

The Day When Saint Peter and Paul Rocks Talk With Space

By Joaquim das Virgens – Joca PS7JN



As is known by most peoples, in January 2006 I did go to **Saint Peter and Saint Paul Island** (PY0S, IOTA SA-014) join in Expedition 200 of *Programa Arquipélago*. More than Amateur radio, I am Geologist and I integrate of researcher team of Program, with intent to develop studies in Saint Peter and Paul Archipelago area. Was 4 days in boat until the place where I debark in 20th and stay there until February 3rd making geological research and, logic, making QSO with worldwide. The island is a little rock exposure with total area of 1,7km², with a main island little larger than a soccer field. The distance to Natal is 1000 km being possible to reach only in boat.

Before the trip, I was contacted by Alain (IZ6BYY) who relays to Kenneth N5VHO about I am QRV in island. I get an antenna that I assembled to a Foxhunt organized by LABRE-RN in last December and a HT FT-209 found in surplus (it was with a default in squelch that made it open all time), only a detail, none of my 8 VHF transceivers was ok, only this with 100mW output power, so low, but not have another way.

One day in island I receive a

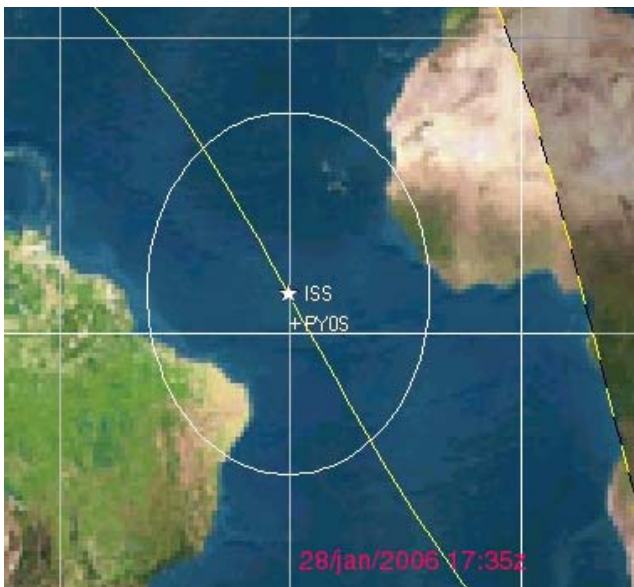


QTC from ED, PS7DX saying whit Fabiano, PY5RX was contacted with Kenneth about Bill want confirm if U should be QRV in PY0S. I was confirme in 145,990 simplex. In follow day, André Mota (not still ham), who stay to retransmit to me the important messages, say-me about operational problems to suggested mode and I say to confirm in I will use the normal set to voice in 145,800/144,490. The *schedule* was set to next weekend in 18/19 January. I was check the Orbitron and note all passes to season in island – by luck, because my laptop broke seriously and no more was possible follow the ISS orbit.



With me in Expedition 200, have more two researches, **André Giskard**, geology student who work with me in oceanic geologic survey and **Verônica Braga**, student of Fishery enginery in Recife. They not was believe in I will talk with astronauts still more with that rig over table and a tape meter and PVC antenna.

In the marked day, the prevision was **a beautiful pass with almost 70 degrees of high**. We were see a video in the computer of the Scientific Station when the clock informs that the hour of the pass arrive, turn on the radio, connect the antenna and stay waiting, out side of the house. When I percept that the coaxial cable was cut since it had been in the reach of atobás that they had pecked it all. The water that accumulates in ground penetrated in the cable. To complete, two elements were broken, what I could fix with an adhesive ribbon still in the time. At the moment it rained and **big waves broke on the island**. In little time, I heard the Bill calling: “*PY0S this is NAISS in*



International Space Station do you copy?” immediately I answered half without hopes: “*NAISS here is PY0S/PS7JN over?*” for my surprise, the Bill answers: “*Ok! I am copy you Loud and Clear, 59 QSL?*” I then was thinking "do not believe, do not believe, it cannot be... he must be speaking with another person, of the thing be in here, I do not arrive in the neighbor island..." when he spoke again: “*PS7JN in PY0S do you copy-me? 59*” yahoo! It was talk with me! there, the QSO a long waited. My colleagues of expedition if had intimidated to speak but I relayed some questions of them. Andre Giskard asked how Bill was seeing the Island from the space and he



answered that not, because the earth under was white of clouds. Verônica, only desired a good luck and success to it in the mission, and the Bill thanked her for the greetings.

During the pass, I was holding the radio with a hand and the antenna with the other, in mid of a lot of atobás. These birds are very aggressive with who approaches to them, especially when its defending your younglings. Still I took some pecks of them while it searched to hear the weak signal, attenuated for the structure of the house, but still it gave to mark another QSO for the following day.



It was in this hour that I took a pain peck in the foot and cried out ugly words (in Portuguese), natural... and not see that it was transmitting. The Bill asks, "say again please?" I answered: "Nothing, nothing, See you tomorrow Bill, NA1SS 73 of PY0S/PS7JN".



In this time I see for my colleagues and the two, way that saying, "wow is true" had said: "Hey man, congratulations!". In the other day, better weather, I can marked a new contact with NA1SS in the pas only 10 degrees of elevation, but I am alone in the house and only marked the pass talking more a bit with Bill, that informed that reach 92 countries of the DXCC. In the end of the pas arrive in two friend fish man (Rato and Fábio of Transmar I) that they had been impressed as I could be speaking with somebody pointing the antenna to high. It said: "the man who I am talk is in space, is an astronaut" so the fisherman said: "wow, you is a impossible

so, speak until with the mans of space! "

The notice of the contact quickly was spread, until the Commander of the Island (in Brasilia) knew and asked by wrote in the daily book of the Station the historical moment, and if it could I send him some material about the contact.

As I was half with a tide of bad luck, since all my VHF's were QRT unexplained, this contact marked a moment of much luck. To the night bad weather launched rays and thunders over the island, Murphy infuriated by not having take-me off this contact so waited. Despite hazards, I see that since in adverse conditions it is possible if to keep a contact, they are the mysteries of the 2 meters bands. 100mW for a radiant system without trustworthiness, send a signal by 1800 km? It is equivalent the 10,000 miles for watt in VHF, this is that is QRP! Of any form, the first contact was registered



between an astronaut in the space and a Brazilian oceanic island, happy by having been glad to the amateur radio. So, This was the Day where Saint Peter and Paul Island Spoke with the Space "

More photos



PY0S/P7JN in operation with NA1SS



Just to have a thing as the bay was



Debark charge in 1st day in shake sea



And we go left in a easy weather day



I had a finger cutter by peaked of a atobá



The sky in a night in northern Hemisphere

Photos: Joaquim das Virgens, André Giskard, Verônica Braga Text: Joaquim das Virgens