

Priests, seminarians take part in spiritual pilgrimage to Fatima

FATIMA, Portugal— Priests and seminarians of the Diocese of Charlotte recently journeyed to Fatima as part of a peace pilgrimage.

Father John Putnam, pastor of Sacred Heart Church in Salisbury; Father Christopher Roux, priest secretary to Bishop Peter J. Jugis; and Father Richard DeClue, priest in residence at St. Vincent de Paul Church in Charlotte; as well as seminarians Joshua Bradford, Paul McNulty and Joel Stroot took part in the Fatima Peace Pilgrimage July 18-31, this year sponsored by the Te Deum Foundation.

Nineteen lay persons from parishes throughout the United States also participated in the pilgrimage.

The annual pilgrimage, which began in 1984, celebrates the anniversary of Mary's appearance at Fatima, Portugal, and is designed to foster a devotion to Our Lady of Fatima in priests, seminarians and other religious. The Marian apparitions to three children in Fatima began 90 years ago May 13.

"When I first visited Fatima, I had recently entered the Catholic faith and was still questioning whether the priesthood was the right path," said Father Putnam. "My pilgrimage to the holy site of Our Lady's apparitions confirmed that yes, indeed, I had made the right choice."

"Our Lady's message 90 years ago is still relevant today," said Father Roux.



COURTESY PHOTO

(Back row, from left) Father John Putnam, Father Christopher Roux, Father Richard DeClue; and (front row, from left) seminarians Paul McNulty, Joshua Bradford and Joel Stroot are pictured in the Church of the Born Jesus in Braga, Portugal June 25.

"In today's world of war, terrorism and atrocities against the sanctity of life, the people of the world need to be reminded of Our Lady's message of hope."

In addition to Fatima, other sites visited included the Church of the Born Jesus in Braga, Jeronimos Monastery and St. Anthony of Padua Church in Lisbon, the home of Blessed Alexandrina Maria da Costa in Balasar and the Church of the Holy Miracle in Santarem.

The Te Deum Foundation is a nonprofit organization that provides for the material and spiritual needs of seminarians.