

Abraham's path

TAYBEH, West Bank (CNS) –

On one night of their 31-mile trek through the West Bank, a group of 25 hikers was welcomed into a village during a wedding celebration. The next night they stayed in the modest homes of Palestinian families. The night they arrived in the Christian village of Taybeh, they stayed at Holy Redeemer Parish's guesthouse. Each experience was another piece not only along the physical path following the footsteps of biblical Abraham's sojourn, but an attempt to recreate his spiritual journey as a traveler who put his safety and well-being into the hands of strangers. "We have a specific purpose. This is a cultural trail. We are walking in the spirit of Abraham, in the faith of our hosts," said Tyler Norris, executive director of the Abraham Path Initiative. Students from Christian Brothers-run Bethlehem University and a dozen young Americans and Europeans joined Norris on the pilot hike of the initiative in the West Bank in early July. Organizers of the initiative, originally a Harvard Law School venture and now an independent nongovernmental organization, hope to eventually link hiking paths through the Middle East.