

**予習課題** 次の英文の内容を理解しなさい。

People in the United States love baseball. The best baseball players are stars. Great players are heroes. They are given a place in the Baseball Hall of Fame.

Roberto Clemente is in the Baseball Hall of Fame. He belongs there. He was one of the best (1 all-round players. He was one of the best in right field. He could make catches that seemed impossible. He could hit. For eight years in a row his batting average was over .300. He was batting champion four times. He was named most valuable player in 1966. He won the 1971 World Series for his team. His average in that series was .414.

But to many people Roberto Clemente was a hero not just for his baseball playing, but for his life. He spent it helping others. And he died helping others.

He was born in Puerto Rico in 1934. He came from a big family. His parents worked hard to give their children the things they needed. He began to play ball when he was young. He was so good that he was a star at the age of seventeen. At nineteen he joined a team in the United States. The next year he went to the Pittsburgh Pirates. He played on that team for eighteen years.

Roberto had pride. He always did his best. He played hard. He would not quit. When he was hurt, he went on with the game. Even when he was in pain, he played his best. He was proud of his game. He used to say, "For me, I am the best baseball player in the world." He meant that he believed in himself.

And he believed in his people. He was proud of being a Spanish American. He fought hard for the rights of Spanish American players. He wanted respect for them and for himself. And he won it.

The two things he loved most were baseball and children. And he loved to do things for others. He found many ways to help people, both in the United States and in Puerto Rico. He spent a great deal of time with children. He taught them to play baseball. He and his wife and their three children often went to Puerto Rico. He worked there to raise money. He made speeches. He used the money to help poor children. He opened his home to visitors. His dream was to build a sports camp for children. He hoped to give poor children a chance to learn all kinds of sports.

But he never built his camp. Late in 1972 there was an earthquake in Nicaragua. Many people were killed. Many were hurt. Many were homeless and hungry. Food and clothing were needed. Medicine was needed. Of course Roberto was one of the first to help. He formed a group to get the things that were needed. He was on the plane that was going to deliver them.

The plane crashed in the sea near Puerto Rico. Roberto was killed. But his life still shines like a light in people's hearts.

(注) the Baseball Hall of Fame : 野球殿堂 (New York 州 Cooperstown にある).