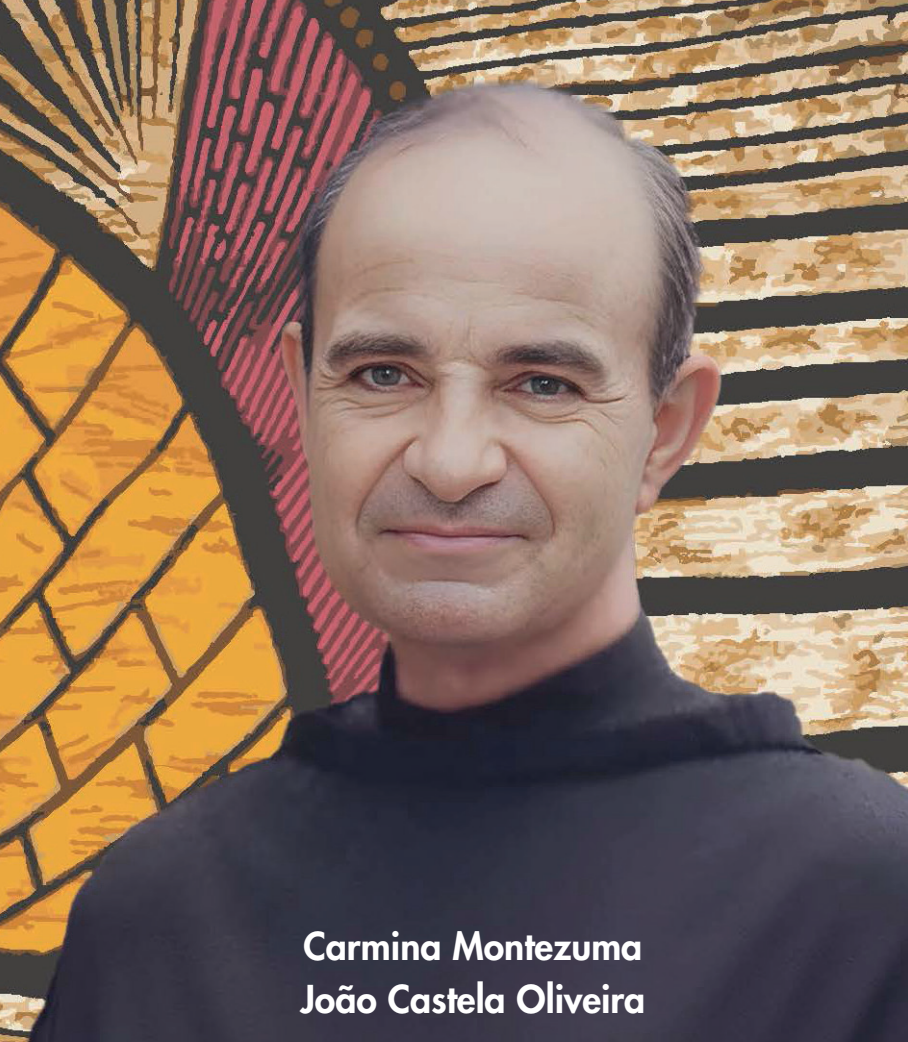


The Servant of God
Father Bento Manuel Nogueira, O.H.
HOSPITALER MISSIONARY



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1927 - 2003



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MANUEL NOGUEIRA'S EARLY YEARS

It was on 5 April 1927 that the second son of António Nogueira and Rosa da Conceição came into the world in Caracoleira, Carvalhal de Além: his name was Manuel, a typical Portuguese name meaning 'God-with- us'. A few days later, on 10 April, he was baptised by Fr Manuel Marques Ferreira in the Parish Church of St Simão de Litém, in the Leiria Diocese at the time (today's Leiria-Fátima).



Rosa and Antonio, Brother Bento's parents, 1950.

His father was a *'serious, sensible and prudent man'*. Although he devoted most of his life to farming in his home village, he emigrated three times to France and Brazil in order to provide a better life for his family. His mother worked as a housewife, taking care of the household chores and the moral and religious upbringing of the children, particularly when her husband was abroad. The couple had nine children: three boys - Manuel, Paulino and Agostino - and six girls - Emilia, Albertina, Maria da Conceição, Celeste, and two others who died in their infancy.



Little Manuel with his mother, 1930.

He spent his childhood in the countryside at a time of great hardship caused by the Second World War (1939-1945), when *'rice, sugar and other products sold in the shops were rationed'*. Manuel enjoyed playing games, but every day he also gave a hand with the household chores, *"looking after the four or five sheep that were part of the household economy, or going out to gather grass for the rabbits"*, because the whole family had to contribute to the upkeep of the family. As his aunt described him, Manuel was *'very sensible, responsible, quiet, and always liked helping his parents in whatever ways he could'*.

Manuel was born into a deeply devout Christian family who lived their faith in an exemplary manner. His sister Emilia recalled that *"at home we recited the Rosary every day as a family, in the evening, after dinner, and it was common practice for our parents to ask Manuel to lead them to keep him awake, which he did with pleasure"*. In addition to the practice of family prayers and taking part in all the liturgical celebrations and festivities in the parish, his parents accustomed Manuel to help the needy people in the village, as his sister recalled: *"my mother often sent him to take food to a destitute family living about 2 km away"*.

At the age of seven, in 1934, he joined the village primary school, as one of about fifty pupils. At school, he consistently proved to be a good and intelligent student, gifted with *"a prodigious memory and a remarkable ability to speak without letting emotion or bashfulness get the better of him"*, and he was always ready to help the others.

At the same time, Manuel began attending catechism classes. His Christian upbringing was pro-

foundly shaped by the devotion to Our Lady of Fatima of the parish priest and the parishioners of St Simão de Litém (since the priest, Fr Manuel Marques Ferreira, had served as the parish priest of Fatima in 1917, and was the first priest to speak to the three little shepherds about the Apparitions of the Virgin Mary).

All the people in the region also had a great devotion to Our Lady of Fatima, because some families had witnessed the 'Miracle of the Sun' at Cova da Iria on 13 October that year. Ever since then, the parish had been going on a pilgrimage to the Shrine at Fatima: *"every year, about two hundred people, adults and children, would wend their way there, on foot, accompanied by donkeys carrying food, smaller children and anyone who grew tired walking the 25 kilometres of the journey. On the way, prayers were said and songs of joy were sung"*. After making his First Communion, little Manuel regularly went on these annual pilgrimages.

This Christian parish experience gave rise to a large number of priestly and religious vocations, which included the Nogueira family with four of children consecrating themselves as Religious Hospitallers: Manuel (Brother Bento) and Paulino (Brother Paulino) became Brothers of St John of God, while Emilia (Sister Crisantina de Maria) and Maria da Conceição (Sister Paulina) became Sisters Hospitallers of the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

On 26 August 1940, at the age of 13, young Manuel was confirmed by in the parish church by the Bishop of Leiria, Mgr José Alves Correia da Silva. On

that occasion, Fr Manuel Ferreira invited him to join the JAC - Catholic Agricultural Youth movement - which was dedicated to evangelisation by promoting reflection, debate and activities among young people in his community.

In August the following year, Brother João Gamero Alexandre, a priest and Brother of the Hospitaller Order of Saint John of God, also from S. Simão de Litém, paid a visit to the family. He celebrated Mass in the parish church, and after Mass he spoke to a group of young people from the Catholic Agricultural Youth movement, inviting them to continue their studies at the School of the Hospitaller Order in Telhal, and eventually become Brothers of Saint John of God. Manuel accepted the challenge and left home, with the permission of his parents, who were happy with his choice.



Health Centre at Telhal (Sintra), 1942.

HIS HOSPITALLER FORMATION AND RELIGIOUS CONSECRATION

At the end of August 1941, young Manuel arrived at the Sacred Heart Care Home in Telhal, a farm surrounded by vast farmlands, with the beautiful Serra de Sintra in the distance. There he embarked on a new stage in his life, in a very different setting from his own rural world. Although the House resembled a small village, with very welcoming tree-lined avenues and gardens, it was a Care Home, consisting of several wards.

In those days, the Community consisted of 70 Brothers of Saint John of God (Fatebenefratelli), two of whom were priests, all living out the Christian mission of Hospitality in prayer and devoting themselves to caring for the mentally ill. This Community was joined by a group of young people in hospitalier formation - aspirants, postulants and novices - as well as numerous co-workers (employees) who contributed to the smooth running of the House. In the wards there were 428 mentally ill male in-patients, divided into four pavilions and a sanatorium for pulmonary diseases, especially tuberculosis. Medical care was provided by a clinical staff of three doctors, and nursing care was provided by the Brothers, organised hierarchically by the Head Nurse, the other nurses, and the support staff.

It was in this Care Home that Manuel Nogueira completed all the stages of his religious formation: Aspirancy, Postulancy and Novitiate, until his consecration in Hospitality, as a Brother of Saint John of God. On 1 September 1941, at the age of 14, he entered the Aspirancy, a period of formation for boys aged 11 to 17 who wish to enter the Religious Life, while receiving an academic, civic and Christian education. In his school year there were 33 young aspirants, coming from different regions of the country.

The aspirant Manuel Nogueira *“was very well-mannered, kind, popular with his classmates and intelligent, so that the superiors appointed him a monitor, to work with the prefects and to carry out certain tasks necessary for the smooth running of the group. When any new aspirants arrived, he would mentor them to learn how to carry out their school duties”*.

In addition to time devoted to prayer and study, according to the Rule of the Order, the aspirants used to assist the Brothers in caring for the sick or in farm work, thereby fostering their future vocation as Hospitalier Brothers.

Usually, the Community of Brothers of the Care Home involved the aspirants in liturgical celebrations and solemn commemorations, welcoming them as a family and initiating them into the Religious Life. One of the most significant moments occurred on 2 January 1943, with the departure of the first three missionary Brothers for the Leper colony at Alto Molócuè in Quelimane, Mozambique. On that same day, the Brothers posed for a group photo

with the young aspirants, an image which Manuel carried with him in his heart for the rest of his life.

Throughout his Hospitaller formation, Manuel Nogueira was to witness the departure of the first groups of missionaries to Mozambique and he read all their exciting account of their journeys and stories about the missions that were published in the magazine *Hospitalidade*, which would certainly have motivated him, years later, in his vocation as a Hospitaller missionary.

Another important event in which the aspirant Manuel participated was the commemoration of the *50th anniversary of the Telhal Care Home*, on 29 June 1943, when the Cardinal Patriarch of Lisbon, Manuel Gonçalves Cerejeira, presided at the liturgi-



Celebration for the departure of the first missionary Brothers for Mozambique, Sintra 25 December 1942.

cal celebrations and imparted the papal blessing on the Portuguese Province of the Hospitaller Order. One of the aspirants had this to say about this visit of the Cardinal Patriarch: *"We were all fascinated by the friendly way in which he spoke to us and the kindness with which he made us sit around him to take the photo commemorating that visit with which he had honoured us."*

At the end of the Aspirancy, on 12 September 1943, even before reaching the age of 17, Manuel Nogueira was admitted to the Postulancy. This new stage of formation was the period canonically prescribed for the study and discernment of the Religious vocation and the Charism of Hospitality, under the guidance of the Master of Postulants, Brother João José Caetano Pinto at the time. Manu-



Group of Novices and Scholastics, Sintra 11 July 1946.

el, who was very dedicated to his studies, was often asked by the Master to tutor his less-well prepared companions, a task which he performed with great joy and goodwill.

Manuel Nogueira continued his Hospitaller formation and was admitted to the Novitiate on 14 August 1944. On that day he received the habit and was given the religious name of Brother Bento.

The year 1945 marked two important events for Brother Bento Nogueira: the celebration of the



Group of students from the nursing course, Sintra 1948-49.

450th anniversary of the birth of St John of God on 8 March, and the end of the Second World War on 2 September.

Brother Bento made his Simple Profession at the age of 18, on 8 December 1945, in the Chapel of the Telhal Care Home. On that day he made the three vows common to the consecrated life: poverty, chastity and obedience, as well as the Order's specific vow of Hospitality.

He continued his formation at the Scholasticate for a year, where he deepened his consecrated life and consolidated his chosen vocation under the guidance of Fr Martinho Barroco Guiomar. Brother Bento lived in the Community during this period, working as an auxiliary nurse.

In 1948, he attended the general nursing course at the "Brothers of St John of God Nursing College", directed by Dr Diogo Alves Furtado, a physician at the Telhal Care Home, where the College was based. This course followed the same syllabus as the Nursing Course of the Civil Hospitals of Lisbon, with practical lessons taking place in the wards of the Care Home. Brother Bento passed the Course's final examinations in December 1949 at the Dr Artur Ravara School of Nursing in Lisbon, and was awarded his professional diploma, qualifying him to practise as a nurse.

The year 1950 was marked by the grand celebrations of the "Fourth Centenary of the Death of St John of God", which lasted for a whole year. Brother Bento Nogueira took part in many events of these

commemorations, in particular, on 2 October 1950, with the arrival in Portugal of the Relics of St John of God, which had been brought come from Granada.

On 4 and 5 January 1951, he took part, as an acolyte, in the inauguration of the new chapel of the Telhal Care Home, consecrated to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. It was in this chapel that he was to make his Solemn Profession on 26 April 1951, at the age of 24.



Brother Bento on the day of his Solemn Profession, Telhal Care Home (Sintra) 26 April 1951.

HIS ORDINATION

On 14 June 1952, Brother João Gameiro asked Brother Bento Nogueira the long-awaited question: whether he wanted to study Theology in order to become a priest. He immediately answered yes, as this was a dream he had been nurturing for years. "This will be a memorable year in my history, as the year God was pleased to set me on the path to the priesthood. My God, I give you a thousand thanks and I pray for many graces." And so, a few days later, he left for Angra do Heroísmo (on the island of Terceira, in the Azores), where he lived in the Saint Raphael House Community and attended formation courses at the diocesan seminary. During that school year Brother Bento had four other Brothers as class companions.



Group of seminarians at the Angra do Heroísmo Diocesan Seminary, 1952-55.

Apart from his studies in the seminary, Brother Bento's life included all the usual daily tasks in the Religious Community and nursing the mentally ill, especially at night, on weekends and holidays. In this Care Home, he also attended various events and festive activities, such as celebrations, cultural activities and catechising the local children. One activity in which he excelled in 1955 was his collaboration, together with other young Brothers, on the occupational therapy newspaper "O Irresponsável" produced by the patients of the Home.

While he was at the Seminary in Angra do Heroísmo, Brother Bento received a letter from the General Curia of the Hospitaller Order inviting him to attend the Hospitaller Order's International School of Spirituality and Missiology in Rome in June 1956. Following this invitation, he left for the Eternal City on 6 June, staying at the St John Calibita Hospital on Tiber Island, where there was a Community of



The Inauguration of the International School in Rome, 14 October 1956.

about 25 Brothers, including the Superior General and other members of the General Curia. Brother Bento therefore lived in a very large Community that "filled the elaborate Chapel of St John Calibita for prayers and community celebrations of the Eucharist, and the monumental refectory, with its vault and pulpit, used for almost every meal". For some time, he devoted himself to studying the Italian language at this International School.

A few months later, on 22 October, he began a course in Theology at the Lateran University, officially known as the Ateneo Lateranense.

The general knowledge and culture he acquired during his stay in Rome were very important for his training as a Religious and as a nurse, enabling him to be aware of and sensitive to pastoral issues regarding the sick and also to deepen his knowledge of matters concerning the history of medicine and care.

On 9 April 1960 he delivered his final dissertation in Dogmatic Theology to Mgr Piolante, entitled 'How to Reconcile Divine Mercy with the Unequal Distribution of Graces'. In May and June of the same year, he took his final examinations, obtaining the highest marks in his degree in Theology: *Magna cum Laude Probatus*.

The Provincial Superior, Brother José Joaquim Fernandes, wanted Brother Bento Nogueira to be ordained priest in Portugal. Responding to his Superior's wishes, he arrived at the Telhal Care Home in the early days of July 1960.

On 14 August of that year, Brother Bento Nogueira and Brother Aires Gameiro, who came from the same parish, were ordained priests in the chapel of the Care Home, where the following day, at 10 a.m., the newly ordained Father Bento Nogueira celebrated his First Mass. On 31 August, he celebrated Mass in the Chapel of the Apparitions, at Cova da Iria (Fatima), for a group of pilgrims.

After graduating in Theology, he resumed his ecclesiastical studies in Rome. On 18 October 1960 at the Lateran University he began the one-year specialisation course in Pastoral Care. During that academic year he continued his hospitaller priestly mission, celebrating Mass and visiting the sick and administering the sacraments to them in the Sala Assunta, the ancient 'ward' of the St John Calibita Hospital on Tiber Island.



Brother Bento with his family in his native village of S. Simao de Litem, 1959.

During this period, he became very interested in the pastoral problems of health and hospitality, and began to author a series of articles on the history of Medicine, published under the title "Medicine down the Centuries"; for the Portuguese provincial magazine, Hospitalidade.

In June 1961, he sat his final examinations for the Pastoral Care Course, obtaining excellent marks. In the meantime, the Provincial Superior wrote to Brother Bento Nogueira, asking him to return immediately to Portugal to attend a meeting of the Masters of Religious Formation of the Portuguese Province. This request only left Brother Bento time to pay a visit to St Peter's Basilica and receive a final papal blessing. He left for Portugal by train, arriving in Lisbon on 11 July that year.



His priestly ordination in the Chapel of the Care home in Telhal (Sintra) on 14 August 1960.

HOSPITALER TEACHER AND MASTER

The nine years of ecclesiastical studies between 1952 and 1961, and his ordination to the priesthood, gave Brother Bento Nogueira the necessary preparation to become a formator in the Portuguese Province, a task he accomplished with total dedication for more than ten years. During this time, he was living in the St John of God Care Home in Barcelos between 1961 and 1966, and in the Telhal Care Home between 1966 and 1972. His lessons were to remain embedded in the young minds of the stu-



Brother Bento, Master of Novices and newly professed Brothers in the St John of God House in Barcelos, 1961-62.

dents, thirsting for knowledge, eager to understand their place in the plan God had prepared for them:

"As for the doctors, we are their right hand; without us they can do nothing... But we live for people's bodies and souls; many no longer expect anything from the doctor, but rather from us, until they die. Whereas magistrates and judges decide everything according to the law, we decide everything with love. St John of God held that all men and women were good or were inclined to being good.... And he made them all happy. As for the lawyers, we are advocates for the poor, before the wealthy and the authorities, and most of all, before God [...]. Soldiers? Yes, but of Christ the King. [...] Teachers? Yes, but of the only science that is taught by the example of love... Sportsmen? Yes, but for useful purposes. [...] Everything that the other professions have that is beautiful and good for humanity is found in ours. Many serve the wealthy and abandon the poor. We try to put them all on an equal footing and unite them in love. And all this is done to an elevated degree, in a heavenly, supernatural manner. We are not servants of the wretched, but of the living God. [...] Our profession consecrates us. [...] We are the people on whom the world of suffering can rely."

On 21 July 1961, Brother Bento was appointed Novice Master. A few days later, he joined the Community of the St John of God Care Home in Barcelos, to devote himself to teaching, which was announced in the "Bollettino di Informazione Familiare" magazine: "We have high hopes with the appointment of new Novice Master, because he is not only an exemplary Brother but is highly qualified

having recently been awarded his Licentiate with the highest marks in the Eternal City [Rome]”.

Meanwhile, during the month of August, Brother Bento had been to visit the Care Home in Telhal and was entrusted with the spiritual direction of the young postulants and a few scholastics. Life in the Care Home at Barcelos involved a great deal of teaching, providing formation courses for the first-year novices, focusing on Hospitality, as he emphasised in his lectures:

“Our mission is to redress poverties. [...] when things are broken, we try to repair them; if someone is faint-hearted, we try to encourage them; if they have fallen, we help them to get back to their feet... We try to give people back what is rightfully theirs; to restore to them the health, the well-being, the joy of living that they had lost... We seek remedies, at least to alleviate suffering... We trust that everyone goes away after meeting us feeling better than they were when they first came to us...”

He also served as chaplain, helping with children’s catechesis, organising courses and lectures in external institutions. And every week he would give pastoral support to the Community and the patients in another care home, the Casa de Saúde S. José, near Barcelos.

It was during this period, between 1962 and 1965, that the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council took place in Rome, intent on bringing greater openness to the Catholic Church, a new pastoral care approach had a direct impact on Brother Bento

Nogueira as priest and formator of the Portuguese Province. He immediately implemented the liturgical reforms, such as the use of the local language and celebrating the Eucharist facing the people.

From February 1966 to 1972 he lived in the Community of the Telhal Care Home. During these six years he worked as Master, Chaplain, Spiritual Director of the Apostolic School, Catechetical Guide and Pastoral Co-worker in the Church of Algueirão, Sintra.

All his work in Hospitality revolved around the sick, caring for others as one of the ways of achieving holiness, as he said in one of his own texts addressed to the students of the Apostolic School: *“To be a Hospitaller saint, one must be able to forget oneself, to spend one’s life completely at the disposal of others, namely [...] the sick”*. In another text he stat-



Director of the Apostolic School at Telhal (Sintra), 1970.

ed that the motto of the Brothers of St John of God had to be construed to mean *'welcoming all needy people and not only those who deserve it. People in need must be welcomed without distinction; we must give without measure, do good without limits, sacrifice our own efforts as long as Our Lord grants them to us, hoping that everyone without a family of their own will find one with them [the Brothers of St. John of God]'*.

Knowing how to welcome the sick and the needy into the great Family of the Hospitaller Order of St John of God is one of the most important values which the Brothers soon learn as they enter the Postulancy and continue on their formative journey towards their profession of simple vows. While he was the Spiritual Director and teacher at the Apostolic School in Telhal, he always tried to inculcate this idea in the young aspirants.

At that time, Brother Bento was also the driving force behind several performances of plays at the Telhal Care Home as a means of evangelisation and fraternal conviviality: one of them was the "Passion and Death of Our Lord", performed by the children and presented on 1 April 1969 in the St Joseph Pavilion, as a way to prepare the guests for Easter.

During this period between 1967 and 1972, Brother Bento Nogueira was also in charge of the General Nursing Training Courses and, between 1969 and 1972, of the courses for Auxiliary Nurses at the *Escola de Enfermagem dos Irmãos de S. João de Deus* run by the Brothers of St John of God, which had been set up in the Telhal Care Home. In these

courses, he taught 'Professional Ethics' and 'The History of Nursing', for which he wrote the text books.

On 8 December 1970, he celebrated the Silver Jubilee of his Religious Profession in the chapel of the Telhal Care Home.

The year 1972 marked a milestone in Brother Bento Nogueira's life: he was appointed in charge of the Hospitaller Mission in Mozambique, and on 5 November of that year, the catechists of Telhal and the students of the Apostolic School paid tribute to him in a farewell celebration. Two days later, on 7 November, he began his missionary life by leaving for Africa, because *'the good Religious Brother keeps nothing for himself of what God has given him; he spends everything to do good to those in need. It is not for himself; what constantly concerns him are the sufferings and pain of others'*.



His Pastoral Visit to Upper Molocué, Mozambique 12 December 1972.

This was the path taken by Brother Nogueira: “to work, but not for oneself; to do good, but not only for one’s own soul; to be holy, but to help others; to walk towards Our Lord, but to lead others to Him.” He himself put it in these terms: [the Hospitaller Brother] “bends his knee before God, but he also bends his body before those who are suffering. He raises his hands to heaven, but does not shrink from using them to bathe and treat people along the way. He speaks words of love to Our Lord crucified and imprisoned in the Tabernacle, but he also comforts those held captive and crucified in bed by sickness.” Always selfless and confident in his faith, Brother Bento has left us a rich legacy, which deserves to be remembered in order to inspire others to follow in his footsteps.



Missionary in Upper Molócuè, Mozambique, Christmas 1972.

MISSIONARY IN MOZAMBIQUE

The Concordat and the Missionary Agreement between the Holy See and the Portuguese Government signed on 7 May 1940, and the invitation from the Archbishop of Lourenço Marques (present-day Maputo) to the Portuguese Province made it possible for the Brothers of St John of God to start providing health care in Mozambique in 1943.

Contact with the first missionaries leaving for Africa left a lasting impression on the young Manuel, while he was still a student, already eager to serve God and help the poorest, shaping his heart definitively for a possible future as a missionary.

In the meantime, now that he was a priest, Brother Bento decided to follow in the footsteps of those missionaries, and left for Mozambique where he began his life as a Hospitaller missionary on 28 November in the Sanatorium (Gafaria) of Upper Molócuè and at the St John of God Mission in the diocese of Quelimane. Missionary work is not only undertaken by Religious or Lay missionaries, but also by priests, since they represent the person of Christ before men and women, and their lives are also consecrated to serving the missions.

From his earliest days, he sought to fulfil what might be considered one of the main aspects of the Church’s missionary vocation: proclaiming the Word of God in order for His Kingdom to spread throughout the earth.

So he immediately dedicated himself with great enthusiasm to his apostolic tasks and to teaching in the Apostolic School of Upper Molócuè, quickly adapting to life in Mozambique. During that period, he witnessed the evils of the colonial war, the sufferings of the people and the process of decolonisation that eventually led to the country's independence, a period marked by great political, economic and social instability, but also of mission, with the hope of a better future.

In one of his texts prepared for a spiritual retreat for future priests in 2000, reflecting on God's call to the Missions, he wrote:

“Called and sent on a mission. The choice, in the end, is mutual: we have chosen Him and He has chosen us, not to become rich and prosperous but for the mission. It is the same mission that the Son of God came to accomplish on earth. And it is of the utmost importance for humanity, because it is all about bringing people closer to God, their Father, and to their fellow brothers and sisters.”

BROTHER BENTO NOGUEIRA IN NAMPULA

During the period of transition to the independence of Mozambique, which took place on 25 June 1975, the Brothers of St John of God in the area gave proof of heroism and perseverance in the face of the difficulties imposed by the prevailing socio-political situation, demonstrating fortitude, capacity for sacrifice and an unprecedented dedication to the sick, the general population and the Church.

Those were difficult times and they were also reflected in the manner with which the Church was treated by the authorities. And it was in this climate of insecurity that, on 25 June 1974, Brother Bento left Upper Molócuè and moved to Nampula, to the St Raphael Psychiatric Hospital that had been created by the Portuguese Province, inaugurated on 25 August 1971. Having joined the Community of this hospital, he was appointed Director of the Nampula Formation Centre of the Hospitaller Order, in charge of the Postulancy, Novitiate and Scholasticate, as well as being the Novice Master. In addition to his duties as Formator and Chaplain, he worked as a Nurse and Occupational Therapist with the patients who carried out farm work on the land belonging to the Brothers, the so-called 'machambas'.

Shortly after independence, the Mozambican federal government nationalised the assets of the religious institutions dedicated to health care, social care and education. Against this background, in July 1975 St Raphael's Psychiatric Hospital was nation-

alised and renamed 'Nampula Psychiatric Hospital', although the Chapel remained open to the public, attended by about 150 Christians, who used to take part in the Eucharistic celebrations at which Brother Bento presided.

In 1976, the Bishop of Nampula, Mgr Manuel Vieira Pinto, appointed Brother Bento to take charge of ecumenical relations with the other Christian churches in the region. He continued his work as Occupational Therapy Technician, at the same time carrying out other tasks in the Psychiatric Hospital.

The country fell into turmoil and the people of Nampula were traumatised, and no one escaped unscathed. People were growing increasingly unhappy with the state of great uncertainty into which the country had plunged.

Brother Nogueira witnessed the escalating violence in Nampula, like a wave that was sweeping



The Chapel of St Raphael Psychiatric Hospital in Nampula, Mozambique, 1980.

everything away, plunging many families into destitution. Yet, in spite of the problems, as a Brother of Saint John of God, fulfilling his obligations to the Church and the Hospitaller Order, he never forgot them, hoping always to help the people overcome their predicament, through evangelisation and by coming to know Jesus.

As FRELIMO (Mozambique Liberation Front) propagated its communist ideology, Mozambican Church leaders, opposed to that ideology, tried to organise small communities of Christians. At the beginning of 1978, a group of more active and enterprising Christians from the parish of St Joseph, where the Nampula Psychiatric Hospital was located, tried to organise a meeting with Brother Nogueira to discuss the need to form a network of 'underground cells', made up of Christians. The priest agreed to the idea and during that year, he baptised children, taught catechism to young people and adults, trained catechists, organised Christian formation courses, adoration of the Blessed Sacrament and reciting the Rosary.

The authorities of the communist regime were unaware of this, but rumours about these meetings of Christians were reported to them by informers lurking everywhere. They accused Brother Nogueira of being a dangerous subversive element and kept him under constant surveillance.

In early 1979, in order for these 'clandestine cells' to reach out to more people, Brother Nogueira decided to set up 'pastoral influence zones', where Christians could meet, reflect and pray, always under the guidance of animators with appropriate Christian formation.

BROTHER BENTO NOGUEIRA'S ARREST

At the end of April 1979, the government launched an aggressive campaign against all religions, particularly the Catholic Church. The siege grew increasingly fierce.

Everything happened on the evening of 11 May 1979, a Friday, around 10pm, when Brother Nogueira was preparing his pastoral activities for the weekend. He heard the convent bell ring and found himself confronted by two police officers, who promptly arrested him without a word of explanation. They searched his room and, as they discovered material they held suspicious, questioned him. As they left, they took money, tapes, documents, papers, etc. with them. Not having had a chance to warn the other Brothers, Brother Bento was taken to the military prison in Nampula, where he was humiliated and deprived of all his personal belongings. They gave him a threadbare blanket and took him to his cell in his socks, not even allowing him to keep his rosary beads with him. His deep faith did not allow him to be afraid and he remained calm and trusting in God, offering all his sufferings and deprivations to Him.

News of his arrest quickly reached Portugal, causing great concern among the Brothers of St John of God, his family and his friends.

As time passed, he resigned himself to life in prison and spent all his time in prayer. He always kept

the people of Nampula in his thoughts, especially the Christians who worshipped in the hospital chapel, as well as his Brothers of the Order and the 'Hospitaller Family', asking God to inspire them to continue without him until the 'storm' had passed over,

Repeatedly interrogated and humiliated, he always refused to divulge any names, which only increased the tension during his interrogations.

He was released on 7 June 1979, which made him suspect the whole process, knowing full well that the authorities' real intention was to imprison him again and expel him from Mozambique as soon as possible.

And so it was that one month later, on 8 July, he was arrested for the second time. He stayed in prison for 130 days, during which time he was transferred from Nampula prison to Machava prison.

Once again he was interrogated and violently humiliated to the point of collapsing. One of his tormentors, a prison guard, was particularly cruel towards him and lost no opportunity to lash out at our good missionary. One day he moved very close to a window, and was caught by this ruthless guard who wickedly forced him to run around the courtyard, driving him to run faster and faster. In this ridiculous display, one of his sandals split open and he lost it, and the same things happened soon after to the other, which provoked the guard's sadistic laughter, who ordered him to run even faster, even barefoot. Brother Nogueira only stopped when

the guard felt satisfied with this 'humiliation', and walked away, bored.

He was transferred to Machava prison on 3 October of that year, where he soon realised that the regime in this prison would be much harsher, because they did not allow him to have with him even the objects he had brought from Nampula: simple things, like a blanket or a spoon. He was assigned the number 1452, which his guards often use to call him, instead of using his name, to humiliate him in an inhuman and ridiculous manner. They assigned him to cell number 14 in pavilion 1, where there was no bed or blankets, so he was forced to sleep on the floor, in the cold, lying on a bath towel, and using his shoes as a pillow.

On his first day in that prison, the guards inspected his cell and not only forced him to stand naked in the corridor, but they also removed his rosary with which he used to pray. His guards at Machava Prison began enjoying humiliating him very early in the morning, especially at ablutions time, and then again at lunch time, when they passed him his food on a plate without any cutlery to make him eat with his fingers or use a tube of toothpaste as a fork.

He was therefore kept locked up, isolated and subjected to a routine that tormented and irritated him. He was mortified by the isolation, because it prevented him being able to help all those desperate people around Nampula who needed his help. Thinking back over those days, Brother Nogueira said that his only chance of meeting anybody was with his Heavenly Father, who could always be

found anywhere, even in a prison like the one in which he had been cooped up.

On 15 November 1979, Brother Nogueira was transferred to the Major Seminary in Maputo, where he remained for more than six months until 25 May 1980, under house arrest, together with two other priests who were in the same predicament. In one of the first letters written after leaving the political prison in Machava, Brother Nogueira vented his feelings about his time in prison and his new status as a 'prisoner':

"As you know, I have been through things a bit out of the ordinary around here, since last May, and even now I am still not out of the woods. What are we to do? It would be easy if we could always choose the sacrifices we like to offer. But sometimes we have to accept what we have not chosen and would never choose, even if we had the chance. And then it is no longer a trifling feat to bear witness, before God and man, to showing sufficient self-control and to go on murmuring 'fiat', if only in a whisper, almost muffled by the seething pent-up sense of revulsion that overwhelms 'my' general emotional state. Have I been successful? At least, I haven't stopped trying to succeed - in my own fashion. I once asked myself if the state I was in might ensure that I would climb a rung higher in what we call 'deepening', 'merit', 'perfection'. I found it very difficult to come up with a satisfactory answer ... It seemed to me that it would be to no avail if, on going back to my duties, I had not made greater efforts at conversion; and that, after all, it was a question that was not even worth asking. As far as my suffering was concerned, clearly the worst thing for me was

the psychological pain: the sense of “helplessness” due to being kept away from the things that mattered to me; the “not knowing” what was going on behind the scenes; the “uncertainty” about the outcome, etc. May everything be done to the greater glory of God’.

Years later, when asked what he had experienced in prison, Brother Nogueira once replied: “Nobody likes being in prison, especially when you don’t know how it will end! To suffer for the love of Christ is a gift that few are granted!”. It was thanks to this spirit of abandonment into the arms of Our Lord that Brother Nogueira was able to surmount his trials in prison.

He was extremely apprehensive for the Christian community in Nampula, because he began to realise that it was going to a long time before he would be returning, knowing that this might undermine all the work he had been doing for many years, both as a Hospitaller and as a Religious Brother. He gradually came to understand the reasons purportedly adopted to justify his arrest. He was accused of using nationalised facilities and equipment for religious purposes and of writing disrespectful letters about the Mozambican regime. All this was fabricated, and were nothing but insinuations. All the authorities wanted was to control and obstruct at all costs any direct contact between the missionaries and the people they were working with and serving.

Furthermore, Brother Nogueira was apprehensive about the possibility of being expelled from the country.

NEW PARISH PASTORAL CARE PATHWAYS

In 1980, the Mozambican authorities granted Brother Nogueira special permission to leave the country to travel to Portugal, where he took the opportunity to visit some of the Houses of the Hospitaller Order from 25 May. During that same period he was also invited to a number of parishes and institutions to give account of his mission and his imprisonment in Nampula. He attracted an enormous number of people interested in listening to him: not only Brothers or individuals involved with the Order, but also people who had heard about the work of this great man, gifted with immense courage and missionary spirit. He was able to acquaint them with the story of his life, and they admired him for his missionary work in Africa, which also enhanced his reputation as an enlightened and God-inspired man. Brother Nogueira always maintained that the work performed by the Brothers of St John of God in the hospital was:

“The ante-chamber to Paradise, and that Jesus was most likely to be found in both places: in the hospital, it was Jesus who was suffering; in Paradise, it was Jesus rejoicing. Here, it was Jesus labouring; there, it was Jesus rewarding the labourers [...] But, in short, it was always Jesus. Here, we suffer with Him; there, we will rejoice with Him. But whether we are in hospital or in Heaven, we will always have Jesus by our side’.

He returned to Nampula on 28 August 1980, and on 24 October he resumed his work at the Nampula Psychiatric Hospital as a nurse and an ordi-

nary worker. He was deeply distraught to see the old chapel turned into a base for political activities by the regime. Yet despite all the problems, he remained undaunted and, eager to make up for the time lost in prison, he pressed on with his work with the Christian community.

On 13 February 1982, the Bishop of Nampula, Mgr Manuel Vieira Pinto, invited him to work with Nampula Cathedral, to be able to devote more of his time to his pastoral care work. The bishop also asked him to organise a number of Christian formation courses, to participate in catechesis, organise the diocesan archives and edit the magazines *Vida Nova* [New Life] and *Informação aos Missionários* [News for Missionaries].

Life marched on, but Brother Bento Nogueira grew increasingly worried about the plight of the



Brother Bento, far left, second row, at the Portuguese Provincial Chapter, 1980.

Mozambican people, caused above all by the growing severity of the war and the terrible drought that was ravaging the whole country, making life very difficult for the people. But not everything was bad. On 23 October 1983, he presided at the ceremony for the construction of a new church in Nampula, dedicated to Saint John of God. The following year, on 15 February, he began to organise pastoral care in the Parish of St Peter, focusing on reviving and reinvigorating catechesis for children and young people. As part of his hospitaller care work, on 11 May 1984 he was given the responsibility for the General Services of the Hospital which included cleaning, hygiene and interior decoration.

The year 1985 opened with an invitation from Brother Aires Gameiro, a priest and Brother of the Order, to join him in Portugal to celebrate the Silver Ju-



Visitation by the Provincial Superior Brother Julio Faria of the Nampula Community in January 1982.

bilee of his priestly ordination. Brother Bento Nogueira took advantage of his return to Portugal not only to enjoy a short holiday in his homeland, but also to seek the support of several associations for the people of Nampula, asking for all kinds of help and creature comforts, which would then be sent to Mozambique in containers by Caritas Portugal on his return.

On 24 July, he took part in a pilgrimage to the Holy Land offered by the Superiors to celebrate the Jubilee of the two priests. As he trod the same paths along which Jesus and His Apostles had walked almost 2,000 years earlier, Brother Nogueira deepened his faith, seizing this opportunity to meditate and search for answers that would help him to further improve his missionary work. On 15 August, he celebrated the Silver Jubilee of his priestly ordination in the Telhal Care Home chapel in the presence of the whole Com-



Celebration of the Silver Jubilee of his priestly ordination in Telhal (Sintra), on 15 August 1985.

munity of his Brothers, his family and his friends. On 8 September, he returned to Mozambique.

The civil war raged on, causing more bloodshed and inflicting immense suffering on the people. Despite the war, in April 1986 he was entrusted with the task of organising and leading the Diocesan Commission for Ecumenism. That same year he was also appointed parish priest of the Parish of St Joseph, vacating St Peter's.

On 10 May 1987, the Archbishop of Nampula appointed him as a member of the Vocations Commission, and on 24 May, he was selected to be in charge of the spiritual formation of candidates to the priesthood in the diocesan seminary. His assignments continued increasing and, on 7 June, he was put in charge of the religious activities in Nampula Cathedral.

In 1988, in preparation for Pope John Paul II's Apostolic Visit to Mozambique, he was asked by the Archbishop of Nampula to help organise the programme for the visit.

In that same year Brother Bento Nogueira had the immense joy of seeing the reopening for worship of the former St Raphael Chapel of the Nampula Psychiatric Hospital, which had been closed for over six years. The political situation in Mozambique was beginning to show signs of change, especially with regard to relations with the Church. He was working extremely hard, taking on ever more duties which was very tiring but also gratifying, seeing the number of the faithful flocking increasingly to worship at the religious celebrations and participating in a variety of Christian activities.

A TIME OF UNCERTAINTY, BUT ALSO OF GREAT HOPE

On 14 December 1989, two General Councilors arrived in Nampula representing the Superior General of the Hospitaller Order of St John of God: Brother Pascual Piles and Brother Raimondo Fabello.

The process of separating the Houses on the African continent from the European Provinces of the Hospitaller Order which had founded them, had begun. Two General Delegations and later two Provinces were to be created across Africa to reinforce the presence and work of the Hospitaller Order on the African continent. The Brothers of the Nampula Community were to join the General Delegation of the Hospitaller Order in Africa, with its headquarters in Lomé, Togo.

This was a source of great concern to Brother Bento Nogueira because of the possibility of his having to leave Mozambique, and he feared that this might lead to a decline in the number of members of the Order in a country that was in such great need. In Nampula, the process of transferring the Community continued throughout the following year, with the visitation of the Provincial Superior of Portugal, Brother João Carvalho Pereira, from 4 to 11 January 1990.

Throughout that year, Brother Bento Nogueira promoted the formation of parish leaders and catechists, made frequent visits to the parishes in Nampula, trained priests for the diocese, worked to pro-

mote new vocations, helped to set up a diocesan Catholic radio station (which was to be launched in 1995, as Rádio Encontro, where he was a regular speaker) and he promoted the project to found the Catholic University of Mozambique.

In May 1990, he went to Portugal to attend the Provincial Chapter, where he submitted a very comprehensive report, and managed to get the Portuguese Province to take responsibility for maintaining the Religious Community of Nampula, pledging to regularly send young Brothers for practical training and support.



Father Nogueira in Nampula in 1990.

From 8 to 15 June that same year, he took part in the Chapter of the General Delegation of Africa and was appointed Superior of the Nampula Community, which would be enlarged by the presence of Brother Javier Murillo, another Brother and a Portuguese scholastic, Brother Jorge Coelho Dias, who arrived in Nampula on 17 September 1992, although he would only stay there for a few months.

Seeing a glimmer of hope for Mozambique's future, Brother Nogueira thanked God for the Peace Agreement signed on 4 October between the Mozambican authorities and RENAMO (Mozambican National Resistance). That same day, he organised an ecumenical celebration in Nampula Cathedral, attended by Catholics and members of other Christian churches.

The following year, on 8 to 19 January, he received the Canonical Visitation in Nampula of the Major Superiors of the Hospitaller Order from Rome, Portugal and Africa, coinciding with the solemn commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the arrival of the first Brothers of Saint John of God in Mozambique. Brother Nogueira was very actively involved in these celebrations of such importance for the Hospitaller Order and for the future presence of the Brothers of Saint John of God in that country.

At the end of October 1994, since he was not a Mozambican citizen, he was chosen as one of the international observers to monitor the elections to be held in that country. Although this responsibility had little to do with his religious life, the fact in itself revealed that he was considered an honest man, worthy of all respect.

In those turbulent times, which were also very full of hope, with many innovations and pastoral activities, 1995 began in the best possible way with the inauguration and blessing, on 15 January, of the Chapel of St Simon, belonging to the parish of St John of God. Four days later, the young Hospitaller Vítor Lameiras, who would later do his Postulancy in Nampula, arrived at Nampula airport to launch the CHACRIMO Project (*Centro Hospitaleiro de Apoio à Criança Moçambicana* - Hospitaller Centre to Support Mozambican Children), together with two other members of the Young Hospitallers Movement, Aníbal Santos and Fátima Baptista. Other members of this Movement, true volunteers, full of generosity and 'Hospitality', such as Margarida Tavares Morais, Aurélio Quiaios, Joaquim António Martins, Teresa Cristina Eugénio, and Rui Nunes, arrived later. This marked an exceptional moment in the life of our missionary Brother because, as he said himself:

"Charity is love and movement, and cannot be understood without someone to practise it on. In His earthly life, the Lord Jesus himself, not content to be the Samaritan of poor humanity, showed special concern for the sick and the abandoned. [...] The Lord commands His apostles and disciples of all ages, not only to preach His teachings, but also to heal the sick; to speak of Him to everyone, as Anna, the prophetess in the Temple of Jerusalem, did, and to show both those who are suffering and those who are rejoicing how much they are loved by the Saviour, one and all. Performing works, even good works, by the Church, without the teaching, would be to disavow her mission. But speaking without

doing would likewise give the impression of not believing in what we preach.”

In addition to the intensive work he carried out in Nampula, not only as a missionary and priest, but his pastoral, medical and educational work, Brother Nogueira was often called upon by a variety of institutions to deal with a range of topical issues, as was the case, for example, on 1 April 1995: he spent the whole day at the City Council, speaking on rural development and its importance for the local community. His ‘voice’ attracted respect, both from the authorities and the population of Nampula, who would turn to him regarding a wide variety of issues.

On 8 December 1995, he went back to Portugal to celebrate the Golden Jubilee of his Religious conse-



Brother Bento with Sister Paulina in Mozambique, 1996-99.

cration, together with Brother Joaquim Pereira das Neves: the ceremony took place at the Telhal Centre.

The following year, one of the most important events of our missionary efforts in Nampula took place: on 26 April in Napipine, on the Feast of Our Lady of Good Counsel, Brother Nogueira and the Young Hospitallers inaugurated the Hospitaller Centre to Support Mozambican Children (CHACRIMO) mentioned earlier. The inauguration of this Centre was of great significance to offer support to numerous children, victims of war and of so many other injustices that were the cause of their human suffering.

Despite being known for his calm and serene temperament, which might sometimes have been mistaken for shyness, Brother Bento Nogueira was



50th Anniversary of his Religious Profession, Telhal (Sintra), 8 December 1995.

an excellent communicator, a man inspired by God in the way he conveyed his message. In order to reach out to a greater number of people, he began to speak on "Rádio Encontro", the local Catholic radio station of the Nampula diocese, where he often dealt with such issues as the defence of life and the promotion of women, the development and welfare of the Mozambican people (on the programme "Contributions to the development of Mozambique"), or the problems that superstition and sorcery could inflict on the local population (on the programme "Enfrentando o mundo dos invisíveis" - literally, "Facing the world of invisible people"). On this radio station, he also took part in debates and other broadcasts on alcoholism, drug addiction, and on social, health and other issues. At the same



Brother Bento celebrating the 50th Anniversary of his Religious Profession with his mother and two sisters, 8 December 1995.

time, he was writing books and articles for magazines and newspapers.

On 10 May 1998 in Nampula he inaugurated the headquarters of the Christian Community of Christ the King, attached to the Parish of St John of God.

On 10 September 1998, he travelled to Lomé, via the capital, Maputo, to attend the first Provincial Chapter of the African Province of St Richard Pampuri. After a short period when there were two General Delegations of Africa, there were now two African Provinces, celebrating their first Chapter.

On 8 December, Brother Bento Nogueira and the Community were able to return to the original house of the Brothers of St John of God at the Nampula Psychiatric Hospital, which had been abandoned and neglected since the 1980s due to the political upheavals at that time.

BROTHER BENTO NOGUEIRA'S FINAL YEARS

As the 20th century gave way to the 21st, the Nampula Community of the Brothers of St John of God continued to be very active among the population, especially thanks to the work of Brother Bento Nogueira who, despite his advanced years and serious health problems, never failed to discharge his duties, above all in the area of vocations promotion.

1999 was a year marked by several adverse events. At the end of June, Sister Paulina, a member of the Congregation of the Sisters Hospitallers of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, fell seriously ill with malaria and died on 24 July. Despite the grief brought about by the loss of this sister, Brother Bento Nogueira never stopped working, and continued to perform his duties, ever faithful to the duties God placed before him. Nevertheless, in the latter half of 2001, his health deteriorated and took a significant turn for the worse.

On 26 May 2002, Archbishop Tomé Makhweliha, the new Archbishop of Nampula, made his first pastoral visit to the Parish of St John of God, where he presided at the Eucharist, accompanied by Brother



Brother Bento celebrating the Eucharist in Mozambique, 2000.

Bento Nogueira and the diocesan priest, Fr Eurico Jorge Nicuia.

Brother Bento Nogueira was deeply concerned about the future of young Mozambicans who, because of their often extreme poverty, did not have the means or the possibility to study and to be able to look forward to a better life. So he tried, whenever possible, to provide them with the most appropriate means for their advancement, not only to live as true Christians, but also to be useful to Mozambican society which suffered from such a shortage of people prepared and willing to help the country reverse its state of destitution.

One of the most outstanding events of that year was the organisation of the '*Chama da Luta contra a*



Brother Bento during catechesis with Mozambican children, 2000-2003.

SIDA' (Flame of the fight against AIDS) movement, which for a whole year, from 1 December 2001 to 1 December 2002, travelled around the parishes and Christian communities of Nampula. It was an initiative by the local Pastoral Care of the Sick Commission, in which Brother Ramon Ferreró, then the Superior of the Nampula Community, played an active role. Such initiatives filled the heart of Brother Bento Nogueira, who was always concerned about the poorest people and the shortage of courageous people prepared to carry on his work, and the work of other missionaries trusting in God's love. At the age of 75, in 2002, Brother Bento Nogueira, in addition to other tasks, held the following posts of responsibility: Chaplain to the Community; Master of Postulants; Parish Priest of the Parish of Saint John of God; Latin Professor at the Seminary and the Fac-



Father Nogueira preaching the Gospel in the Parish of Christ the King in Nampula, 7 July 2002.

ulty of Law; Assistant to the Community of Sisters; Coordinator of the Commission for Ecumenical and Interfaith Dialogue; Coordinator of the Diocesan Commission for the Laity, and Director responsible for the training of three groups of young men for the priesthood.

At the beginning of 2003, although he was feeling very weak, he nevertheless took part in planning the Interdiocesan Week of the Pastoral Care of the Sick to be held in Anchilo in June. He also took part in the celebration of the World Day of the Sick, in collaboration with the Diocesan Commission for the Pastoral Care of the Sick.

But by then his health was steadily deteriorating, and during the Easter Vigil that year, for a few moments his memory failed him; after resting for a few moments, however, he recovered and resumed his part in the ceremonies. Brother Ramon Ferreró immediately suspected that he was suffering from a passing pulmonary embolism which is very common among the elderly, but his condition then worsened considerably.

Until May there was little improvement, so his Brothers decided to transfer him to Lisbon, diagnosing him with cardiovascular disease (stroke). He had to travel via Maputo, accompanied by Brothers Ramon Ferreró and Martin Cuenca, and the journey from Nampula to the country's capital turned into a real nightmare for everyone, as Brother Bento was in great pain. In Maputo, he stayed at the Sisters Hospitaliers' residence and left for Portugal on 9 May.

In Lisbon, he was immediately admitted to Santa Maria Hospital, after being examined by a neurosurgeon, who ordered some tests and recommended emergency brain surgery. But the operation proved unsuccessful due to the advanced state of the disease, and a few days later, he was admitted to the Saint John of Ávila Residence, attached to the Portuguese Provincial Curia in Lisbon, where he underwent chemotherapy.

News of Brother Bento Nogueira's state of health quickly reached Nampula and everyone was very concerned about his departure for Lisbon, sensing that they might no longer be able to count on his presence.

He was bedridden for six months, dividing his time between clinical examinations, medical visits



Visit of the Archbishop of Nampula, Tomé Makhweliha, to the Community with the group of volunteers, 2002.

and treatment at Santa Maria Hospital and the St John of Ávila Residence.

Brother Bento Nogueira died on 26 October 2003, "leaving to be with Our Lord", as he liked to say. His funeral took place on 28 October, presided over by Brother Aires Gameiro, his great friend: his coffin left the chapel of the Telhal Nursing Home at 10am bound for the cemetery in Rio de Mouro. His death caused sincere grief in Nampula, not only by the Community of his Brothers, but also by the local population. The Brothers immediately relayed the news to the Archbishop and on *Radio Encontro* to spread it throughout the city. In Nampula, there were many outpourings of grief and mourning, the most important of which was a Mass celebrated in the Cathedral, presided over by the Archbishop himself and concelebrated by twenty priests.

Brother Bento (Manuel) Nogueira had led an exemplary, extraordinary life. He was totally dedicated to the underprivileged and was a true example of what a Son of Saint John of God priest, nurse, educator and missionary, should be. Having received a special vocation from God, he was never fearful of pursuing a life in mission under increasingly challenging conditions, led by the Holy Spirit, all set on proclaiming the Gospel, driven by faith and total obedience. He was a great missionary, wholly devoted to God and to the Hospitaller Order, in the manner of our Holy Founder, St John of God.

He had ministered in Mozambique for many years, living on the bare minimum, travelling long distances on foot, overcoming difficulties, exposing

himself to many dangers, some not even imaginable, always in the service of others.

People remember him as a man who was, and still is, 'revered', loved and respected by the people of Nampula, for his closeness to the people, his simplicity, his kindness, his dedication and his integrity in life. He never hesitated to pour out his life among the sick, comforting them and showing them the right way to the glory of God.

His mortal remains rest in the chapel of the St John of God Hospital in Telhal, Portugal.

PRAYER FOR THE BEATIFICATION

Most Holy Trinity

who delights in exalting the humble
and confounding the proud,
who in Jesus Christ, missionary of the Father,
has guided the prophets through deserts
and across vast oceans,
we praise You for the gift of Hospitality granted
to Father Manuel Nogueira!

We bless You for the way he lived his life,
the way he celebrated, prayed,
and welcomed others, and for his zeal
in proclaiming the Gospel in mission lands.
In imitation of the example of St John of God,
he gave himself generously in the hospitaller
priestly ministry
and brought comfort to the poor and the sick
in their suffering.

Hear our supplications and,
recognising his merits and through his intercession
look kindly on the burdens we bear in our hearts
and grant us this grace we ask!

(Make your request)

We ask this through Jesus Christ, Your Son
who is God and lives and reigns with You
in the unity of the Holy Spirit
for ever and ever. Amen!

(Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be)



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