

# DR. MANUEL RODRÍGUEZ MARTÍNEZ

Dr. Manuel Rodríguez Martínez was born in Alhama de Almería on 27<sup>th</sup> december 1928 in Calle Médicos into a humble family; he spent his childhood in the towns of Gádor, La Cañada de San Urbano and Almería. He studied at the La Salle School in Almería and entered the Diocesan Seminary at a young age, where he stayed from his youth and for almost 10 years, not concluding his stay because he awoke in him another vocation of a different kind, medicine.

Although he studied philosophy and theology at the Carthusian monastery in Granada, he completed his studies at the Faculty of Medicine in the same city, later specialising in internal and emergency medicine, radiology and the digestive system at the Spanish Hospital in Mexico City, to which he devoted the rest of his life.

After his specialisation, he returned to Spain where he began his work as a doctor in home public health care professional in towns such as Rioja, Sierra Alhamilla or Pechina and later established himself as a specialist in the digestive system both in Social Security and in private medicine, practising in his practice until the age of 80, the age at which he read his long-awaited Doctoral Thesis in the Assembly Hall of the Royal Academy of Medicine of the Faculty of Granada.

Although the three pillars of his life were family, medicine and friendship, those of us who knew him well know that the most important thing in his life, in his own words, was his beloved wife **Pepita Laiz Pérez**, whom he met in 1957 in Cartagena during the university militias as a Complementary Second Lieutenant. He married her in december 1961 in the same town and with her he had 6 children, all boys, **Antonio José, José Manuel, Gonzalo Patricio, Miguel Ángel, Javier** and **Carlos**. From all of them he has 13 grandchildren and a great-granddaughter whom he met last year.

**Manuel Rodríguez**, Manolo for his friends, was described as a "*Renaissance man transplanted from the past*", for his vital restlessness, for his capacity and for the number of activities to which he dedicated himself throughout his life. He was a member of the Constituent Parliament of Andalusia in his first legislature with the UCD, he was President of Caja Almería (now Unicaja), of the Christian Family Movement, of the Cánovas del Castillo Foundation, of the San Buenaventura Institute, of the Tienda-Asilo charitable institution, of the Almeria Medical Union and Vice-President of the Spanish Confederation, among many other associations. He was also the founder of several others, such as the Friends of the Cathedral and the San

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## IN MEMORIAM

Indalecio Institute of Religious Culture, among others. He was awarded the Gold Coats of Arms and Honorary Membership of the Provincial Council and the Official College of Doctors of Almería.

Professionally, he was awarded the Gold Medals and Honorary Membership of the **Andalusian Society of Digestive Pathology (SAPD)**, of which he was one of the founders in 1968, and the Spanish Society of Digestive Pathology (SEPD), associations of which he was president, as well as the Alumni Association of the Faculty of Medicine of Granada.

He organised and chaired more than 50 regional and national congresses and meetings throughout his professional life, including an extraordinary one of great memory for his colleagues held on a boat with a mini-cruise between the cities of Almería, Oran and Melilla, which was a true innovation at the time and an unprecedented achievement.

He has numerous medical publications in his specialty, some others of an informative nature, as well as a biography that he published at the age of 85 called "*Almería en mi Memoria*" (Almería in my memory) where he combines memories,

experiences and reflections of a life full of experiences and anecdotes. In it, he affirms his values, life, freedom and love, and as his motto "*Unum, Verum, Bonum*".

A great lover of nature, he recited by heart the Latin names of the more than 300 species that he had in "*his farmhouse*", which was his retreat and his refuge, where he enjoyed with his family and friends.

Of deep ethical-religious, Christian, liberal and democratic convictions, he was an example of honesty, work and love for those who were close to us; of simple tastes and hobbies, familiar as the most, he always won the appreciation of those around him for his endearing disposition, his happiness transmitted and his sincere friendship. We can never thank him enough for his legacy and his example of life.

He left peacefully, in peace, without any pain and sitting next to his beloved Pepita; now he rests safely in heaven where he will be passionately organizing, as always, some meeting or trip, or perhaps he will be innovating with some topic to keep him, as always, productive and busy, surrounded by affection and friends.

**Dr. José Manuel Rodríguez Laiz.**