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About a thousand pilgrims of the Apostleship of Prayer of Toledo - more than 500 young people, fifty priests and over a hundred families, mostly young - are in the Shrine of Fatima since yesterday, in the context of its 25th Pilgrimage.

As it is a Jubilee pilgrimage, the group has offered to the Shrine of Fatima a monstrance, which will be used tonight, Sunday, in a vigil in the Apparitions Chapel.

The group that comes from Spain, as every year at Carnival, comes from different autonomous communities, all coordinated by the Diocese of Toledo

They arrive on Thursday by bus to Leiria and leave on pilgrimage to Fatima on the next

day and arrive on Saturday for their first Eucharist. On Sunday, all day long, they participate in different celebrations; in the evening, after the Eucharist, they will attend a Vigil in the Apparitions Chapel. On Monday, they have tours; the pilgrimage ends on Tuesday with a big celebration, presided this year by the Bishop of San Sebastian, Mgr. José Ignacio Munilla.

The pilgrims are mostly young people who are organized in groups, always assisted by a priest. Many of them feel that "it is in Fatima that we have discover the true meaning of pilgrimage, often a true miracle," said one of the coordinators of this pilgrimage, Fr Francisco Vidal Carretero, to the press office this Sunday night.

This initiative started 25 years ago in Talaverna La Reina, a small town that is part of the Diocese of Toledo.

"When we started this initiative, only three buses were coming; today among young people and families, we are nearly a thousand or more which represents a big change," the priest said recognizing that despite the "progressive secularization of Spanish society, we still have many young people who come many times with a very weak faith and awaken here to something much more solid and mature."

Today the pilgrimage is no longer a diocesan one; it is instead a national pilgrimage and beyond the young pilgrims, it also joins families.

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