

REVEALAR



II estação Igreja de N.ª Sr.ª dos Remédios Fajãzinha – Lajes das Flores

24.09.2022 – 31.12.2022

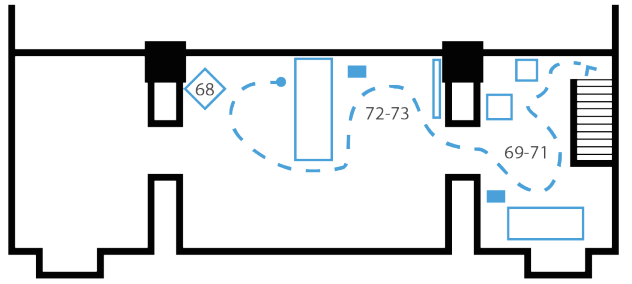
REVEAL

Station II

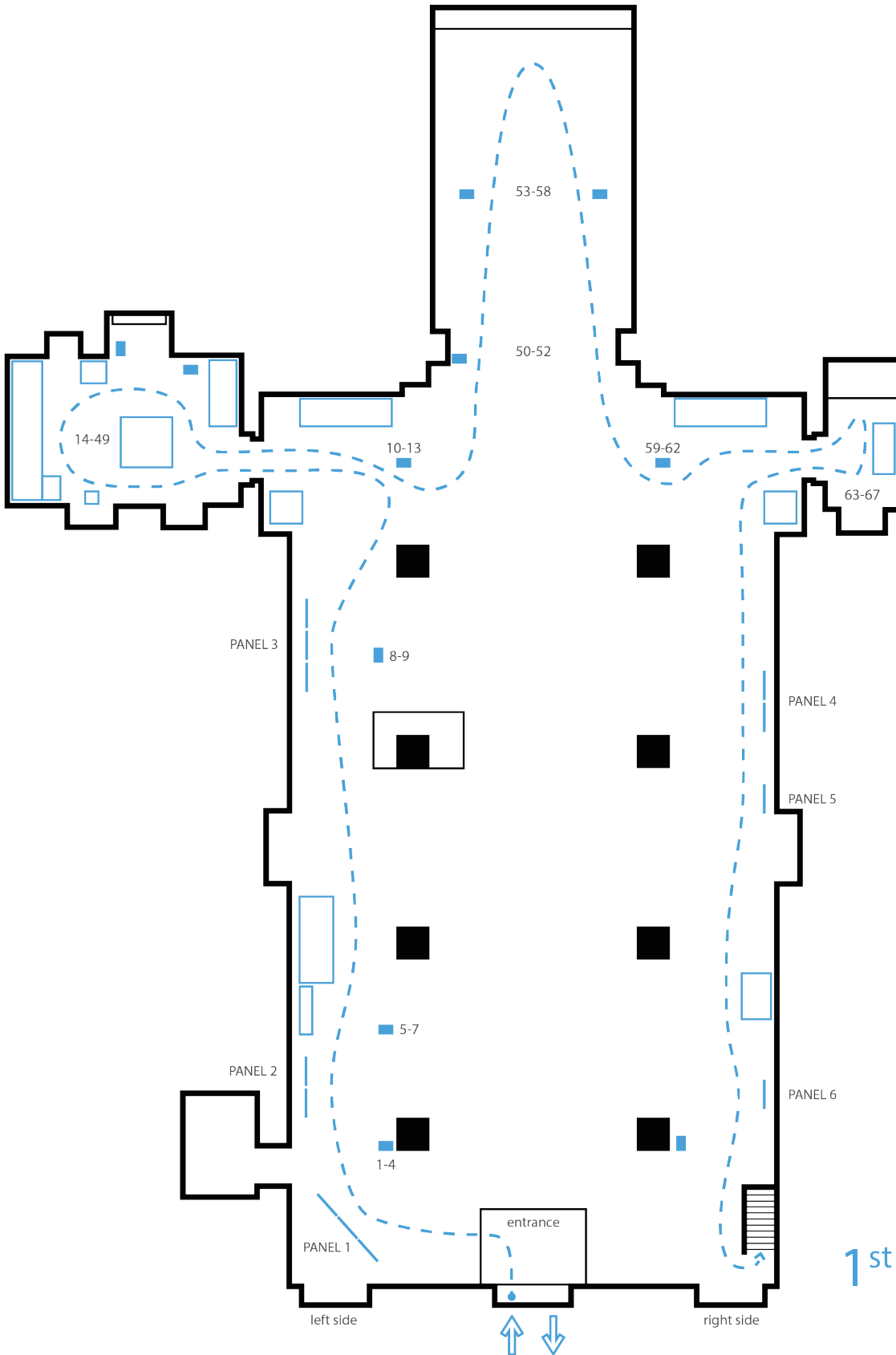
Exhibition Series

The Places of the Sacred – Valuing the cultural religious heritage of the Azores

Church of Nossa Senhora dos Remédios [Our Lady of Remedies], Fajãzinha – Lajes das Flores



2nd floor



1st floor

PANEL 1

Introduction text

Reveal, *tr. v.*, to unveil; to make known what was secret or ignored; to discover, to display, to indicate, to manifest; to make appear (the photographic image) on the silver gelatin, developing the negative and the positive; *refl.* to appear; to make oneself known; to declare oneself (from the Latin, *revelare*, «id»).

Every act of revealing derives from the process of identifying something acknowledged as being valuable, which consequently justifies its disclosure.

In this II Station of the exhibition series THE PLACES OF THE SACRED, we present the Church of Nossa Senhora dos Remédios [Our Lady of Remedies] at Fajãzinha and its contents as an important heritage set which bears witness to the cultural relevance of the community it serves.

Fitting into Flores Island world view, the most western territory of Europe, and in spite of its undeniable value, this heritage shares the challenges of contemporary global society, among which the demographic crisis and the consequent depopulation of outermost territories per se are factors putting it at risk. REVEAL is thus an act of raising awareness to the protection of this heritage, by deepening the understanding of its guardian community towards it.

Structured as a discovery itinerary confronting the visitor with heritage assets occupying several areas of public access in this building, the present exhibition offers a perspective of Memory revitalization focusing upon a common cultural legacy: artistic expressions resulting from spiritual religious practices.

Through this initiative, we aim at reinforcing the assertion of an heritage whose richness lies in the diversity of its inherent values – historical, artistic, symbolic – not forgetting the unique landscape context that shaped it:

. a territory declared by UNESCO a Biosphere Reserve since 2009, in which, apart from the impressive natural landscape and its respective biodiversity, the harmonious human-nature relationship is noteworthy, particularly regarding the sustainable use of natural resources, a theme also approached in some aspects of the current exhibition.

REVEAL takes place within the framework of two important celebrations:

- on one hand, the **European Heritage Days 2022**, a joint initiative of the Council of Europe and the European Commission, fostering cultural dialogue and diversity as moments of taking back remains from the past, under the theme of «Sustainable Heritage», whose goal is to encourage the active role of communities and Cultural Heritage within the process of building a more sustainable and resilient future;

- on the other hand, the **Pedro da Silveira Centennial (1922-2022)**, celebrating the remarkable Azorean writer from Flores, also devoted to History, particularly concerning his home Island. In this context, his study *Para a História do Povoamento das Ilhas das Flores e do Corvo com três documentos inéditos* [Towards the History of Flores and Corvo Settlement with three unpublished documents] (1960), as well as his contribution to the work *Anais do Município das Lajes das Flores* [The Annals of Lajes das Flores Municipality] (1970) are noteworthy as writings where he made known decisive facts concerning the knowledge of the history of this church.

PANEL 2

17th CENTURY

THE CREATION OF THE PARISH OF NOSSA SENHORA DOS REMÉDIOS DAS FAJÃS [OUR LADY OF REMEDIES OF FAJÃS], HAVING SEAT AT FAJÃZINHA

The monument that is nowadays the Church of Nossa Senhora dos Remédios da Fajãzinha [Our Lady of Remedies of Fajãzinha] was, for almost two centuries, the seat of Fajãs Parish, founded in 1676 and the fourth oldest in Flores Island.

Around 1675, the early church of Fajãzinha was raised at a place known as Adro Velho (possibly nearby the current building) of which no remains are left. The following year, it is established as the parish seat by Dom Frei Lourenço de Castro O.P., the 14th Bishop of Angra, and Father André Álvares de Mendonça (†ca.1720) takes up his post, becoming its first Vicar.

On July 12th and 13th 1676, during the act of marking the parish, a landmark is placed in the middle of Rocha do Risco (by Ribeirinha do Miradouro), near Ponta, marking off the limit with the neighboring parish of São Pedro de Ponta Delgada, while the other landmark is placed at *the limit of Mosteiros, taking Ribeira de Simão Dias from the side of the sea until Rochão da Ventosa*. The parish would thus incorporate the following areas: Ponta, Fajã Grande, Fajãzinha, Caldeira and Mosteiro.

Image caption, Flores Island map

The territory comprised by the former *Parish of Fajãs*, between 1676 and 1850.

Landsat/Copernicus satellite images. ©Google Earth Pro, 2017-2022.

The difficult access of this territory to the two Island villages (easier by sea than by land) and some demographic expression, occurred between the 17th and the 19th centuries, were relevant factors for the creation of the parish, which was, during that period, administered by a Vicar, a coadjutor Vice-Vicar, a priest and a cashier (also a clergyman).

An investment carried out by successive generations of people from Fajãs, the group of cultural assets remaining until nowadays, which includes the building as well as several devotional objects gathered for more than three centuries, mirrors its relevance in the daily spiritual practices of this population.

In such set, one is able to acknowledge an affectionate relationship, linked to Faith and spirituality consolidated over time, apart from other aspects, such as the influence of main European artistic movements or the way available natural resources were used.

18TH CENTURY (1ST HALF)

STRENGTHENING FAITH WITHIN THE COMMUNITY: ESTABLISHING THE HOLY SACRAMENT CONFRATERNITY

1705 (October 19th)

Dom António Vieira Leitão, the 17th Bishop of Angra (1694-1714) grants license for the establishment of the Holy Sacrament Confraternity as well as for the Tabernacle, demanding the following conditions: *that the deed endowed enough for the lamp, candles and remainder adornments of the Tabernacle and that, for such purpose, at least thirty neighbors should be gathered.*

1708 (January 22nd)

Complying with the conditions, the Holy Sacrament Confraternity was established by endowment deed and with the intervention of a large group of inhabitants from the five areas comprised by the circumscription of the parish territory, headed by the Captains Domingues Rodrigues Ramos and Gaspar Henriques. By then, the tabernacle was already in the church. *To maintain the said Tabernacle and to light the Holy Sacrament (...) as long as the world lasts are endowed for such purpose thirty thousand reis per year (...) to maintain the said Tabernacle as well as other Brotherhood expenses.*

1708 (August 9th)

The Ecclesiastical Ombudsman on duty, Father Cristóvão Pimentel de Mesquita (ca.1655-[†]1736), carries out an inspection to *the things belonging to the Divine Cult and the establishment of the Holy Sacrament Confraternity, which he deemed very suitable and decent (...) to host the Holy Sacrament in the Tabernacle.*

1747

Date engraved in stone at the current church tower. According to the local historian Francisco Gomes, it comes from the bell tower of the early church, raised by Vicar João Rodrigues Ramos (ca.1699-[†]1766), and was embedded in the tower of the current church during the works of 1896-1898. This date might indicate an intervention of improvement of the early church, by adding a bell tower, possibly lacking until then.

18TH CENTURY (2ND HALF)

THE BUILDING OF THE NEW PARISH CHURCH OF FAJÃS

1572-1761

Still in the early church, *a chintz fabric from India, to apparel the Church during Holy Week*, is acquired for 5 300 *reis*.

A window is opened in the chancel by a mason, while a carpenter makes its respective shutter. In this change in the temple space, aiming at the improvement of the conditions of interior lighting, the option for a shutter instead of a window pane indicates that the primitive building was probably of rustic instead of erudite character.

1762 (June 15th)

Dom António Caetano da Rocha, the 21st Bishop of Angra, orders the Vicar, Father João Rodrigues Ramos (ca.1699-[†]1766), to spend the amount of 31 470 *reis* in *what is most suitable and needed for the Chancel and vestry*, referring that *the first work would be a window pane for the window of the said chancel*, which would be carried out, that same year, for 3 000 *reis*.

1771

The outset of the building works for the new Parish Church of Nossa Senhora dos Remédios das Fajãs [Our Lady of Remedies of Fajãs] takes place, with *breaking stone*. By this time, the Vice-Vicar is Father Alexandre Pimentel de Mesquita (1721-[†]1786, Vicar since 1766).

1775 (June 19th)

By decree issued by Angra Diocese, the Parish Vice-Vicar is *encharged with the Church works, taking into account its present numerous people*. He is able *to take and spend whatever needed from the remainder of the Church Confraternities, being compelled to render all the revenue*.

1776 (April 7th)

First expenses registry regarding the construction works of the new temple. This was projected to fit into the Southern slope of Ribeira Grande valley, facing southeast, and with the main *façade* turned to the old path of Rocha dos Bredos, the primal route for those going to the villages and the other parishes of the Island. The plot was acquired from a private owner and the implementation deadline was set for four years. Raw materials were carried along private ground, which indicates the difficulties in establishing exterior access pathways by the time.

The origin of the used stone was a local quarry, while lime came from the mainland and was prepared locally. From outside the Island also came some instruments and tools, bought at Faial and Terceira.

1778

Lead by master builder Bento Rodrigues, the work of the new church begins its ending stage. Date embedded upon the church entrance portal: «RAISED BY/ FATHER ALEXANDRE/ PIMENTEL DE MESQUITA/ VICAR OF THIS CHURCH BY 1778».

18TH CENTURY (END)

THE BUILDING OF THE VESTRY AND THE PURCHASE OF SEVERAL ADORNMENTS, AS WELL AS A NEW STATUE OF OUR LADY OF REMEDIES, MADE IN LISBON

1786 (March 11th)

The Vice-Vicar Alexandre Pimentel de Mesquita passes away and is buried in the church which he had begun to raise ten years before.

1787

Completion of the vestry works under the management of the parish Vice-Vicar, Sebastião António da Silveira (1738-[†]1821). Date of the inscription by the vestry gable: «RAISED /BY THE VICAR SEBASTIÃO ANTÓNIO DA SILVEIRA. 1787».

1789

The Holy Sacrament Confraternity purchases two new lanterns and several fabrics, namely: white silk damask, purple wool damask and sewing silk fringe. Apart from the Holy Sacrament Confraternity, there were also the Jesus and the Saint Peter Confraternities in this church by then.

1789 (November 1st)

The *New Statue of Our Lady of Remedies* is placed on the main altar, with a solemn procession that leaves from *Capitão Manuel Alves home and a Mass sung by the benefactors. The statue was made in Lisbon and cost sixty five thousand and eight hundred and ten reis, an amount gathered with alms from devout and parishioners, together with its silver crown, which amounted to fifteen thousand reis. The sculpture which, until then, served the same title, was laid on the altar of Our Lady of Pain, whose image is and will remain the same.*

1791

The Holy Sacrament Confraternity spends *seven thousand and two hundred reis in gold for a censer and an incense boat*, as well as further one thousand and fifty *reis* for the advance payment of such amount.

1792 (August 6th)

The day on which, *in this Church, people used to hold the festivity of Our Lady of Remedies, on August the 5th, the Day of Our Lady of Snows*, is changed to the last Sunday of June, *since that was a holy day not to be disrespected as mortal sin and the dwellers of this parish, being the time of harvest, had to toil their lands.*

1798 (October 20th)

The work of the interior wooden planking of the church, costing 188 660 *reis*, as well as the commission of the model for the tabernacle lighting, amounting to 86 790 *reis*, take place.

19TH CENTURY (1ST HALF)

FROM OUTSIDE IMPROVEMENTS TO THE LAST BURIAL INSIDE THE CHURCH

1805

The establishment of paving stones, steps and the altar of the Chancel, as well as the purchase of three *côvados** of purple silk damask, four *varas** of silk lace-work and three *varas** of silk fringe to adorn a cross cover are carried out at parish board expenses.

*ancient measures of length

1824

The paving of the churchyard, in which the Holy Sacrament Confraternity spent 15 000 *reis* for cut stone, takes place.

1825

The Holy Sacrament Confraternity spends the amount of 213 200 *reis* on the purchase of several liturgical implements, including the expenses made until their handing over at the church, among which were *a silver censer and an incense boat, as well as a purple damask chasuble and its belongings.*

1826

The Holy Sacrament Confraternity purchases, for 123 430 *reis*, *a purple damask chasuble and its belongings, chalice bag, three arrobas* of incense, four of thin white lead, a ciborium for the Holy Communion, two pairs of altar cruets, two big bells, a holy water bucket stand, all coming from Lisbon, with freight and further expenses paid until being handed over.*

*ancient unit of weight

1831 (December 20th)

Considering the accounts from the time of the administration of both the former Vicar, José Caetano Martins (1749-[†]1823), and the current Vicar, Francisco Carolino de Assis (Vice-Vicar in 1828), the number of existing Confraternities in this period amounts to four: Saint Joseph, Our Lady of Remedies, Holy Sacrament and Child Jesus (also called Good Jesus).

1834 (May 23rd)

Last burial inside the church.

19TH CENTURY (2ND HALF)

FROM THE BREAK-UP OF THE PARISH OF FAJÃS TO THE RISE OF A NEW BELL TOWER

1850 (October 23rd)

The queen D. Maria II issues a decree allowing the detachment of Mosteiro from the Parish of Nossa Senhora dos Remédios das ajãs [Our Lady of Remedies of ajãs] . The following November 18th the parish with seat at the chapel of the Holy Trinity of Mosteiro is created by episcopal license of Dom rei Estêvão de Jesus Maria, the 27th Bishop of Angra.

1861

The parish of São José da ajã Grande is created , as it already *held a chapel with enough area* and it *distanced a league from the seat locality, through a large stream which completely cut communications during winter*. Apart from that, by then ajã Grande played an important role *in the communications with the whalers and America*, as it held an harbor where a significant number of ships, particularly whaling ships, docked.

1868

Fajãzinha graveyard is formally organized, by the outside area of the church, and able to receive 80 corpses.

ca. 1871

The church holds three altars, the main devoted to the Holy Sacrament, and the side altars, one to Our Lady of Pain and the other to Saint Anne, according to the observation of the historian from Faial, António Silveira Macedo, on his *História das Quatro ilhas que Formam o Distrito da Horta [History of the Four Islands forming Horta District]*.

1879 (September 10th)

Date of an inventory of *all statues, ciboria, implements, adornments, titles and remainder objects belonging to the Parochial Church of Nossa Senhora dos Remédios da Fajãzinha [Our Lady of Remedies of Fajãzinha]*, carried out by the parish council. The Vicar was Manuel Joaquim Ignacio (1846-[†]1883) and 132 movable assets were listed.

1884 (April 14th)

A new inventory is held. The Vicar was still Manuel Joaquim Ignacio and 127 movable assets were listed.

1887 (January 23rd)

A new inventory is held. The Vicar was Joaquim Ferreira Campos (1841-[†]1916) and 94 movable assets were listed.

ca.1896-1898

Following the pastoral visit of Dom Francisco Vieira Brito, the 30th Bishop of Angra, the *beginning of the construction of the church towers takes place*. This reference in the plural raises the suspicion that two towers framing the façade were projected.

Under the administration of Father Francisco Goulart Martins (1867-[†]1944), part of the church tower, not yet finished, was laid down and rebuilt, as indicated by the existing inscription «BUILT / WITH DEVOUTS ALMS /1898».

Statues belonging to the sculptural groups of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and Saint Margaret Mary Alacoque are purchased, and the Confraternity of the Third Order of Saint Francis is re-established in the parish.

20TH CENTURY

NEW IMPROVEMENTS INSIDE THE CHURCH, PROMOTED BY VICAR ROBERTO FERNANDO ARMAS

1902 (March 16th)

A new inventory is held. The Vicar is Roberto Fernando Armas (1879-[†]1953) and 94 movable assets were listed.

1904 (April 4th)

First expenses by the *Comissão dos novos melhoramentos na Igreja Parochial da Fajãzinha das Flôres* [Committee for the new improvements at the Parish Church of Flores Fajãzinha], buying wood for the church, namely: Weymouth pine and longleaf pine.

1905

The expenses of buying wood and paying sawyers continue. Wood flooring and the creation of the vestry cabinet take place, while the works on the main retable begin.

1906

Completion of the works of gilded woodcarvings on the main retable, according to the existing inscription: «THIS RETABLE WAS COMMISSIONED/ BY/ VICAR ROBERTO F. ARMAS/ 1906». There are expenses made at the Customs concerning wood and nails, as well as the sawing of chestnut wood for the retable. The works of wood flooring keep on going, while the areas of the vestry and baptistery are paved with Portland tiles. The works of wooden planking in the chancel are carried out, wood is purchased in São Miguel and the windshield is built.

1907

A credence table for the cancel is purchased for 8 000 *reis* as well as a baptismal font. The carpentry works concerning *rails, pulpit, baptistery door and the church frontispiece* are carried out, the expenses of which amounting to 89 000 *reis*.

1908

The niche canvas for the altarpiece is acquired from Nunes Sobrinho for 27 000 *reis*. The building of the two side altars begins with the purchase of 1 209 feet of wood from Terceira for 132 595 *reis*. Five boards of pinewood are also acquired for 2 150 *reis*.

1908 (January 20th)

The inventory of the Parish Council of Nossa Senhora dos Remédios da Fajãzinha [Our Lady of Remedies of Fajãzinha] is carried out by Vicar Roberto Fernando Armas and 92 movable assets are listed.

1909

The work of gilded woodcarvings of the side retables keeps on going.

1910

The statues of Senhor dos Passos [Stations of the Cross] and Senhor Morto [Dead Christ] are purchased for a total sum of 208 500 *reis*.

PANEL 6

Final notes

«Nowadays, the cult rendered to heritage demands, therefore, more than a pleasure checking. It demands questioning, since it is a neglected yet undeniable revealer of the state of a society and the questions therein lying.»

Françoise Choay, *L'Allegorie du Patrimoine* [*The Allegory of Heritage*] (1st ed., 1992)

Raising awareness on the legacy of our ancestors, by deepening knowledge upon it is key for its valuing, safeguarding and upkeep.

In the discovery itinerary that we offer, the acknowledgement of the historical, artistic and symbolic value of this Place of the Sacred, as well as of its belonging assets, whose functions are a call to transcendence and a reference to the divine, is manifest. We aimed that the emptiness and silence existing in the reconstitution of the historical process of this building were, in a way, balanced by the diversity of artistic accomplishments that have remained to the present day.

We hope to have triggered some restlessness in the visitor about what strategy to adopt, in order to safekeep this heritage, ensuring its existence and accessibility to future generations. We wish that Memory, as the place of immortality, may arouse appreciation, inspire care and strengthen the connection among past, present and future.

LABELS

LABEL 1

The Church of Nossa Senhora dos Remédios da Fajãzinha [Our Lady of Remedies of Fajãzinha]

Bento Rodrigues (Master Builder)

1776-1778 (main masonry work)

Masonry structure of towed and whitewashed local stone

The **Church of Nossa Senhora dos Remédios da Fajãzinha** [Our Lady of Remedies of Fajãzinha] is a well kept example of Late Baroque Azorean architecture, in which are worth mentioning:

1 – **Outside**, the classical concept of the façades presents in the main one a Baroque design, organized in three surfaces, where the following stand out: the play with protrusions and recesses of the vertical elements (particularly at the center), as well as the liveliness granted by the inscription of different window shapes within a set finished by the waving and indented line of the gable, ending in volutes;

2- **Inside**, space is organized according to the traditional division in three aisles (an archaic conception whose chronological persistence is a characteristic of religious Azorean architecture, raised between the 16th and the 19th centuries), where light is noteworthy. It comes from several lighting openings existing on the four church elevations (some of which of considerable size). This aspect fully frames the building in the Late Baroque concept, typical of the Enlightenment period, where clear and abundant light is specially valued, whether for wholesomeness reasons or as a metaphor for the divine.

The current architectural building conforms with the work carried out between 1776 and 1778, promoted by Vicar Alexandre Pimentel de Mesquita (1721-[†]1786) and led by the master builder Bento Rodrigues, according to the expenses registries kept in the parish archive.

Even though the main stone work was almost completed during those years (aisles and chancel), the vestry would be finished only in 1787.

Also probably during the 1780s, the works on the main and the side retables were carried out, which would be replaced by new structures finished in 1906 and 1909, respectively. By the end of 1789, a new statue of the patron saint was laid on the main altar.

We also know that, by the end of the 18th century, in 1798, there were still finishing works inside the building, in particular, regarding the church planking.

LABELS 2-3-4

Windshield / Choir Loft Balustrade / Baptistry Railing

Unknown Author

1906-1907

Assembled, carved and polychrome wood

From 1904 on, a deep reformation begins inside the church, promoted by the then named *Comissão dos novos melhoramentos na Igreja Parochial da Fajãzinha* [Committee for the new improvements at the Parish Church of Flores Fajãzinha], led by Vicar Roberto Fernando Armas (1879-[†]1953).

Among several interventions is a vast carpentry work, from which resulted the current Windshield, the Choir Loft Balustrade, the Baptistry Railing, the Pulpit, among other elements.

The artistic current which directly influenced the production of these interventions is Eclecticism, typical of the turn between the 19th and the 20th centuries.

Eclectic creations, usually with a strong decorative content, mixing ornamental elements of different origins, resulted therefore in a kind of showcase of characteristic adornments belonging to several historical periods.

The **Windshield** presents a plain design, devoid of ornamentation, formed by two great central panels, as well as two on the side and narrower, elaborate with a play of panels and frames, through which the faithful enter and leave, sheltering the interior of the temple from storms. The top includes a framework with translucent glass, which favors brightness in the church interior.

Above, the **Choir Loft Balustrade** can be seen, a rail composed of an ongoing linear sequence of wooden banisters, suspended at the center by the Marian monogram «MA», alluding to the patron saint of the temple, Our Lady of Remedies.

As a dividing barrier between the side aisle of the Gospel (the left side), where we stand, and the Baptistry, a **Railing** was produced and inserted as a door, adapted to the opening in the shape of a semi-circular arch. It presents abundant decoration, mainly hollows and reliefs.

[LABEL 5](#)

Senhor dos Passos [Stations of the Cross statue]

Unknown Author

1910

Carved and polychrome wood, silver nimbus and colored glass

[LABEL 6](#)

Our Lady of Solitude

Unknown Author

After 1910

Carved and polychrome wood, glass

[LABEL 7](#)

Processional lanterns

Unknown Author

19th century (1st half)

Wood, metal alloy, lead, glass

Parish of Nossa Senhora dos Remédios da Fajãzinha [Our Lady of Remedies of Fajãzinha] collection / Angra Diocese

The **Procession of Senhor dos Passos** [Stations of the Cross Procession] is a highlight among the liturgical rites of the Lent period, which invokes the moments of the Passion of Christ, from His condemnation to His burial, after the Crucifixion at Mount Golgotha. At the Church of Nossa Senhora dos Remédios da Fajãzinha [Our Lady of Remedies of Fajãzinha], even though the precise date of the first procession of Senhor dos Passos [Stations of the Cross] is unknown, this yearly practice goes back to the beginning of the 18th century. According to the writings of the Vicar Father António Freitas, the ruins of one of the *Passos* [Stations], included in the old itinerary of the procession, is still preserved. Here was displayed a panel with the representation of the corresponding scene of *Via Dolorosa*. This structure, probably located in the surroundings of the early temple (demolished in mid-1700s), is set at São João side street and corresponds to a semi-circular arch, currently turned into an altar devoted to Saint Joseph, which recently received an industrial tile panel with the representation of the saint.

This liturgical practice, still carried out yearly on the fourth Sunday of Lent, was renewed by initiative of Father Roberto Armas, in the beginning of the 20th century. By then, new statues were acquired, such as **Senhor dos Passos** [Stations of the Cross statue] and **Senhor** [Dead Christ], apart from other assets of

liturgical function, such as the catafalque, the coffin or the Tenebrae hearse (which, in the present exhibition, lie at the choir loft).

The statue of Senhor dos Passos [Stations of the Cross statue] derives from an investment made by the *Comissão dos novos melhoramentos* [Committee for the new improvements], having been acquired in 1910, together with the statue of Senhor Morto [Dead Christ], (currently sheltered in the interior of the retable gradine) for the sum of 298 500 *reis*, even though where it was produced and by whom remain unknown until today.

This is a processional sculpture, *to be dressed* (a sacred statue, destined to be taken in procession, dressed with fabric garments), representing penitent Christ, carrying the cross. The statue presents a thorn crown and a lozenge shaped silver halo with colored glass.

The emotion and drama of Christ are highlighted by the expression of the face and gesture, as well as by the work on the flesh tone, seeking realism through the blackening of both feet and hands, together with the simulation of open wounds and blood draining on the face and limbs.

Inseparable from the statue of Senhor dos Passos [Stations of the Cross statue] is **Our Lady of Solitude**, evoking Virgin Mary, the mother of Christ, mourning her Son's death, in the moment between His Crucifixion and Resurrection. This dressed statue represents a standing Virgin and is similarly expressive, presenting depth in the eyes and manifesting loneliness, yearning and sadness towards Christ's death. The expression of the face, dramatized by the inclusion of blood tears, is strengthened by her posture with bent arms, the hands clasped with interlaced fingers, in an attitude of distress and silent and introspective suffering.

It's interesting to notice that, in a time when resorting to drama in this kind of sculptural expressions, which show a strong mimetic charge (imitating reality) and have roots in the Baroque theatrical practices and cenography, had fallen into disuse, one would, in the beginning of the 20th century, choose this variant of sacred sculpture.

In this context associated with the processions – moments of collective devotion, in which several community participants interact, at the outside scenery of Fajãzinha, treading the most important streets – it's worth mentioning that, apart from the sculptures, there are also other objects used with different functions.

Remaining faithful to their original aspect, three **processional lanterns** (belonging to a set of eight), date probably from the first half of the 19th century and are made of beaten and cut tinplate and lead, holding three glass faces and their respective wooden rods.

The polychromy of these three pieces is the authentical gilded and red and its ornamentation fits into the Neoclassical style, being applied, as decorative motifs, columns of even shaft (lining with the vertical edges), laurel leaves (base and chimney), urns, lion heads and cherubs. These objects were used in processions to accompany the Holy Sacrament, usually in even numbers and made of silver. However, when the financial resources didn't allow for it, they were commissioned in other materials, as in the case of these.

[LABEL 8-9](#)

Pulpit

Confessional booths

Unknown Author

1906-1907

Carved and polychrome wood

As a piece of liturgical furniture resulting from the intervention promoted by Vicar Roberto Armas in the beginning of the 20th century, the pulpit and its use are associated with the practice of the sermon, which, before the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965), followed the reading of the Sacred Scriptures.

This piece of considerable size is located at the central aisle, on the Gospel side (the left side), adjoined to the pillar separating the 2nd from the 3rd span, and is accessible by stairs, from the side aisle.

Having a wooden base, it presents a closed *basin* (also called *balcony* or *box*), made of carved and polychrome wood, forming a parallelepiped with copious decoration on three faces.

Among the ornamental elements (affiliated to Eclecticism) are some symbolic iconographic elements, associated with the three Theological Virtues, such as the *heart*, inserted in a circular medallion on the main face, alluding to the Sacred Heart of Jesus and to Charity, the *Latin cross*, also of Christological evocation, a symbol of Faith, and the *anchor*, alluding to Hope. Representations of bunches of grapes and grapevine leaves, connecting with the Eucharistic sense of the Blood of Christ, complement those symbols.

The pulpit cover, similarly made of carved and polychrome wood, presents decorative elements of a vocabulary conforming with the one applied on the three faces of the balcony, that are mainly geometrical and vegetable.

While autonomous pieces of furniture related to the sacrament of Confession, the two **confessional booths** placed on the top of the aisles, at the pseudo transept, are cubicles in the shape of trapezoidal prisms, opened on the top, and favoring the privacy of the act of confession. Inside, there's an arm chair for the confessor. For the communication with the penitents, there are two square openings on the sides, in trellis of thin mesh. As adornment, on the upper edge of the side faces, there's a sequence of cut waving shapes and, on the back panel, a Latin cross which finishes the top. Below, there are some carved elements, such as a cross-shaped motif inserted in a circular medallion, as well as the «NSR» monogram, evoking the church patron saint.

[LABEL 10](#)

Retable of the Sacred Heart of Jesus

Unknown Author/ Regional workshop

1908-1909

Carved and polychrome wood

[LABEL 11](#)

Saint Peter Apostle

Unknown Author

20th century (1st half, after 1908)

Carved and polychrome wood, glass, silver nimbus

[LABEL 12](#)

Apparition of Christ to Saint Margaret Mary Alacoque

Unknown Author

ca. 1899-1902

Carved and polychrome wood, glass, silver nimbus

[LABEL 13](#)

Saint Mathew

Unknown Author

17th (end)-18th (beginning) centuries

Carved and polychrome wood, silver, glass, and silver nimbus and quill

Parish of Nossa Senhora dos Remédios da Fajãzinha [Our Lady of Remedies of Fajãzinha] collection / Angra Diocese

According to the expenses records of *Comissão dos novos melhoramentos* [Committee for the new improvements] of Fajãzinha church, in 1908 begins the construction of two side altars, a work for which wood is acquired at Terceira Island. The piecework continues in 1909, however, its finishing date as well as its authorship are unknown. These retables came to replace older structures (from the last quarter of the 18th century), devoted to Our Lady of Pain and Saint Anne, two side altars existing in the church, as witnessed by the historian from Faial, António Silveira Macedo, on his *História das Quatro Ilhas que Formam o Distrito da Horta* [History of the Four Islands forming Horta District], ca. 1871.

We suspect that their author is the same who carried out the joinery, carpentry and woodcarving works at the Baptistery railing, Pulpit and Confessional Booths, taken place in previous years.

Even though this is a production from contemporaneity, from the stylistic point of view, the conception of this **retable** structure is inspired by the Classical architectural layout spread throughout the Baroque. Also of Baroque influence is the applied polychromy (notice that the background panel work results from a recent restoration), in which the effects of feigned marble and jasper on the mensa, plinths and column shafts, as well as the attic background

are highlighted. In this last element, inscribed on a central cartouche, the Christological symbols of the Holy Chalice (alluding to the blood of Christ shed upon His death) lie upon two of the most relevant *Arma Christi* (Weapons of Christ, the instruments of Passion): the Holy Sponge, stuck on a rod and dipped in vinegar which was offered to agonizing Jesus to drink, and the Holy Spear, the lance used to inflict His mortal blow.

On the left, upon a console, is **Saint Peter Apostle (I)**, a sculpture produced in the 20th century and acquired to replace the former statue (currently in the vestry), dated from the end of the 17th/ beginning of the 18th centuries.

This twentieth-century representation is noteworthy for presenting an unusual iconography among sculptures of the prince of Apostles, the father of the Roman Catholic Apostolic Church, namely, the inverted Latin Cross attribute, alluding to his decision to be crucified upside down, since he didn't consider himself worthy of dying as Christ.

In addition to this element, there are the usual keys (of the kingdom of Heaven, mentioned on the gospel of Saint Mathew, alluding to his papal primacy – Saint Peter was the first Pope of the Church), as well as the writings (here in the shape of parchment), referring to his epistles and to his apostolic legacy in general.

Also unusual is the sculptural group devoted to the scene of the **Apparition of Christ to Saint Margaret Mary Alacoque (II)**, which is connected with the Cult of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, a devotion which was particularly intensified from the end of the 19th century on. In 1899, Pope Leo XIII proclaimed the Consecration of the World to the Sacred Heart of Christ, following the requests addressed to him by Sister Maria of the Divine Heart Droste zu Vischering, a fact which contributed to the widespread of statues linked with this invocation.

In this scene, Saint Margaret Mary Alacoque (1647-[†]1690), a nun from the Order of the Visitation (founded by Saint Francis of Sales), is represented during one of her mystical experiences, at the monastery chapel of Paray-le-Monial, while meditating upon the Agony of Christ at the Gethsemane garden. Christ entrusted her with spreading and promoting the devotion to His heart, as a way of honoring Him. According to the writings of Saint Margaret, in her vision, the heart of Christ appeared *radiant as the sun (...) crowned with thorns, upon which emerged a cross*, a description conforming with what is represented here. The sentence inscribed below the niche, «MY SON, GIVE ME YOUR HEART», is a quote from Proverbs 23:26) and calls the faithful to the devotion of the heart of Christ, encouraging a close relationship with God.

On the console of the right side is **Saint Mathew (III)**, a statue restored by the Fânzeres Workshop, in Braga, in the middle of the 20th century. From this intervention resulted its total re-polychromy, amputating one of the most important aesthetic components of this sculpture, thus reducing its artistic integrity, and consequently causing an irreversible loss of value. From the original aesthetical principles, from the end of the 17th/ beginning of the 18th centuries, remain its formal conception, wavering between the immobility of posture, strengthened by the vertical pleats of the tunic, and the dynamism of the mantle drapery, falling diagonally, below the waist on the left side and enveloping the shoulder and arm of the opposite side. It also keeps its half-moon silver nimbus and the scribe quill which, together with the book, are the main iconographic attributes of this apostle and evangelist.

[LABEL 14](#)

Jesus Child

Portuguese School/ Regional Workshop

Mestres da Sé de Angra atrib. [Angra Cathedral Masters] attrib.

17th century (last quarter)

Polychrome and gilded cedarwood, metal

[LABEL 15](#)

Jesus Child

20th century (1st half, after 1908)

Polychrome and gilded wood, metal, glass, fabric, metallic alloy with silver plating

Parish of Nossa Senhora dos Remédios da Fajãzinha [Our Lady of Remedies of Fajãzinha] collection /Angra Diocese

These sculptures share the same iconography: Christ as a child in triumphant pose, blessing Humanity, equipped with a labarum (banner), a symbol shown in the context of His Resurrection. The piece from the 17th century is unusual and, according to the inventories carried out between 1879 and 1908, it held garments (currently keeping a dress) as well as adornments made of precious materials, in a transposition of worldly tastes to the devotional realm. A re-paint changed its original flesh tones, as well as the gold leaf finishing, applied on both hair and plinth, whose carved work recalls the gilded woodcarvings of the retables produced by the same time.

[LABEL 16](#)

Our Lady of Health

Portuguese School, Lisbon?

18th century – c.1730-1750

Polychrome and gilded wood, glass, metal

Stretched and chiselled silver crown, without hallmarks

Parish of Nossa Senhora dos Remédios da Fajãzinha collection / Angra Diocese

The cult to *Our Lady of Health* begins with the outburst of plague which raged across Lisbon, in 1569. In acknowledgement of Mary's protection, devots assigned Her the invocation of *Our Lady of Health*, a practice that spread to the entire kingdom.

The iconography of this piece is faithful to the one worshiped in Lisbon (at the chapel of Martim Moniz Square), from which the cult spread: the crowned Virgin is standing, hands together as in praying, covered by a vast mantle.

The sculpture evidences re-polychromy, overlapping two pictorial layers: the original (with egg tempera, gilding and punching) and the re-painted (using pastiglia technique). The inventories between 1879 and 1908 refer, as adornments, a *pair of earrings* and a *gold Lady of Conception* (a small pendant, shaped as a medal or a hollow antropomorphic figure), which attest the affection of Fajãs devouts for this statue.

LABEL 17

Our Lady of the Rosary

Portuguese School, Regional workshop

18th century, 2nd half

Polychrome and gilded cedar wood

Silver nimbus, without hallmarks

LABEL 18

Saint Anne

Portuguese School, Regional workshop

18th century, 2nd half

Polychrome and gilded cedar wood, metal

Parish of Nossa Senhora dos Remédios da Fajãzinha [Our Lady of the Remedies of Fajãzinha]
collection / Angra Diocese

These two sculptures conform with the patron saints of the former side altars, replaced, in the beginning of the 20th century, by the current two, devoted to the Sacred Heart of Jesus and Our Lady of the Rosary of Fátima. These are regional productions, having their origin in the same workshop, as show the affinities between them, both regarding the carving work and the pictorial finishing. Sculpted in cedar, in both cases, the waving motion designed by the body, leaning the head to the right side of the viewer, as well as the pleated work and arrangement of the drapery are similar. The shape of the hands and treatment of the hair are also remarkably similar and both present a rich work of egg tempera on gold leaf, sgraffito and punching, imitating textile needlework of vegetable and floral motifs.

LABEL 19

Saint Francis of Assisi

Portuguese School

18th century (1st half)

Polychrome wood

Silver nimbus, without hallmarks

LABEL 20

Saint Peter

Portuguese School

End of the 17th/ Beginning of the 18th centuries

Polychrome wood

Parish of Nossa Senhora dos Remédios da Fajãzinha [Our Lady of Remedies of Fajãzinha] collection

These two sculptures correspond to two of the most primitive pieces in this church collection and both were subjected to rough re-paintings which irreversibly hid their original aspect. In addition to these re-paintings, there are also other signs of intensive use, such as the loss of elements (either attributes or ornaments) and huge gaps, noticeable in both statues, namely, at the base. Such invocation of Saint Francis of Assisi can be linked to the existence of the Third Order of Penance of Saint Francis, in Fajãs main church at least until 1897, while the presence of the founder patriarch Saint Peter goes back to the early period of the church existence, remaining at the side altar of the Gospel side, currently in a sculptural version of the 20th century.

LABEL 21

Saint Mary Magdalene penitent

(fragment of the sculpture of the Good Shepherd?)

Regional workshop

17th (end)-18th (1st half) centuries

Polychrome cedar wood

Parish of Nossa Senhora dos Remédios da Fajãzinha [Our Lady of Remedies of Fajãzinha] collection / Angra Diocese

This enigmatic and unusual sculptural component, of popular features, is a remaining fragment of another larger sculpture, organized in overlapping layers, corresponding to its base. The lying leaning figure, sculpted favoring the frontal observation of the viewer, together with the existence of four socket points (circular openings) on the edges suggest it. The characteristics of this representation, with long hair, half-undressed body, as well as the skull where the head lies, are elements fitting the iconography of *Saint Mary Magdalene penitent*.

The current polychromy results from a 19th or 20th-century intervention, as well as the inscription painted on the inside edge [«Saint John»], which indicates the iconography of the missing statue. The association between the two saints was usual among several representations in the History of Art, since Mary Magdalene was regarded as the female equivalent of Saint John.

LABEL 22

Processional Cross

Unknown Author

20th century (1st half)?

Relief molten metallic alloy, and colored glass

LABEL 23

Superfrontal

19th-20th centuries?

Red silk thread fabric, embroidered with golden metallic laminated thread

Parish of Nossa Senhora dos Remédios da Fajãzinha [Our Lady of Remedies of Fajãzinha] collection / Angra Diocese

On the main face of this cross is *crucified Christ* and on its back is *Christ in majesty (Pantocrator)*, holding, by the end of the arms, the inscription of the four Evangelists. It fits the Revival aesthetic, influenced by Renaissance Art (16th century) acknowledgeable in the vegetable shapes applied on the arms of the cross, as well as on the small tondoes (circular medallions), with the representation of high relief busts, wearing miters. Alternating vine leaves, bunches of grapes and wheat ears, alluding to the Eucharist, this **superfrontal** was intensely used in the context of the Pentecost festivity, red symbolizing the blazing compassion of the Holy Spirit. It was applied suspended, on the edge of the main altar mensa, hanging upon its frontal and side faces.

LABEL 24

Altar Crucifix

Portuguese School

Unknown Author

18th century

Polychrome and gilded wood (Christ and edges), jacaranda wood (cross)

Silver nimbus and inscription, without hallmarks

LABEL 25

Altar Crucifix (incomplete)

Portuguese School

Unknown Author

18th century

Carved oak (?) and jacaranda wood

LABEL 26

Altar Crucifix

Portuguese School

Unknown Author

End of the 18th / Beginning of the 19th centuries

Polychrome and gilded wood

LABEL 27

Altar Crucifix (incomplete)

Portuguese School

Unknown Author

End of 18th / Beginning of 19th centuries?

Polychrome wood (Christ) and engraved jacaranda wood (cross)

Parish of Nossa Senhora dos Remédios da Fajãzinha [Our Lady of Remedies of Fajãzinha] collection (Angra Diocese

LABEL 28

Holy Cross

The Holy Land (Palestine, Jerusalem)

18th century

Olive tree wood, bone and mother-of-pearl (crucifix)

Wood and jacaranda (box-shrine)

Parish of Nossa Senhora dos Remédios da Fajãzinha [Our Lady of Remedies of Fajãzinha] collection

The fragments or particles of the Holy Cross, remains of the cross where Christ was crucified, sanctify places, being specially used to cure the sick and in epidemics in general, protecting communities against external threats. Coming from the Holy Land, this crucifix was an object really appreciated by the pilgrims who acquired it to Franciscan friars, as a souvenir of the visited holy palce, in the 18th and 19th centuries.

It's mostly decorated on the main face, where a small cell holding the relic of the Holy Cross is noticeable, on the base. There are bone and mother-of-pearl plates with incised adornment applied, prevailing the cross and floral shaped motifs, in addition to the three nails from the crucifixion of Christ.

LABEL 29

Our Lady of Pain

Portuguese School

End of 17th-beginning of 18th centuries

Polychrome wood

Silver crown and swords, gold plated silver heart, without hallmarks

LABEL 30

Vestry Crucifix

Portuguese School/ Regional production?

Unknown Author

18th century

Polychrome wood (Christ)

Silver nimbus, without hallmarks

Parish of Nossa Senhora dos Remédios da Fajãzinha [Our Lady of Remedies of Fajãzinha] collection / Angra Diocese

Bearing the current invocation since 1789, this sculpture, according to the parish archives, corresponds to the former statue of Our Lady of Remedies, replaced by then for a new sculpture (No. 57). In this sequence, the most characteristic attribute of the **Virgin of Pain** was added: the heart pierced by seven swords – symbolizing the seven sorrows suffered by Mary.

Crucified Christ is the most relevant, among holy statues. As such, while a prevailing point in the vestry, placed above the *arcas* [chest], His presence highlights the spirituality of the preparatory moment of the priest, previous to the liturgical acts.

LABEL 31

Arcaz [chest]

Portuguese School/ Regional Workshop?

Unknown Author

18th century (last quarter)

Carved wood, metal (brass)

Being the component of greatest functional relevance in this area, the *arcaz* [chest] is used to keep, in its multiple compartments the priests' vestments. It comprises four large drawers (in the center), two drawers and two shelves with doors (one on each side). Their front panels present double handles of oval rings and respective escutcheons cut in brass. The back is framed and organized in ten blind panels, separated by a sculpture niche at the center.

LABEL 32

*Collection bag**

United States of America

1957

Red satin thread (silk and wool) fabric, yellow satin thread (string), golden satin thread (embroidery)

LABEL 33

*Box***

United States of America

ca. 1894

Wood and metal

Parish of Nossa Senhora dos Remédios da Fajãzinha [Our Lady of Remedies of Fajãzinha] collection / Angra Diocese

Those who returned from emigration to North America, occurred from the 19th century on, naturally had impact on the material culture of the community – in 1898, according to a local newspaper, there were *more than five hundred Americans* in the Island: *eagles* (20 dollars gold coins) were in circulation, as well as other utilitarian assets, which were novelties.

Those objects are related with such phenomenon, in an interesting appropriation of profane character assets and their transmutation to the sacred function, much due to the visual ostentation of their materials, in particular their ornamentation.

*Bag from the commemorative edition of Seagram's whiskey Seven Crown.

** Using components of the barrel organ box from Symphonia/Wilcox and White Organ Company.

LABEL 34

Roman Missal

The Royal Printing, Lisbon

1820

Leather, gold leaf, fabric, cardboard, paper, black and red printing ink

LABEL 35

Monstrance chalice

Portuguese School

Unknown Author

17th century (end)/18th century (beginning) – monstrance

20th century – chalice

Golden plated beaten silver (monstrance), stretched and chiselled silver, glass

Parish of Nossa Senhora dos Remédios da Fajãzinha [Our Lady of Remedies of Fajãzinha] collection / Angra Diocese

Linked with the *Roman Rite* (way of saying mass previous to the Second Vatican Council/ 1960s), this **missal** is an official printed edition by The Royal Printing, illustrated with eight engravings by Francisco Tomás de Almeida and Francesco Bartolozzi, two of the greatest masters of the Engraving Art in Portugal.

The **monstrance chalice**, on its turn, a very popular model during 17th century, allies two functions: a sacred vase, where wine is consecrated during mass and, at the same time, a support for the exposition of the Holy Sacrament, in this case following the variant of an architectural frame in the shape of a tower or with a dome finished by a Latin cross.

LABEL 36

Roman Chasuble

Unknown Author

18th century (end)/ 19th century (beginning)?

Crimson straight silk thread fabric embroidered with gold thread and sequins application

LABEL 37

Washbasin

18th century (last quarter)

Wrought ashlar of volcanic origin

LABEL 38

Censer stand

20th century

Silver plated metallic alloy

Parish of Nossa Senhora dos Remédios da Fajãzinha [Our Lady of Remedies of Fajãzinha] collection / Angra Diocese

Priestly vestments are an important realm within the artistic heritage of churches and are associated with the solemn moment and visual impact of a liturgical celebration.

In this area of the vestry, serving, among other functions, to keep vestments, we've selected a Roman chasuble, that is, a kind fitting the needs of the former Roman or Tridentine Rite (no longer used from the Second Vatican Council on, occurred in the 1960s), in which the priest said mass in Latin, turning his back to the faithful.

This chasuble characteristics place it in the transition from the 18th to the 19th centuries. It's an interesting piece, showing refinement, either in the selection of the outward fabric chosen for its making (of crimson straight silk thread) or in the careful and elegant adornment (of direct embroidery with gold thread and sequins).

These embroidered adornments comprise vegetable and flower shapes, as well as thin waving lines, applied on the piece with an equally embroidered gallon.

The composition of this vestment is organized according to three vertical divisions (named *clav*) in the front and back, which are delimited by the application of a gallon similar to the one bypassing the whole edge of the piece.

The crimson (or red) color symbolically alludes to the blood shed by the martyrs and by Christ, as well as to the tongues of fire at Pentecost, for which reasons this vestment was used during the liturgical time conforming with the dates of the apostles and martyr saints festivities, the Cross, Blood and Coronation of Christ and also at the Holy Spirit Festivities.

In the Azorean reality, the local stone of volcanic origin was used in masonry and ashlar building, being also used, in very specific cases, in complementary sculptural works of architecture, such as the interesting **vestry washbasin** here kept.

Inserted in an area slightly back in relationship with the whole of the room, this equipment is composed of a basin, a tall and wide back, holding inside a water reservoir.

Essential in any vestry, it served for the priest's ablution (purification through the wash of a body part, in this case, the hands), before and after the liturgical ceremonies. The symbolic charge and relevance of this gesture are noticeable in the special attention dispensed to its plastic treatment, as the careful drawing and sculptural work carried out on this piece show.

Dating from the end of the 18th century, it's interesting to notice that this space complies with the majority of the rules for building and organizing Catholic churches, in particular vestries, which were defined by Saint Charles Borromeo who published the work *Instructiones Fabricae et Supellectilis Ecclesiasticae* [*Instructions on the building and furniture of churches*] in 1577. From then on, these rules would deeply influence architecture in the Catholic world. Thus, the following rules were abided by:

- the vestry has a proportionate size in relationship with the temple to which it belongs, namely in what concerns the number of priests on duty (notice that, by the end of the 18th century, this church, then the Main Church of Fajãs, was attended by four priests);
- the vestry is well ventilated and lighted by two windows, placed in front of each other (recently one of the windows was adapted to give access to a bathroom);
- the vestry ceiling is vaulted (barrel vault);
- there are two doors: one giving access outside and another to the church;
- it holds a well-built and adorned washbasin, secluded in order to optimize the space, with a nearby towel rack (currently, on the wall);
- the *arcas* [chest] is assembled on a platform above the floor.

An utilitarian object supporting the vestry service is the **censer stand** which, in the case of the parish church of Fajãzinha collection, dates from the 20th century. This is a multipurpose resource, which can also be used as a towel rack and as support for other implements, such as the holy water bucket stand, liturgical brazier tongs, among others.

[LABEL 39](#)

Censer

Unknown Author, Lisbon

19th century, ca.1825

Beaten, stretched e chiselled silver

Hallmarks: assayer, illegible hallmark and silversmith hallmarks

[LABEL 40](#)

Incense boat

Unknown Author, Lisbon

19th century, ca.1825

Beaten, stretched e chiselled silver

Hallmarks: assayer, Lisbon hallmark, illegible silversmith hallmarks

[LABEL 41](#)

Liturgical perfume burner with maniple

19th century?

Jacaranda wood, brass

[LABEL 42](#)

Baptismal salt cellar

20th century

Molded and engraved glass

[LABEL 43](#)

Candlestick

19th century

Sperm whale ivory, whalebone, metal

[LABEL 44](#)

Holy oil stocks case

20th century

Wood, glass, paper, typewriting ink, cork

[LABEL 45](#)

Pair of altar cruets with tray

20th century

Metallic alloy with aluminum

[LABEL 46](#)

Host box

Oporto

20th century

Silver

Mark 822/1000 (1938-1984), Oporto silversmith

[LABEL 47](#)

Host box

20th century

Metallic alloy (brass?)

[LABEL 48](#)

Host box

20th century

Silver (with mark) and red lace-work silk thread string with a knot and two tassels

[LABEL 49](#)

Host box

20th century

Metallic alloy with aluminum

Parish of Nossa Senhora dos Remédios da Fajãzinha [Our Lady of Remedies of Fajãzinha] collection / Angra Diocese

The vestry is the church area designed for gathering and carefully keeping the vast parafernalia of objects serving the Catholic cult, such as textiles (including religious vestments, but also linens and liturgical adornments), in addition to several utensils used during Eucharist and other sacraments, in the ablution and sprinkling practices, lighting or even accessories for collection as well as for the main liturgical festivities, namely Christmas and Lent.

In this cupboard is a display of the diversified collection of this church, in what concerns small objects, some more sumptuous (such as the censer and the incense boat, produced in Lisbon, ca.1825), other humbler (as the pair of altar cruets with tray or the baptismal salt cellar), and also rare objects, which mingle with other important cultural traits of the Island, such as the whaling culture and the material objects associated with it, such as the candlestick which we present here (belonging to a pair, meanwhile dissolved), which, in spite of not being currently in use, is a curious example of the kind of utilitarian objects produced in sperm whale ivory and whalebone.

[LABEL 50](#)

Infant Jesus of Prague

Unknown Author

After 1910?

Carved and polychrome wood, glass

[LABEL 51](#)

Saint Sebastian

Unknown Author

ca.1902

Carved and polychrome wood, glass, silver (without hallmarks)

[LABEL 52](#)

Hanging sanctuary lamp

Portuguese workshop

18th century, 2nd half

Beaten, molten, stretched and chiselled silver (without hallmarks)

Parish of Nossa Senhora dos Remédios da Fajãzinha [Our Lady of Remedies of Fajãzinha] collection / Angra Diocese

Placed on consoles to frame the sides of the triumphal arch, the statues of the **Infant Jesus of Prague** and **Saint Sebastian** are late acquisitions. This latter is listed for the first time on the inventory carried out on March 16th 1902, while the former was purchased after 1910, since it's not indicated in the last known

inventory, signed by Vicar Roberto Armas. This chronological information matches with the technical, aesthetic and iconographic characteristics of this sculpture: we stand out the fact that it incorporates a fixed un-removable imperial crown, which allows us to fine-tune the date as after 1924, the year when Pope Pius XI granted the statue its first canonical coronation.

At the entrance of the chancel, passing the triumphal arch, reinforcing the sacredness of the place, hangs suspended and exuberant the **Sanctuary Lamp**, a delicately adorned silver object, nourished with olive oil, marking the presence of the Body of Christ in the form of a consecrated host in the tabernacle.

In the Catholic Church this habit goes back to the 12th century and, upon the arrival of electricity, the tradition was kept and still remains, thanks to those who watch for its maintenance and permanence in the most continuous possible way. Bearing witness to the interaction of Fajãzinha community with natural resources, the traditional use of *Holy flowers*, from black horehound (*Ballota nigra*) within the liturgical context is noteworthy. After drying, the flower calyxes of this plant are picked, in order to be used as wicks for the Holy Sacrament oil lamp.

Due to this use, also known in other islands of the Azorean archipelago and in some mainland areas, other popular names of the black horehound are *oil lamp grass* ou *wick grass*. In the Azores, there is a subspecies of this plant: *Ballota nigra subsp. uncinata*, mentioned on *Catálogo das Plantas Vasculares dos Açores* [*Azores Vascular Plants Catalog*] (1966) by Ruy Palhinha.

[LABEL 53](#)

Mural painting set at the Cancel

José Inácio Nunes Sobrinho attrib.

ca.1899-1908?

Tempera painting

[LABEL 54](#)

Ceiling painting at Capela-Mor

José Inácio Nunes Sobrinho attrib.

ca.1906-1910?

Oil painting (?) on wood

The **mural painting** carried out with tempera technique covering the elevations of this space is noteworthy and the most relevant of the whole building, regarding its liturgical importance: it's the place where the tabernacle is located.

The documents looked through don't refer this intervention. Nevertheless, considering the formal, technical and aesthetical elements, this seems to be a work by José Inácio Nunes Sobrinho (1854-[†]1910), a painter-gilder born and educated in Brazil, whose parents were from Faial, where he settles from 1875 on, producing abundant work throughout the archipelago, with particular impact on the islands which formed the former Horta district, where Flores was included.

The expenses listing regarding the improvement works carried out from 1904 on don't mention any decorative painting campaign, which makes us suspect that it occurred before, for instance, ca.1899, when Nunes Sobrinho held painting and gilding interventions in some churches of the Island, as told by aial newspaper *O Telégrafo*.

On the other hand, the expense of 27.000 *reís*, payed to the artist for the altarpiece niche canvas is registered, which allows us to establish a formal comparison, in what concerns the drawing, modelling and brushstroke, and conclude that there are great affinities between these and the scenes represented on the mural painting.

The iconographic program of the represented figurative scenes is essentially Christological (devoted to Christ) and Eucharistic (devoted to the Eucharist), organized in the following order:

-On the Gospel side:

I) Christological emblem/ Theological virtues: the Holy Cross, complemented by the anchor (a symbol of Hope, placed at the foot of the cross), a crown of thorns (falling upon the arms of the cross), the Holy Spirit dove (on the left) and the blazing heart with thorns, topped by a small cross (at the center, at the junction point of the arms of the cross);

II) Christ and Saint John the Evangelist at the Last Supper;

III) Eucharistic emblem: chalice with consecrated host, framed by a wheat ear and grapevine stem with bunches of grapes.

-On the Epistle side:

IV) Eucharistic emblem: Monstrance, framed by a wheat ear and grapevine stem with bunches of grapes;

V) Mary and Jesus Rest on the Flight into Egypt;

VI) Christological emblem: the Holy Cross, with thorns branch (by the base) and roses crown (as ending).

We suspect that the **ceiling painting of the chancel** was carried out within the context of the works promoted by Vicar Roberto Armas, which means it was necessarily done after planking, for which boards were purchased in São Miguel, in 1906.

The theme of the scene represented on the central medallion – *The Assumption of the Virgin* – is in line with the Marian dedication of the temple. As secondary motifs, on the oval medallions placed by the corners, there are the figures of the four evangelists, represented from the waist up, together with their attributes (book and quill) and zoomorphic symbols (with the shape of animals) which identify them:

-On the Gospel side:

I) Saint Luke – Bull;

II) Saint Mathew – Angel;

-On the Epistle side:

III) Saint John – Eagle;

IV) Saint Mark – Lion.

From the artistic value point of view, we highlight the harmonious visual unit, resulting from this pictorial set, comprised of components carried out in different techniques (mural tempera painting, oil painting (?) on wood on the ceiling and oil painting on canvas on the altarpiece niche), all presumably by the same hand. Stands out the fact that the performer to whom we attribute authorship (a painter-gilder), in spite of the rough quality of the figurative scenes (revealing evident limitations, either on the not very accurate treatment of anatomies or on the weak modellings and the stiff effect of draperies), shows nevertheless great quality on the ornamental work as well as a good pictorial technique quality. Notice the well achieved effect of feigned architectures, serving as supporting level to the represented panels of the mural painting, or the beautiful shapes of the spiral wound acanthus leaves, seen on the ceiling around the central medallion.

LABEL 55

Altarpiece

Unknown author/ Regional workshop

1905-1906

Carved and polychrome wood

LABEL 56

Saint Joseph

20th century (after 1908)

Polychrome wood, silver, glass. Silver nimbuses and staff, without hallmarks

LABEL 57

Our Lady of Remedies

Unknown author, Lisbon

ca.1789

Polychrome wood, silver, glass

LABEL 58

Saint Anthony

Unknown author

20th century (after 1908)?

Polychrome wood, silver, glass. Silver nimbuses and staff, without hallmarks

Parish of Nossa Senhora dos Remédios da Fajãzinha [Our Lady of Remedies of Fajãzinha] collection
/Angra Diocese

The altarpiece was designed intending that the vanishing point from the faithful perspective, located at the body of the church, converges to its center, placed between the statue of Our Lady of Remedies (usually placed aligned with the base of the niche) and the tabernacle (lying on the mensa, which is advanced in relationship with the plan of the retable). Even though this is a production dated from the early years of the 20th century, which replaced the former structure raised by the end of the 18th century, the composition of this altar is aligned with the typical model of the Portuguese retable, of Eucharist kind widespread from Baroque Art on (17th and 18th centuries). At the base level, the mensa, on which the Tabernacle lies, hosts, in its interior, a set of textile frontals, with the colors of the liturgical calendar, as well as the statue of Senhor Morto [Dead Christ].

As finishing, above the entablature, there are two segments of round pediments and an archivolt circumscribing the whole structure on the top and receiving in the middle a cartouche surmounted by a crown, bearing the inscription of the Marian monogram «MA» at the center.

As finishing, the wood received a work of polychrome and gilded painting, which includes vast areas of feigned colored marbles and jaspers.

On the left, lies the statue of **Saint Joseph (I)**, dated from the 20th century (after 1908, since it's not listed on the existing inventories dated from 1878, 1884, 1887, 1902 and 1908). It was possibly commissioned to the new retable, together with Saint Anthony and years later, in 1954, was restored by Fânzeres Workshop, in Braga, having the performer of the "restoration" (which affected the original aspect of the statue due to the re-painting performed) written on the base of the sculpture the name of the author and the place of production: Sculptor – *José Soares de Oliveira/ Porto*, of whom we know had a workshop on Santo Ildefonso Street, ca.1899.

Usually placed on a plinth incorporated on the base of the niche of this main altar, the **statue of the patron saint (II)** of this Main Church of Fajãzinha is a wooden sculpture, produced in Lisbon, around 1789, which had been commissioned, together with its silver crown *with the alms given by devouts and parishioners*. This new statue came to replace another, older, which was, from then on, laid on the altar of Our Lady of Pain invocation

(No. 29), which was, on its turn, replaced by the Sacred Heart of Jesus retable in the beginning of the 20th century.

The current statue (therefore from the 18th century) of Our Lady of Remedies presents excellent sculptural quality but doesn't conform with its original aspect of the end of the 18th century, since, in the beginning of the new Millennium, was subjected to a re-painting intervention which unfortunately deeply changed its aesthetic integrity.

This sculpture iconography conforms with the representation of triumphant Virgin Mary: crowned, hands together, looking up, placed on a cloud from where emerge four winged heads of angels.

The inventory records carried out by the end of the 19th century inform about several interesting aspects connected with the cult experience of this statue and its relationship with the faithful. One information is that it was adorned (a usual practice during the 17th and 18th centuries in sculptures of female invocation) with jewelry pieces, resulting from devout's gifts: in 1878, the statue is described as holding *a galvanized silver crown, two gold earrings and a necklace made of the aforesaid*. Another information is that the statue held its own mantle, which was taken from the inventory, *for being unable to be used*, together with other assets, in 1887.

On the right side console is **Saint Anthony (III)**, a sculpture which was also restored and re-painted by Braga Fânzeres Workshop in 1954, according with the record on its base.

The saint is represented in accordance with its classical iconography, wearing the Franciscan habit, with Jesus Child on the lap and his main attributes: the book and the cross, this latter made from silver, similarly to both nimbuses of the two figures. We suspect that this work replaced an older one, referred to in the inventories since 1879.

[LABEL 59](#)

Retable of Our Lady of the Rosary of Fátima

Unknown author/ Regional workshop

1908-1909

Carved and polychrome wood

[LABEL 60](#)

Saint Anthony of Egypt

End of the 17th/Beginning of the 18th centuries

Polychrome wood, silver (nimbus)

[LABEL 61](#)

Our Lady of the Rosary of Fátima

Irmãos Maias Workshop, Cidadelha – Castelo da Maia – Porto

1930s?

Polychrome wood, glass, silver (crown)

[LABEL 62](#)

Saint Elizabeth, Queen of Portugal

Unknown author

End of the 17th/Beginning of the 18th centuries

Polychrome wood, silver (crown)

Parish of Nossa Senhora dos Remédios da Fajãzinha [Our Lady of Remedies of Fajãzinha] collection / Angra Diocese

Presenting a drawing exactly identical with the opposite side altar (on the Gospel side aisle, devoted to the Sacred Heart of Jesus), this **retable** keeps its wholesome original painting, where feigned stone effects, namely marbled and jasper, prevail.

Its outcome is harmonious with the painting intervention of marbled stucco done on the covering of all ashlar and framing surfaces of pillars, pilasters and cornices of the inside church. This work of mural painting, carried out in the beginning of the 20th century, was also promoted by Vicar Roberto Armas, as shows a painted inscription on the keystone of the semi-circular arch exiting at the choir loft («R. Armas»).

The only element distinguishing this retable from its congenerous, located at the Gospel aisle, is its iconography: in addition to the statues of Saint Anthony of Egypt, Our Lady of the Rosary of Fátima and Saint Elizabeth, the represented motif inside the cartouche, finishing the structure, is also different, conforming with the blazing heart topped with a cross, alluding to the *Immaculate Heart of Mary*.

The statues of *Saint Anthony of Egypt* and *Saint Elizabeth* are primitive sculptures, from the end of the 17th and beginning of the 18th centuries which, however, were deeply affected in their original appearance, due to a re-painting occurred in 1954, when all the statues of this church were sent to Braga (Fânzeres Workshop) to be “restored”.

The **Saint Anthony of Egypt (I)** sculpture respects its typical iconography: represented as an elder, with a long beard, he wears the Antonines habit, characteristic for its cowl (part of the habit covering the shoulders) and long scapular (central vertical strip on the habit), holding a staff (originally a stick with the Tau shape, or holding a bell) and a book, having an animal by his feet (alluding to the pig, one of his attributes, for being regarded as the protector of domestic animals).

This invocation is recurrent in religious buildings of the Azores archipelago, to which Flores and Corvo are no exception. Here, Saint Anthony of Egypt was the patron saint of these Azorean islands, from the time of the Philip I (II of Spain) domain on, a reference gradually abandoned mainly on cartography throughout the 17th century.

The central niche hosting **Our Lady of the Rosary of Fátima (II)**, in an unusual sculptural version conforms with the development stage of that which would become the official and iconic statue of such invocation, in the decades following the 1917 apparitions.

Until the normalization of the accepted model – created by José Ferreira Thedim in 1919 – during the 1920s and the 1930s countless versions of the sculpture spread, designed from the detailed account narrated by clairvoyant Lúcia. Thus this sculpture matches with the creation widespread by the renowned workshop of religious sculpture by Irmãos Matias, located at Cidadelha/ Castelo da Maia (Oporto), which could be purchased together with the figures of the three little shepherds, that way forming a sculptural group. Originally, the sculpture didn't have the crown nor the chaplet, two major iconographic attributes in the official representation, which were added to this piece later.

On the right is the sculpture of **Saint Elizabeth (III)**, crowned and wearing the habit of the Order of Saint Clare, whose vows she took after the death of king Dom Dinis. The staff, which, together with the book, is one of her most common attributes, is missing from the sculpture. The stiffness of the anatomical representation together with the almost absence of expression or body movement strengthen the given date and are shared with the statues of Saint Anthony of Egypt, Saint Mathew and Our Lady of Pain (at the vestry *arcas* [chest] niche).

LABEL 63

Holy Sacrament Retable

Unknown Author/ Regional workshop

19th-20th centuries?

Carved and polychrome wood

The date of this small altar is unknown. Its structure comprises four columns supporting a cornice and an attic in a semidome of bulbous shape finished by a cross. The ornamentation is restrained and limited to some elements in relief, shells, acanthus leaves (capitals) and foliage, with curve and reverse curve, ending in volutes, applied on the cut edge of the structure.

The tabernacle door holds the most interesting decorative work with Rococo shellies and is better executed technically. It differs from the remaining adornments, which allows for the suspicion that it might have come from another retable structure (e.g. the former altarpiece, dated from the last quarter of the 18th century). At the center, it holds the Eucharistic symbol of the three wheat ears joined by the lemniscate (or “lying eight”) of infinity. Fajãzinha community still keeps memory of its use, hosting the Holy Sacrament, during Holy Week.

LABEL 64

Fragments of an old retable/ decorative frieze

Unknown author

End of th 17th/ Beginning of the 18th centuries (1708?)

Carved and polychrome wood

LABEL 65

Fragments of an old retable/ finishing element – shell

Unknown author

End of th 17th/ Beginning of the 18th centuries (1708?)

Carved and gilded wood

Parish of Nossa Senhora dos Remédios da Fajãzinha [Our Lady of Remedies of Fajãzinha] collection / Angra Diocese

A small set of gilded woodcarving fragments, belonging to the old retables of this church, once the Main Church of Fajãs, which show the quality these probably had by the time, still remains. In the shape of portions of decorative friezes and a shell, they evidence a high quality woodcarving work, as well as outstanding gilding with polished gold leaf. They were probably commissioned between the end of the 17th century and the 1730s, together with the tabernacle (No. 66) also exhibited here.

LABEL 66

Fragments of an old retable/tabernacle

Unknown author

End of th 17th/ Beginning of the 18th centuries (1708?)

Carved, polychrome and gilded wood

Parish of Nossa Senhora dos Remédios da Fajãzinha [Our Lady of Remedies of Fajãzinha] collection / Angra Diocese

This element of Baroque gilded woodcarving is most probably the tabernacle of the altarpiece of the early temple of Fajãzinha, demolished as a result of the construction of the new church (where we now stand), in the last quarter of the 18th century.

Remember that, after the establishment of the Holy Sacrament Confraternity in 1705, on its setting-up deed, dated from January 22nd 1708, it's affirmed that the tabernacle was already in the church, an information reinforcing the chronology attributed to this fragment.

In spite of its fragile state of conservation, we must acknowledge the good technical quality of the woodcarver and painter-gilder who produced it.

On this tabernacle door there is the representation, painted on wood, of resurrected Christ, who, enveloped by a cloud, in apothecic pose, shows the Passion wounds and holds the cross-shaped labarum (banner). This composition shows an amputated frame, which indicates this was reused from a larger size painting.

[LABEL 67](#)

Fragments of an old retable/ cartouche

Unknown author

18th century, 1780s

Carved, gilded and polychrome wood

Parish of Nossa Senhora dos Remédios da Fajãzinha [Our Lady of Remedies of Fajãzinha] collection / Angra Diocese

Built from 1771 on, the new church necessarily hosted new altars, built in accordance with the style in use by then. In this period, the shapes of Woodcarving Art in Portugal relieved the decorative charge, giving way to plain backgrounds, thinning adornments sculpted in relief, reducing the use of gold leaf to highlight elements, favoring colorful polychrome.

This cartouche is probably the attic top of the altarpiece, built on the new church in the 1780s, which would be disassembled in the first years of the 20th century and replaced by the current structure.

The Christological monogram – IHS (*Jesus Hominum Salvator* – Jesus Savior of Men) – strengthens the connection with the main altar, certainly of Eucharistic function, that is, incorporating the tabernacle (of which possibly still remains the door, see No. 63).

[LABEL 68](#)

Lectern

Unknown author

Carved and polychrome wood

Parish of Nossa Senhora dos Remédios da Fajãzinha [Our Lady of Remedies of Fajãzinha] collection / Angra Diocese

Connected with sacred music and revolving upon a vertical axis, this piece has a quadrangular base and an inclined fourfold top, whose surfaces are used as stands for singing liturgical books.

Even though devoid of ornamentation, this shape is clearly inspired by the models produced in the 17th and 18th centuries, a renowned example of which is the lectern made from jacaranda wood, with ivory inlays at Angra Cathedral.

LABEL 69

Processional stretcher

18th century (middle)

Carved, gilded and polychrome wood

LABEL 70

Sedile (chair)

17th century

Azores juniper wood?

LABEL 71

Sedile (presidential chair)

18th century (2nd half)

Polished Azores juniper wood

Parish of Nossa Senhora dos Remédios da Fajãzinha [Our Lady of Remedies of Fajãzinha] collection / Angra Diocese

Used in processions to transport statues, the **stretcher** is key within the apparatus of religious festivities, moments of participation of the community as People of God, when multiple visual and auditory details are gathered in the exterior manifestation of Devotion and Faith.

This is a rare piece from the middle of the 18th century, whose sculpted faces are well carved and finished with gold leaf. It displays a frieze of twisting acanthus leaves, placed symmetrically in curve and reverse curve, from a small plain cartouche.

This is a handbarrow of rectangular shape with four side hooks for the insertion of two poles, and a setting system for the statue with a screwed pole to be inserted in a central opening, as well.

Unfortunately, its original polychrome was debased by a green re-painting, applied as the adornments background, while in its original form the stretcher faces were entirely gilded, showing the brightness and quality of the applied gold leaf.

Within the group of church liturgical furniture, sediles hold an essential function in religious celebrations.

Here on display are two pieces, distant from the chronological point of view, which therefore justifies their notorious formal differences. The older piece – labeled within the typology of «chairs», typical of traditional Azorean furniture of the 17th century – shows that the utilitarian side outweighed the decorative investment, resulting in its primitive aspect. In this sedile only wood is used, in an assemblage system following the technique of mortise and tenon, not needing any metallic element and using wooden pegs.

This is a simple structure, where the minimalist back is carried out using a wooden panel, supported by two back legs.

Marks of time passing stand out, the most disastrous being the amputation of the top finishings of side legs and the back.

The presidential chair, on its turn, shows the evolution of the Portuguese sedile, distancing the former for more than a century. Even though it keeps identical decorative restraint (not including any type of adornment), this piece shows technical refinement in the curvilinear and waving shapes of its structural components, particularly in the flap, arms and back.

To the prominence of this piece, whose considerable size justifies the attributed typological label, and to which no decorative ornaments were added, has probably contributed the chromatic value of the raw material used: the Azorean juniper (*Juniperus brevifolia*), an endemic species of the Azores.

This kind of wood – robust (hard, resistant to xilophages and fungi, stable regarding hygrometry), scented (due to its richness in essential oils), varying between the honey and reddish shades – was often used, for more than four centuries in the Archipelago of the Azores, by carpenters and joiners, mainly in the production of household utilitarian objects, ship building, civil and sacred furniture, devotional sculpture, woodcarving art (retables and ceilings) or in architecture (timberwork structures and ceilings, doors, doorposts windows and beams timbers). Even though this species exists in all Azorean islands, with the exception of Graciosa (where it's extinct), Flores Island played a prominent role in the supply of this raw material for the remaining archipelago, as several references existing on historical documents show. Currently, it's ranked as protected species (Bern Convention and EU Habitats Directive), its felling is forbidden and its trading without certificate of provenance is illegal.

It's regarded as a key species in natural ecosystems balance, holding a relevant impact on the quality and abundance of water resources, soil fertility, the islands fauna and flora balance.

On the left: Illustration of the species *Juniperus brevifolia* accompanied by a corresponding wooden sample (a fragment of old wood applied in construction and disassembled as a result of the building demolition).

[LABEL 72](#)

Tenebrae Hearse

20th century (beginning)

Carved and polychrome wood

[LABEL 73](#)

Catafalque and Coffin of Senhor Morto [Dead Christ],

20th century (ca.1910)

Carved and polychrome wood

Parish of Nossa Senhora dos Remédios da Fajãzinha [Our Lady of Remedies of Fajãzinha] collection / Angra Diocese

Within the framework of the Holy Week ceremonies, the Tenebrae is one of the most impressive because of the solemn charge associated with it. Usually, this celebration – of prayer and meditation upon the Suffering, Passion and Death of Christ – takes place from Wednesday night until Maundy Thursday dawn and marks the beginning of the Easter Triduum.

This ceremony acquires a symbolic charge connected with the words of Christ to the chief priests and officers of the temple guard, on the night He was arrested on the Mount of Olives: «This is your hour—when darkness reigns» (Luke 22:53), the moment marking the beginning of His Passion. Usually carried out when night falls, the ceremony also presumes liturgical darkness, gradually turning off all the church lights, except one, the white candle placed on the top vertex of the **hearse**.

One of the religious objects that stand out is this candelabrum of 15 candles, symbolizing the apostles and those who accompanied Christ to His death (the Virgin and the three Marys), the white candle, which will never go out, being representative of Christ.

Still within the context of these ceremonies, at Fajãzinha, until the 1960s, at the beginning of Good Friday night, the Procession of the Burial of the Lord took place.

In honor of the crucifixion and death of Christ, this nocturnal procession covered the main streets of the place, with **Senhor Morto [Dead Christ]**, on His **coffin**, returning to the church, where He was laid on the central aisle (by the **chancel**) upon the catafalque, the Sermon of the Passion taking place afterwards.

In the procession circuit, silence as well as the light of lanterns and candles taken by participants prevailed. The **Senhor Morto [Dead Christ]**, statue is held on the interior of the mensa of the **altarpiece** and was acquired by initiative of Father Roberto Armas in 1910.

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