

## In memoriam

## Carlos Ribeiro



In November, Portuguese cardiologist Carlos Ribeiro died, aged 95, in his native city of Lisbon. He was a great friend of Spain and saw no border between our two countries.

Along with distinguished colleagues of the ilk of Fernando de Padua and Cerqueira Gomes, Carlos Ribeiro helped build an excellent relationship between Portuguese and Spanish cardiology that has persisted, and which paved the way, at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> and beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, for numerous biennial Spanish-Portuguese cardiology conferences where scientific opinions could be shared and friendships forged among cardiologists from the two countries. This was particularly interesting to me, as in Spain there were few experts in vectorcardiography, and the opinions and critiques of my Portuguese colleagues were very useful in helping to consolidate my ideas on interatrial block.

From a professional perspective, Carlos Ribeiro's scientific activities were closely linked to the Faculty of Medicine of the University of Lisbon, where he graduated and where he later became president of its scientific council. He was director of the Coronary Care Unit at the Hospital de Santa María in Lisbon, where he delivered outstanding clinical and scientific work. Over his lifetime, he published more than 300 articles of major scientific interest, including his publications on left bundle branch block.

Carlos Ribeiro was an optimist, a peacekeeper, and a great communicator. That, along with his huge scientific knowledge, meant that he was successful not only in his own country, where he

reached the peak of medical recognition as president of the Portuguese Society of Cardiology, director of the Portuguese Journal of Cardiology and the journal of the Portuguese Medical Association, but also internationally, representing the Iberian Peninsula in his role as vice president of the European Society of Cardiology. He was also successful in other fields of medicine: he was named *Bastonário* (chair) of the Portuguese Medical Association, was a member of the National Ethics Commission for the Life Sciences and a member of the European Economic and Social Committee as representative of the liberal professions, being called to give his opinion on all manner of health-related subjects. In addition, he received the Medal of Merit from the European Society of Cardiology, the Portuguese Department of Health Gold Medal, and Medal of Honor from the European Economic and Social Committee. He was also decorated by the Portuguese president with an *Orden do Infante Dom Henrique* knighthood.

In his private life, he was a family man, always joined by his charming wife Elena, his lifelong companion, with whom he had 7 children. His 16 grandchildren and 1 great granddaughter describe him as a ready listener who made each of them feel special. The ties between our families are such that his daughter considers me her "Catalan uncle", and I am proud to say that the most important honorary scientific milestone of my professional life was receiving an honorary doctorate from his university, the nomination for which came from him. My whole family, including my 90-year-old mother, came with me that special day, and Carlos, his team, and all of the Portuguese cardiology community treated me so kindly.

His death, which will always be considered untimely despite his having enjoyed a long and full life, leaves a great sadness for his family, friends, colleagues, students, and all those who knew him. His life has been an example of scientific rigor, emotional intelligence, human sensitivity, dignity, and professional ethics that is difficult to match. Carlos, your memory, especially in the Latin world, will always remain bound to cardiology.

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