” refers to the feast itself. Additional information relevant to this paper is provided in the appendix to help clarify elements of this tradition in *Santa Maria*. In *São Miguel*, the Feast extends over the 7 weeks of Easter. The crown is taken from the *império* to a resident holding the crown for a *Dominga* and this continues for 6 weeks, being that the *mordomo* holds the last *Dominga* normally on Sunday of Pentecost.

### ST. PETERSBURG –

Every year at the end of the summer break, which the club observes for lack of attendance, people shared stories of their summer vacations, including the feasts of the saints attended “up north” or in Portugal. Of special note were the feasts of the Divine Holy Ghost. However, for economical reasons, not everyone is able to travel to the feasts every year. But every year they shared the desire and dreams of having a few of these feasts in Florida.

And in the late summer of 2006, without exception, chats went on of increased enthusiasm within a small group of Azoreans, about starting a Feast of the Holy Ghost “down here in Florida”, in the city of St. Petersburg:

Maria Batista, the instigator of the group, born on the island of *São Miguel*, was raised in Newark, where her father Manuel Batista, was one of the founders of the Azorean Club, to provide Azoreans the freedom to celebrate those elements of the Portuguese culture and traditions that differentiate the people from the mainland and the islands. He was also the president of the Holy Ghost Feast. As a young adult, Maria lived in Brazil for twelve years. She has been in Florida for many years now, first in Tampa, then in Miami, and then moved to St. Pete, where she has been actively involved with the Portuguese Club in a number of roles, from president to folk dancing, and has had her daughter actively participating at her side.

Angelina Phelan, born and raised in the island of *Santa Maria*, and long time resident of Florida, has frequently attended the feasts of the Holy Ghost in Hudson, Massachusetts, as well as the feasts in her home island, during the summer travels. She has also been involved with the club in various board roles, committees, primarily the youth group, in which her younger daughter participates. She lives with her family about one hour drive south of St. Pete, in the northwest area of Bradenton. She was an



empress at age 11, to pay a promise that her parents made to the Holy Ghost, if surviving cancer, for which she underwent radical surgery at the age of eight.

António Leandres, relatively new Florida resident, born and raised in the island of Santa Maria, is a former member of the Philharmonic band of the Portuguese Club in Hudson, Massachusetts. As such, he has frequently traveled to participate in performances at the feasts of the Holy Ghost of the Santa Maria's (in the tradition from the island of Santa Maria, Azores) in various towns, such as Hudson, Lowell, East Providence, etc., and to visit his older children and his parents. He is a member of the Portuguese club board of directors. Tony also lives with his family about one hour drive south of St. Pete, in the southeast area of Bradenton, half-hour from his cousin Angelina (above).

Reggie Silva, born and raised in the island of Terceira, is also a former member of the Philharmonic of St. John, in Stoughton, Massachusetts, having performed at many religious feasts and especially the feasts of the Divine Holy Ghost. Both Reggie and Tony knew each other from the north due their mutual band interests. Reggie lives with his family in Port Richey, which is nearly an hour north of St. Pete.

Maria, Reggie, and Angelina, had the opportunity to gather more frequently at the weekly folk dance rehearsals, in which their children participated, when they reminisced about the hometown traditions of the Holy Ghost they knew. The two cousins talked about the idea of simply putting on a Holy Ghost dinner, if a feast would be too large a mission, from insufficient interest and assistance.

All, by default, grew up with the feasts of the Holy Ghost being a part of their lives. So naturally, like any other positive element of childhood, the subject built a unique bond between them and raised in their hearts warm feelings of nostalgia. None of them had direct experience with organizing such an event but dreams and desires evolved into a possible under-taking, if they began very small and very simple.

In the early fall of 2006, they started to plan a few critical aspects:

- Gain alignment with the Club to add two events (fundraiser and feast) to the calendar. The concern of the members was that these new events would take away from the meager profits of the regular monthly functions.
- Organize a fundraiser event to purchase a crown, a flag, a banner, and still have funds to buy all the meat, wine, and food for the feast day. Ideally some of these items would be donated.
- Reach out to the Azores government requesting support for the Feast.

By the end of 2006, Maria, Tony and Angelina, were the three co-coordinators remaining to spearhead the undertaking. Gaining alignment with the board was quite a feat. Although history shows that the Portuguese roots for the feast of the Holy Ghost are in mainland Portugal, the perception is that it is strictly an Azorean festival. This notion is prevalent not just among the mainland Portuguese but as well within the Azorean Portuguese, and propagated by the media, which works to widen the gap and hinder unification between mainlanders and islanders. Indeed, the Azoreans embraced the custom and have made these feasts an integral part of their lives, in every single island, and they feel very proud of such dynamic and religious traditions. It is difficult for the Azoreans to understand the indifference of the outsider towards this tradition, which to them is more than a tradition or a festival, it is a special and divine blessing from the Holy Spirit.

So it was a paradigm shock when the group approached the board about holding an event, with not only free admission, but also to serve *sopas* with meat and wine to anyone, for free. However, after much persistence, disappointments, and persuasion, a few non-Azorean people joined the new committee of the Holy Ghost. Though small, this was a start, and they were admired for sticking out their neck in support of a new and very different idea to the status quo. And before the end of the year, the 2007 dates were set for the fundraiser dinner and for the Feast day: The fundraiser in February and the Feast on Pentecostal Sunday. Subsequent years maintained the fundraiser in February, and moved the Feast to end of April, to allow for higher participation of "snow birds".

Letters in both languages of Portuguese and English were mailed to members and to friends of friends, to the other clubs in Florida, to governmental offices, explaining what the event was, its purpose, the tradition and its origins, and requesting support.

The support started to flow... A snowbird by the name of John Correia, former senator of Rhode Island, and his wife Cidália, very involved in these sort of things in the north, offered much support and encouragement, initially with the first financial donation and then in the form of ideas, and also especially with the donation of the Holy Ghost crown – the main element of the Feast, the element





without which there is no *Festa do Divino Espírito Santo*; Dr. Alzira Silva, *Directora Regional das Comunidades Portuguesas in the Azores*, extended a generous and beautiful gift, a flag of the Holy Ghost, as well as books on the History of the Holy Ghost traditions in the Azores; The Azorean airline, Azores Express, offered a roundtrip ticket to Portugal for raffle; And numerous people offered other gifts.

The fundraiser dinner for the Holy Ghost at the St. Petersburg club is called Night of Roses. It is held in February and typically one or two weeks after Valentine's weekend, but the event was named following the renown and legendary Miracle of the Roses. In 2007, attendance of the club members was less than parity to the regular functions, and to much amazement of the attending members, the hall was filled in record numbers, mostly of Azorean people who traveled long distances and flocked from out of the area to provide their unequivocal support of this cause. The group had a secondary goal for this event besides raising funds for the big feast, it was to create awareness about the origins of the tradition and to educate people about the key elements of the same: The young people played a skit enacting the Holy Queen Isabel feeding the poor, followed by the Miracle of the Roses; Then a presentation was made explaining the elements of the tradition in mainland Portugal, the Azores, and other Portuguese communities, while young children, dressed in white, demonstrated the symbols of the Holy Ghost Feast – the crown, the scepter, and the flag.



St. Pete: 2007 Night of Roses: Miracle of the Roses (left) Demonstration Holy Ghost symbols of the Holy Ghost Feast (right)

The Night of Roses has become a tradition in itself: *Caçõila* (marinated pork) prepared by Mr. and Mrs. Hermano Soares the first year, Mr. and Mrs. Reggie Silva, Mr. and Mrs. Francisco Rodrigues, and Mr. António Andrade; Fish is also on menu and prepared by the volunteer house cooks, Frank Barbosa or Ted Tomás; Presentation by the youth group, with same theme but with different approach; Live auction with items donated by participants; Live band, whose members normally donate their entertainment talents (Eddie Couto, Gilbert Frias, Arlindo Andrade, JBL, and Horizonte). The attendance continues strong with participation of people from afar and slight increased number of club members.



St. Pete: 2009 Night of Roses: Feast Coordinators and Cooks (Tony Andrade, Mr. and Mrs. Silva, Mr. and Mrs. Rodrigues)





The preparations began then for the first “big” Feast in 2007. Pentecost Sunday was chosen for its meaning. That first year, it was held on Sunday May 27th, coincidental with Memorial Day weekend. The leaders wanted to demonstrate that this was an inclusive tradition, by incorporating as many elements of the traditions from various represented regions as possible. Neither of the leaders had the experience nor knowledge to run a full production as is typical in the large Portuguese communities. They discovered that among the three, there was a common purpose but different ideas on how to go about it.

There was no traditional *mordomo* or *imperador* or *festeiro*, as it may be called in different areas where the tradition has long roots. In recognition for the tremendous support provided by the president at the time, Luís Carvalho, was invited to serve the honor of *mordomo*, and his daughters were invited to be crowned. And although, as he stated, he was simply following the formalities, he recognized that a grand honor had been granted him to be crowned and carry the crown.

Again, the number of Azoreans at the St. Petersburg club can be counted with the fingers of one hand, and so a lot of help was offered from people who traveled from across the state and from out-of-state.

- Father Manuel Pereira, from Massachusetts, presided a beautiful mass in Portuguese.
- Fátima Chaves, baked most of the large sweet breads (*roschas* and *pães da mesa*), traditional of Santa Maria, and drove them with her sister from across the state, encouraged by her husband who was on his last living days succumbing to colon cancer.
- Elvira Chaves flew in from Massachusetts to build the first *ramada*, and Jose Sousa to be the informal *trinchante* and help in the kitchen.
- David Janeiro also flew in from Massachusetts, Luís Sousa traveled from Palm Coast, and Joe Borges came from Northport to cook the *sopas*, in a mixed tradition of Santa Maria and Saint Michael islands.
- The International dance team led by Dinis Frias from Hudson (Massachusetts) also traveled to offer their talents.

Wheat bread for the *sopas* was baked by a number of people, some ahead of time and frozen, others the preceding week by the Chaves’ and the Borges. Sweet breads served were donated anonymously by member as a promise. A total of 15 *pensões* were sold the first year. The grounds were cleaned the prior weekend. Advertisement was done in LusoAmericano and Portuguese times, as well as RTPi. Flyers of the event were mailed to club members and nearly the same number of non-members. Many other people, club members and visitors, poured their labor of love to work the different areas, from setting up the altars (altar of Holy Spirit and the altar for the mass), from grilling sardines or *bifanas*, to selling *rifas* at the bazaar, cutting bread at the *ramada*, serving *sopas*, serving at the bar, etc.

The procession was held around the exterior perimeter of the club, incorporating flags of the club, guest clubs, folk groups, Holy Ghost banner, Holy Ghost flag, party with the crown, priest, and offerings. In addition to the *roschas* and *pães da mesa*, *pães leves* (pound cake) and bottles of wine, as well as the tiny *pães bentos*, the procession also incorporated the tall trays in the style of Tomar, in mainland Portugal, known for the Feast of the Trays (*feira dos Tabuleiros*) and formerly known as Feast of the Holy Ghost. The people in the procession sang and marched to the vibrant sound of the Holy Ghost Hymn, which played over the *Horizonte’s* speakers. Folk groups from St. Pete and Port Richey provided rich entertainment for the afternoon. The band *Horizonte* led the musical part of the mass and later played for people to dance after the serving of the *sopas* and *massa*.

Attendance was much higher than expected and the hall filled to the seams. The *sopas* were served to everyone at the same time. They consisted of the traditional hot rich beef broth flavored with spearmint and dill, over homemade bread, cubed, and on the side trays of pulled beef, cabbage, potatoes and Portuguese sausage. Wine and soda to drink, and *massa* for dessert complemented the meal.

One could see the glow in people’s eyes, a happy tear overflowing on to the cheek raised with a smile, a serene aura around them, yet the fervor of youth memories burst into sighs and to dancing in joy to the traditional songs. The Holy Spirit was among the people. He was missed by many in this type of celebration and He had arrived! In keeping with the solidarity of Queen Isabel, a portion of the proceeds was shared with two needy people in the Portuguese community.



And so the objectives were reached with the first feast: (1) Celebrate the Feast of the Holy Ghost and (2) Add a new and different type of event to the club. In subsequent years (2008 to the present), the club has continued with the Holy Ghost tradition. Each year it has seen increased number of people participating and helping. The leaders have gained the respect and admiration for the tremendous effort involved to coordinate the event. The support has been slow but steady and strong.



St. Pete: 2007 *Mordomo*, Luís Carvalho (above); 2008 *Mordoma* Maria Batista with daughter Ana crowned



St. Pete: 2008 *Mordoma* Maria Batista with daughter Ana crowned (left)



St. Pete: 2009 *Imperador* and *Imperatriz* Jim and Angelina Phelan Phelan (left), with daughters Elvita and Margarida (right)





St. Pete: 2010 *Imperador* and *Imperatriz* António Leandres and Isabel Rodrigues (left), with parents José and Maria Rosa and children, Michele, Mark, Andrew, Chris, and Daniel

People found the role of *mordomo* intimidating and it was difficult to obtain volunteers. The idea was to have a leader, more consistent with the traditional definition, rather than simply holding the crown. Maria Batista volunteered to be the *mordoma* for 2008. At that point, there were still no takers for 2009, and so Angelina Phelan volunteered to be the *imperatriz* under the condition that her cousin Tony Leandres would take on the role for 2010. And while the challenge continues, Manuel Cabral volunteered to be the *imperador* for 2011.

The event has grown to two days: Saturday evening and Sunday. Both the religious aspects and the profane features continue to take place at the Portuguese club. Hall preparation moved to Friday evening: Holy Spirit Altar; *Ramada*; Bazaar; Second bar; Tents outside. All the food items are pre-prepared as well on Friday. Saturday morning, the *pensões* are prepared, blessed, and distributed. Saturday is the “*arraial*” or eve of the festivities, which starts with the rosary, and is followed by food and live entertainment. No admission fee is charged, but traditional dishes are available for sale. At the end of the evening, the *midnight Sopas* are served, by volunteers from the floor. Immediately after, the hall is setup for mass the next morning.



St. Pete: 2009 Grupo das Candeias from Massachusetts performing at *arraial*



St. Pete: International Folk Group from Hudson, MA (left) Folk Dance Group from Palm Coast (right)





St. Pete: Folk Dance Group from Port Richey (left) and St. Petersburg (right)

More tradition elements have been added and others modified according to the direction of the *mordomo* or *imperador*, based on their experience. In 2008, a queen and assistants were added (custom in the California communities). In 2009, elements from Santa Maria were incorporated, like the *varas* in square, the *foliões* and their traditional chants with drum and cymbals. A wreath of flowers was placed around the crown, as an element from the island of Flores. The *Domingas* were also established, with crowning of the *Dominga* holders at the main feast.



St. Pete: Large Bread (left and right) in the tradition of Santa Maria, and tall bread trays in the style of Tomar (center)



St. Pete: Left: *Trinchante* at the *Ramada*; Right: *Foliões*





Due to the large number of people attending the feast on Sunday, the food is served in more than one round, lasting about 20-30 minutes each. At the end of each round, the servers lead in shouts of "Viva a Fé do Espírito " (Hurray the faith in the Holy Spirit), which is indication for people to leave the table, and make room for the next round. This arrangement allows for high social interaction at the table, as one may end up sitting across someone from a different community. In 2009, there were three large groups who came from Hudson, Massachusetts, from Providence, Rhode Island, and from Palm Coast. They were either accompanying the entertainers or old relatives and friends of the *imperatriz*. As a domino effect, then friends of friends, and a sister of a cousin who traveled from Canada.



St. Pete: Sopas served after mass and procession

Entertainment has been a key component of these celebrations: live bands (Gilbert Frias, Grupo de Cantares das Candeias from Hudson, and Horizonte), *cantigas ao desafio* (Ernesto Paiva, Noé - Duarte, Joe Borges) to delight the more senior attendees, folk groups (St. Pete, Port Richey, Palm Coast, Hudson-Mass), live auctions (Octavio Azevedo, John Correia, Ted Tomás), and also less formal *cantigas* with verses of the Holy Ghost dedicated to the bakers, simulating the *foliões* with drum and cymbals.

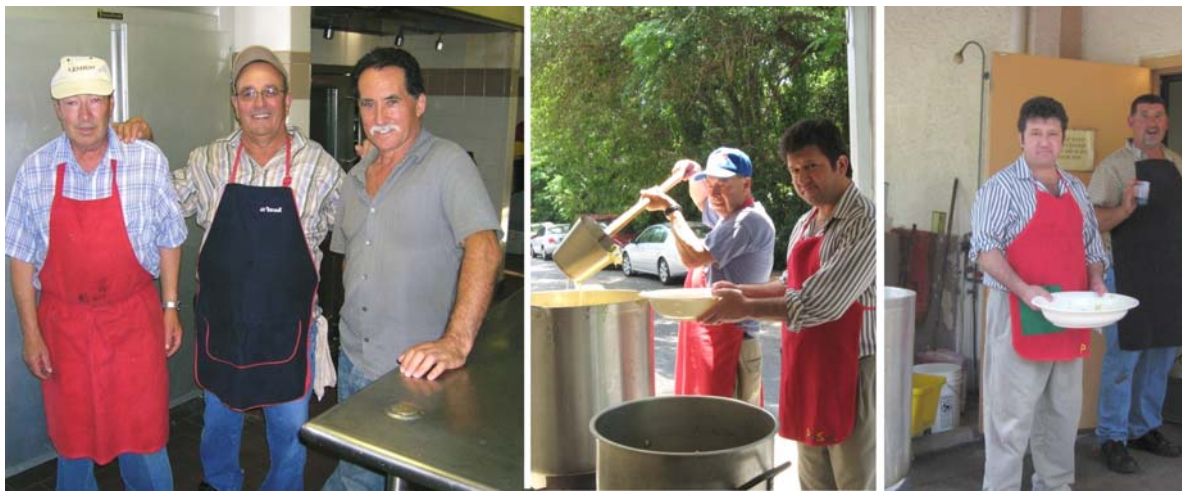


St. Pete: Cantigas ao desafio, 2009 (left) and 2008 (right)





St. Pete: Traditional style “bakers” singing Holy Ghosts chants



St. Pete: Cooks David and Luís with coordinator Tony (left) and helpers Gilbert and Joe (right)

Support from outside the community has continued, until sufficient local support is obtained: Father Pereira celebrated the mass in 2008 and 2009, and Monsignor Vieira celebrated the mass in 2010; The sweet bread baker has continued with the baking of the *porvimentos*, mostly by Fátima Chaves and Inês Sousa; And the same cooks have traveled to make the *Sopas*. *Foliões* have come from out of town: Arsénio Tavares from Massachusetts, Jose Cabral from Port Richey, José Manuel Coelho and Jose Eduardo Chaves from the east coast.



St. Pete: Left/Center: Working at the bar; Right: Selling *rifas* at the bazaar



St. Pete: Left: Cooking for *arraial*; Right: Preparing the meat to serve

The Holy Ghost Altar is decorated differently every year and left up to Lucy Correia's creative ideas, and likewise, the altar for the mass is left to Lina Baltazar's expertise. The mass booklets are prepared. The mass chants are led by Horizonte. Altar Servers and Eucharistic ministers, active members of the club, participate in the mass. Henry Chipelo coordinates the advertising. Frank Barbosa or the Rebelo's coordinate the food sales outside. Rodney Chipelo coordinates the bar, and Manny Tomás the parking. Azores Express, the Barbosas and Chipelos have consistently donated valuable items for the raffle.

The number of people to thank is too large to list, starting with the leaders, members and friends of the club, friends and relatives of the coordinators, living near and far. All who lead or enjoy the feast, are grateful to all who have supported and participated directly and indirectly. The future of the Feast at the Club in St. Petersburg lies in the will of the people, their efforts, their support and their commitment. Donations from the proceeds have been made mostly to St. Vincent DePaul charities.

Preparations are underway for the 2011 *feita* with great anticipation, for Bishop António de Sousa Braga, from the diocese of the Azores, who will be celebrating the mass and joining the festivities.

### PORT RICHEY – MAY FEAST

In late fall/early winter, a group of people gathered to plan the first feast of the Holy Ghost for 2007: Frank Rosa, Clara Rosa, Norman Botelho (president at the time), Adélia Formagini, António Andrade and Diana Andrade. The Rosas come from the island of Faial and the others from São Miguel. All had various levels of experience and exposure to the traditions of the feast. Clara grew up with her parents of faith who were deeply devoted and involved in running these events in Newport, Rhode Island.

A formal committee was formed with president, vice-president, secretary and treasurer. With little time left, the committee worked hard to plan and organize this new event. Though they did not face the challenge of getting buy-in from the membership, since most were intimately familiar with the tradition, the challenge was more with alignment between the strong difference in ideas of how to execute the details of the feast.

Funds for the feast were raised with the event "Night of *Mordomo*", a dinner dance with live entertainment, and live auction. And animated it is – typically the auctioneer does not need a microphone, such is his experienced and projecting voice (Frank Rosa). This fundraiser has been typically held in March. The first feast took place on May 6<sup>th</sup>, 2007, and from then on, it has continued on the first weekend in May. The festivities span three days, starting with Rosary and Blessing of *pensões* on Friday, dinner dance on Saturday, as a fundraiser, and the big event on Sunday.

On Sunday, the festivities start with a procession around the property of the club, followed by Mass and crowning of *mordomo* and *Domingas*. The mass is celebrated in Portuguese by a guest priest from out of town. The first couple of years, the priest came from Faial. The *sopas* are then served to everybody present, all in one sitting, along with wine and soda, followed by the *massa*





*sovada* (sweet bread). The afternoon is filled with socializing, live band and dancing to traditional music, folk dancing, live auction, and finishing with the announcement of *Domingas* and *mordomo* for the following year. Ideally, the *mordomo* is chosen by raffle, provided there are more than one candidate or volunteer. The *mordomos* have been Norman Botelho, Tony Alves, Lourenço Raposo, and Frank Mendes, respectively. In 2011, Mrs. Fernanda Botelho will be *mordoma*. Proceeds are used to support local charities.



Port Richey: Holy Spirit Altar 2007 (left) and 2008 (right)



Port Richey: Sopas ans Wine



Port Richey: *Mordomos* Mr. and Mrs. Lourenço 2009 (left) and Holy Spirit Altar 2010 (right)

Each year, there have been slight variations of some elements, as some feasts are led by the committee or the *mordomo*. Crowning as part of the mass, is extended to other people in the club,



provided they are current with their catholic sacraments. The *sopas* are typically a mix from different islands, with higher influence from Faial, and using the typical Portuguese bakery bread.

At a young age of 18, back in the island of St. Michael, Mr. Raposo had also served as a *mordomo*, when there was no one else stepping up to the role. So as history seems to repeat itself, he became the *mordomo* in 2009 under similar circumstances. Mr. Raposo managed the function in a less rigid fashion and more consistent with his experience and spiritual depth. In a beautiful display of the Love of the Holy Spirit, mimicking the actions of and following the intent of Queen Isabel, all were invited to be crowned at the Holy Ghost altar, after mass. Then the *sopas* were served in the style of his hometown, which included roasted beef and potatoes as a second dish.

### PORT RICHEY – JUNE FEAST (ST. JOHN DAY)

In the Port Richey area there is a significant ratio of Portuguese originating from the island of Santa Maria, and there was a strong desire to celebrate a feast just like the traditions of that island. Jose Chaves, was one such person, who bred and carried this desire, with the difference that he acted on this wish.

The Feast of the Holy Ghost on St. John Day, is called in Santa Maria “*Império das Crianças* (Children’s Empire)”. This means that children occupy the roles normally held by adults: From *imperador* and *imperatriz*, to *mestre sala*, *trinchante*, and *briadores*, and even *foliões* (if available). The organization as well as the cooking and baking is still conducted by the adults.

Jose Chaves chose to organize the Children’s Empire feast, for his special connection with children that he had developed over the years, since childhood. As a child, he lost his father on St. John’s day, and was left with the responsibility to raise his young sisters with his mother. His youngest child was seriously ill, requiring hospitalization in Tampa, where Joe learned of St. Jude Hospital and how this organization assists children.

Joe also had a life-time special connection with the traditions and the faith in the Holy Ghost. He grew up amidst celebrations in the village, where all children ran for the one chance a year to eat beef, drink soda, and eat sweet bread. As a young adult, he was the *imperador* of a feast to pay a promise made by his late father. In 2006, he went back to Santa Maria to hold a Holy Ghost dinner, to pay a promise by his still living mother in the island, at which all meat and bread was donated by others. A Holy Ghost dinner is simply a smaller version of the feast. In 2008, Joe participated ardently in the serving of *sopas* at the feast in St. Pete.



Port Richey, June Feast: After crowning ceremony (left); Procession with the children (right)

A fundraising dinner dance was held in March, with help of friends from the homeland living in Palm Coast. After Joe drove some of those helpers across the state, he died in an auto accident, on the return home, on March 29. In the face of this tragedy, and the anguish in the family, his wife Ilda, relying on his sisters Aura and Marcia, and many friends, mastered the strength to carry his wishes forward, and continue with the plans for the feast.





On June 28, 2009, Joe's older son Steven Chaves, and his niece, Andreia Amaral, carried the crown as the *imperador* and *imperatriz* to the mass altar, at the Portuguese club. The mass was celebrated in Portuguese, with large attendance, by family members, relatives, friends, acquaintances and many others who did not even know Joe. The solemn mass was especially moving, as Joe's presence in spirit filled the hall. The procession followed, and the *sopas* were served, in the style of Santa Maria, with homemade bread and meat, along with the wine and soda, and followed by the sweet breads. The afternoon was entertained by a live band and the local folk group. The proceeds from the feast were donated to St. Jude Hospital, to help the children.



Port Richey, June Feast: *Imperador* handing out sweet bread (left); Altar (center); Visiting dove (right)

There was no need of words to say something about Joe. The glossy eyes with a smile on a tilted face described one's thoughts and feelings about Joe's presence in this Holy Spirit gathering. The festivities ended with a surprise renewal of a promise to continue the feast another year: his sister Aura Chaves and her husband Tony Gouveia took on the role of leading the second annual feast in 2010, with the same young people as *imperador* and *imperatriz*. To the amazement of family and close friends, a surprising visit of a white dove flying into the patio where the cooks finished the day, calmly moved about, eating bread crumbs – to the believers this was an assenting sign of Joe's mystical presence.

## CAPE CORAL –

Back in Portugal, and in particular, the islands, there is a church in every small town, and a small church or chapel in every small village. It is not uncommon to see each one hold a Feast every year, and within a few miles you may run into a few feasts taking place. So it is quite normal that each Portuguese community establish their own version of the feast in their club, especially if the traveling distances become a significant challenge.

Rui Moniz, former public relations officer for the Cape Coral Portuguese club, has been working on the idea of starting a Holy Ghost feast in their club for some time. An Azorean from St. Jorge, his familiarity with the tradition increased from performing at dinner dances for many years in Massachusetts at a variety of feasts, and especially at the feasts of the Holy Ghost.

To facilitate the execution of the Feast of the Holy Ghost in Southwest Florida, he waited until there were enough Azoreans on the board of club, prior to presenting the idea. Despite some "birth pain", as father Pereira would say, as of this writing, plans to hold a Feast in Southwest Florida, in early spring of 2011, have materialized. It took place at the clubhouse of the Mordomo's residential community in Venice, where father Pereira, presided the mass. Among those crowned were the *mordomos*, Roque and Licéria Avelar, both from the island of Flores. A procession followed and *sopas* were served with meat, sausage, potatoes and cabbage. The band Sweet Sounds provided music for the mass and entertainment for the afternoon.

Faith in the Holy Spirit was abundantly evident through large attendance, generous gifts, genuine support in various tasks, from the meal preparation to the altar and hall setup. Not to mention a





replicate of the miracle of the “five loaves and two fish”, and an intimate atmosphere where participants socialized and reminisced of old times.

With the growing number of people in the area, the community is well poised to continue the Feast in the future.



Southwest Florida: *Mordomos* Roque and Licéria Avelar (left) and crowning ceremony by father Pereira (right)

### **PALM COAST –**

Fátima Chaves is a strong believer in the Holy Ghost, having been actively involved in the Santa Maria *Festas* for many years, both in the island and in Massachusetts, where she and her late husband had been emperors. When her young husband was dying of inoperable cancer in the spring of 2007, at the time of the feast in St. Pete, it was him who thrust her to bake the big breads, helping her place them in the car. Too weak already to travel, he waived goodbye to her as she left with her sister across the state to St. Pete, in mixed emotion of inner sorrow, joy, and reverence for the Holy Ghost.

It was on the return home to Palm Coast from the 2008 feast in St. Petersburg when Fátima and her brother Fernando Arraial, discussed her suggestion of starting one in Palm Coast. The next month, she went to Hudson, Massachusetts, from where she borrowed an old Holy Ghost crown, which she restored for the feast in Palm Coast.

They come from a large family, of which two other siblings also live in Palm Coast. Despite the differences between the siblings, they organized a formal committee, which included other family members, with Linda Arraial (Fernando’s daughter) being the president. Born in St. Michael, they were raised in Santa Maria and grew accustomed to the traditions of the latter. And as such, their goal was to hold a feast - in Santa Maria style.

Teresinha (one of the siblings) and her husband António Areias, were the *imperadores* for the first year. The committee held two fundraisers (October and March). At the first one, they introduced the elements of the Holy Ghost feast to educate the attendees, as many were not familiar with this tradition. With no *Domingas* in the Santa Maria tradition, Teresinha setup a Holy Ghost altar in her home, long before the traditional day of *alumições*, where prayers were led and many people learned about the faith. Fátima baked the vast majority of the *pães da mesa*, *rosclas*, *pães leves*, as well as the wheat bread for the *sopas*, at her home, for an entire week, assisted by friends and sisters.

The first feast was held the last Sunday of May of 2009, to coincide with the Memorial Day weekend, which was also Pentecost. It started with a small procession into the mass, which was celebrated in Portuguese, followed by crowning, and then a procession. It incorporated jesters leading in front, crowning party in square formation, and files of people carrying sweet breads and cakes. After the procession, while setting up for the *sopas*, rituals were initiated for *mestre sala* and *trinchant* and then for the feeding of the child (*menina da mesa*). The *sopas* were served to the public in Santa Maria style, with meat and bread soaked in beef broth, and accompanied with wine and soft drinks, in multiple rounds until everyone was fed. Sweet bread was handed out periodically throughout the afternoon. The priest came from Massachusetts, as well as the cooks, and one of the jesters. Entertainment included a live band and the famous home folk group, Palm Coast Portuguese Folk Group.



Palm Coast: 2009 Foliões sing as the Imperador brings the crown to the ramada (left). Ritual of “menina da mesa” being fed.



Palm Coast: 2010 Crowning Party exists mass (left) and form a procession led by the jesters (right)

Since then, funds were raised to purchase own crown, so the borrowed one could be returned to club in Hudson. The second feast, which took place on May 28, 2010, had for emperor, Fernando Arraial. A strong believer in the Holy Ghost, for having saved his life from serious illness in the past, Fernando gained much strength to endure recent debilitating illnesses. His daughter, Linda, coordinated the planning and the numerous activities of the feast, as well as the fundraisers. Still a young woman, admirably passionate about these traditions, she is relentless in her hard work to continue the same, and help others in other communities. A priest came from Massachusetts, unfamiliar with the custom, who celebrated a wonderful mass, reminding all and pointing out the richness of this tradition, which he was observing for the first time. The band Horizonte traveled from Port Richey to lead the hymns during mass. The jesters and cooks also traveled from out-of-state. Most of the help was from Santa Maria’s in Palm Coast and out of town, and also from club members. Plans are underway for 2011, with Vitorino and Conceição Andrade as the emperor and empress.

### **PT. ST. LUCIE –**

One of the snow birds in Port St. Lucie, of Azorean origin (St. Michael), raised amidst feasts of the Holy Ghost, Tina Cardoso introduced the idea to the Portuguese Community of starting a feast of the Holy Ghost. Her husband Luís, an Azorean from the city, Ponta Delgada, who grew up unattached to these traditions, had gained deep appreciation and faith over the last decade during heavy involvement in the northern communities.

In 2009, they established a committee along with Ana Cardoso, and Gina Machado, and started a brotherhood of about 30 people which has since grown to 60. Unlike most clubs, there is no





fundraiser event. Instead, the members of the brotherhood contribute each in some form to the feast, with money, meat, bread, wine, etc., and the participation is well mixed between mainlanders and islanders (Azores and Madeira).

The first feast was held on Sunday May 24, 2009, the second one on May 23, 2010, both organized by the *mordomos* (Luís and Tina). The rosary is prayed throughout the preceding week at the club. The Sunday ceremonies start with a procession around the club building, incorporating the *mordomos*, *domingas*, and queen with the dames, followed by the mass in Portuguese, with crowning of *mordomo* and *domingas*. The traditional *sopas* and wine are served in the style of São Miguel, with rice pudding and sweet bread for dessert.



Port St. Lucie: Crowning ceremony (left); Holy Spirit Altar (right)



Port St. Lucie: Auction (left); Ready for the *Sopas* (right)

This is a very simple, yet very strong and deep faith based Feast, as demonstrated by the variety and number of active participants in 2010, now counting nearly 200. The afternoon was filled with highly entertaining and lively auction of sweet breads and wines by the *mordomo* himself. After the auction, the raffling took place for *domingas* and donations for the following year. The 2011 proud *mordomos* will be Carlos and Gina Machado. Proceeds from the feast are donated to charity organizations such as St. Jude hospitals.

### WEST PALM BEACH –

“It takes one tree to make 10,000 matches, but one match to burn 10,000 trees”. It takes one person, with one idea, who is energetic, who is active, and passionate about the idea. As said before, the traditions of the Holy Spirit are an intimate element of the Azorean folk. And despite solid numbers of Azoreans in the immensity of Florida, they are settled so far apart, that gathering for common causes becomes a project. But that is not an impediment to Fátima Chaves. Her name has



appeared in this written work at least in two other communities involved with the Feasts of the Holy Spirit. After her recent relocation to southeast Florida, she initiated the process of starting a Feast in West Palm Beach.

Fatima has engaged the support of a few people in the Portuguese community of West Palm Beach, enough to persuade them to organize a tradition unfamiliar to most. The crown was donated by a devout couple, and Fátima crafted the Holy Spirit Flag. She coordinated the fundraising dinner event in early March, and is finalizing plan details for the first weekend in June, 2011, when the first Feast of the Holy Spirit will be held in West Palm Beach.



Fátima's Family in 2007: Agostinho, Sónia, Fátima, and Suzana

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## SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Information contained in this work was collected in various forms. Some was provided by present and past leaders of the Feasts, and leaders in the communities, where the feasts are/were held, via in person and telephone interviews. Some was collected from direct observation when attending the Feasts. Other was obtained from direct personal involvement with the Feasts. Geographical and historical data was obtained from various websites. The information is presented as objectively as possible, and regrets extended for unintended subjectivity or miss-representation.

## APPENDIX:

The following terms are associated with elements of the Holy Ghost tradition in the island of Santa Maria.

**Porvimento** – is a set of offerings consisting of one *pão da mesa* (very large sweet bread), one *rosca* (large sweet bread in shape of donut), one *pão leve* (pound cake), one bowl of *pães bentos* (chickpea size semi-sweet hard mini-breads), and one bottle of wine. These are all decorated with flowers for the procession

**Imperador** (emperor) and *imperatriz* (empress) – similar to the role of *mordomo* and *mordoma*, dress in Sunday best.

**Cozinheiras** – Women who bake the bread for the *sopas*, and all the sweet breads and cakes.

**Cozinheiros** – Cook the meat for and prepare the *sopas*.

**Mestre sala** – Role of honor chosen by the *imperador*, manages the cutting and distribution of sweet breads.

**Trinchante** – Role of honor chosen by the *imperador*, cuts sweet breads throughout the day in the *ramada*.

**Briadores** – Two people, with roles appointed by the emperor in charge of taking baskets of sweet bread and handing out *fatias* (slices) to attendants.

**Crowning Party** – The group of *imperador*, *imperatriz*, *mestre sala*, *trinchante* and *briadores*.

**Foliões** – three jesters, carrying a flag of the Holy Ghost, a drum, and cymbals. They normally lead the procession into mass, and instruct in their ritual chants, the various ceremonies, from entrance of crowning party into church, placement of the crown on the altar, the kissing of the scepter, transfer of the *porvimentos* to the *ramada*, ending of the feast transferring the crown to the following year emperor. Throughout the day, the *foliões* sing, for donations, to friends or group of people they know well, using improvised verses, consistent with the theme of the Holy Ghost.

**Ramada** – This is a booth, decorated in greens (thus *ramada* meaning “of branches”), where the sweet breads are cut into slices by the *trinchante*. In the island, this role takes in place in a small building called *trato*, located near or adjacent to the village chapel.

**Menina(o) da mesa** – a young child is chosen by emperor as the first person to be fed at the feast, in a ritual announced in chants by the jesters.



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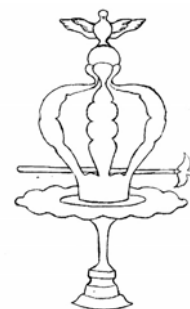
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*In Memory of*  
***Isabel Frias***

— DECEASED WIFE AND MOTHER —

*Antônio Leandres and children*



*Michelle*

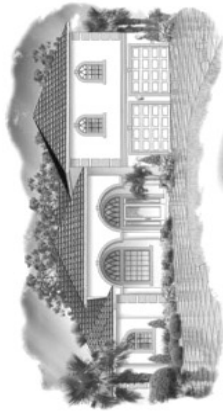
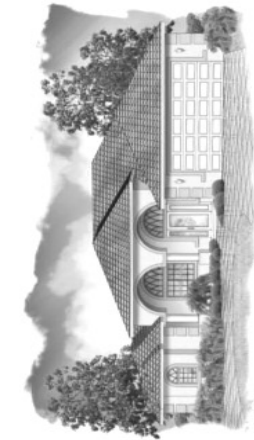
*Marc*

*Andrew*

*Chris*

*Danny*

I am the resurrection  
and the life.  
He who believes in me  
will live,  
even though he dies,  
and whoever lives and  
believes in me  
will never die.  
(John 11:25-26)



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