



Juridic Validity granted to the Diocesan Inquiry of the Servant of God Brother Boniface Bonillo

The Dicastery for the Causes of Saints, at its Ordinary Congress on 27 November 2024, granted Juridic Validity to the Diocesan Inquiry for the Cause of Beatification and Canonisation of the Servant of God Brother Boniface Bonillo that had been concluded in Córdoba (Spain) on 30 September 2023. The intense and demanding work carried out by the members of the Tribunal, who had been called upon to question the witnesses and verify their truthfulness and quality, ensured that the Diocesan Inquiry had a positive outcome. The Postulator General will now request the Dicastery for the Causes of Saints to appoint the Relator for the preparation of the 'Positio super vita, virtutibus et fama sanctitatis' of the Servant of God.

Brother Boniface had been a model and an extraordinary

example of the Hospitaller life lived in simplicity just as Saint John of God had lived it. Bishop Cirarda, then the Bishop of Cordoba, recalled this very well in 1999 during the centenary celebrations of Brother Boniface's birth, when he wrote in a letter: *'I have a very beautiful memory of the goodness of this Brother. I had many contacts with him in the now distant days of my episcopal service in that Church in Córdoba, which was unforgettable. And I remember with some emotion his many virtues, the love with which he cared for the sick, especially children, and the courage with which he did everything to serve them, above and beyond what human prudence might have advised. His spirit always seemed to me 'a stand-in', to use an expression from the world of cinema, for the spirit of St John of God, whose life and example had seduced him into imitating Christ, following in the footsteps of that 'madman of love' who had so astonished Granada'*.

After his accidental fall, the Servant of God never recovered due to further complications that slowly led him to his death on 11 September 1978. In moments of lucidity, he would say. *'Last night I thought I was dying, but I felt such gentleness and peace that I have no doubt that the Lord is preparing a happy passing to encounter Him'*. He slipped into a coma, but regained consciousness and was still able to tell Brother Ángel: *'Unless we are men of prayer, our life has been a complete waste,'* as he had said many times during his life. *'I have already fulfilled my mission, and God can now summon me whenever He wishes'*.

May this testimony of such a true and credible life, nourish our journey as Hospitaller Brothers and inspire our co-workers to live the charism of hospitality with even greater fervour and passion in caring for the poor, the sick and the needy.

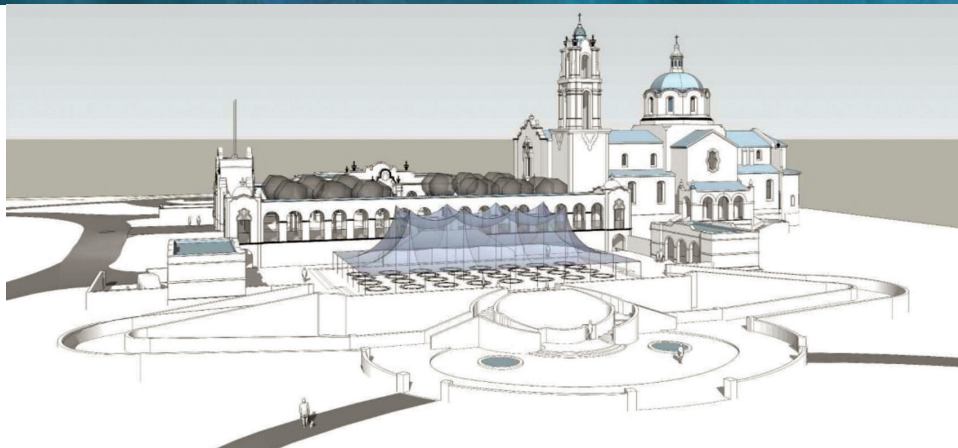


The Servant of God resting, waiting to meet his benefactors



Brother Phelipe Orbalaes

The Rome phase of the Cause of the Florida Martyrs, which includes our own Brother Felipe (Phelipe), is in progress. The Cause is being examined by the Dicastery's Historical Consultors, as they seek to investigate and shed light on the truth of the martyrdom of these religious and lay people who sacrificed their lives for the faith between 1549 and 1715. The missions that once flourished in much of La Florida, were by now only a distant memory. In the western part, the Spanish had established Santa Maria de Galve, a Fort and a village at Pensacola. Some Catholic Apalachee people had stayed in Pensacola, where the Brothers lived to care for the sick and celebrate the sacraments. But the native Christians were few in number, and the people living in Santa Maria were often attacked by non-Christian natives



The project for the Shrine of Mary, Queen of Martyrs, to be built in Tallahassee, Florida in honour of the Martyrs

led by the English. As a surgeon, Brother Phelipe was responsible for taking care of the body of the sick, and bringing them consolation and offering spiritual care. On 1 September 1712, Brother Phelipe chose to risk his life and leave the fort to take help, both as a surgeon and to administer the sacraments as a 'priest'. He was killed during an ambush while he was caring for the wounded.

The Servant of God Brother Manuel Bento Nogueira

The Diocesan Phase of the Cause of the Servant of God is proceeding successfully. The Officials undertaking the Inquiry: the Episcopal Delegate, the Promoter of Justice and the Notary, have already concluded the first phase by questioning the witnesses present in Portugal. They will soon proceed to the second phase by travelling to Nampula in Mozambique, where they will be able to hear the statements of the second group of witnesses who knew or lived with the Servant of God. Brother Bento was a humble person, but a man of great culture and spiritual sensitivities. In his writings, including his letters, articles and homilies, we can appreciate the spiritual depth he had reached after 58 years of religious life spent always at the service of the sick, providing formation for the



'To aspire to uplift and sanctify without a sacrifice is to want the impossible'. Servant of God Brother Manuel Bento

young Brothers, and as a missionary. In one of his writings we read: *'We are consecrated men; day and night we live for our mission. Our life entail placing ourselves entirely at the disposal of the mission. Work is the means whereby we perform our vocation, to strive to reach the ideal that God has sown in our hearts.... We do not think about feeling tired but only about the relief that others that may derive from our work'*. In another text he says: *'Often a grateful smile will not be our sole stimulus. And when this is lacking, all we need is the smile that our heavenly Father sends us through faith'*. Continuing in this vein, he wrote: *'There are some things that cannot be achieved without a great deal of self-denial. If we only give in to ourselves over and over again, we shall not be able to give to others and to Our Lord'*.