

Fr. Ed at World Youth Day 2023—Portugal

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Wednesday August 2nd

Greetings from Portugal!

I am writing this at 10 PM after a long but spiritual day. Our group went to Fatima which is an 85 minute drive north from Lisbon. We left the hotel at 9 AM and arrived in just enough time to attend the 11 AM Mass in the Basilica. The Basilica can hold over 7000 people. There were over 60 priests.

After the Mass I walked around the shrine area. It is over 3/4 of a mile from the Basilica at one end to the Cathedral on the other. The Chapel of the Apparitions is in the middle.

Pilgrims make their way to the Chapel on a white marble pathway on their knees! It was amazing to see the courage and determination of all the young people as they struggled up the small incline towards the Chapel. I saw 4 pilgrims whom had no one walking along side them for support. So I made sure that these 4 people knew I was there praying with and encouraging them as they were in pain and maybe ready to quit. The group included: a young woman from Gabon carrying her guitar, a young man from Chile, a young man from Equatorial Guinea and a man my age from Oklahoma. It was a very moving experience to be there for them.

Our group then did the Stations of the Cross on a path made in the fields where the three young people that Mary visited would walk to the Apparitions. Almost all of the 20 pilgrims in our group from Camden and Trenton took turns carrying the Pilgrim Cross from our Parish.

We arrived back to Lisbon by 6:30 PM. We saw large crowds of people walking the streets. I am grateful that I had the opportunity to meet the pilgrims walking on their knees and take prayerful time in Fatima.

Tomorrow (Thursday August 3rd) will be a long day. We leave the hotel by 8:30 AM for the Rise Up Session for prayer, music, teaching by a bishop and then Mass. Then by 1 PM we will be in downtown Lisbon trying to get a good place to see Pope Francis who will speak at 5 PM. The crowd for the Mass on Tuesday night was estimated at 350,000. Now with Pope Francis speaking it could be over 500,000!!!

Peace, Fr Ed



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WYD 2023 Lisbon 2023

August 1st

Greetings from Lisbon just ended our 2nd day here. Got to Lisbon on Monday July 31 st around Noon and had mass in an old Church in Lisbon at 6pm. There are people (pilgrims) from everywhere ! Over 151 countries are represented, some with very small groups and other countries have over 50,000 people!

Today we were in downtown Lisbon and it was very crowded; at 7 pm there was an Opening Mass for the WYD in the center of Lisbon. The area for the Mass covered 10 city blocks and there were probably over 300,000 people! We will be going to Fatima on August 2nd

We have 8 seminarians from our Diocese in our group , They are writing a report with pictures every day and will be posted on the Catholic Star Herald website.

Peace, Fr Ed





Inside Basilica



**Camden Diocese Group holding
Cross at Fatima**





**Pilgrims walking on their knees
for 3/4 mile at Fatima**



Camden/Trenton Group carrying Cross during Stations of The Cross on Fatima



Pilgrim Equatorial Guinea holding Cross after walking on his knees



Pilgrim from Lithuania with Cross

