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News



This is the logo for Pope Francis' trip to Romania in late May. The theme of the visit is "Let's walk together" and the image shows Mary, the Mother of God, protecting the people of God in Romania. (CNS/courtesy Holy See Press Office)

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Visiting Romania May 31-June 2, Pope Francis will stop at six destinations, including a popular Marian shrine in the Transylvanian region.

He also will beatify seven bishop-martyrs of the Eastern-rite Romanian Catholic Church, who died during a fierce anti-religious campaign waged under the communist regime in Romania.

His visit to the predominately Orthodox country will be his 30th foreign trip after visiting Morocco in late March and Bulgaria and Macedonia in early May.

The trip will include visits to the Romanian Orthodox and Roman Catholic cathedrals, celebration of a Latin-rite Mass and an Eastern-rite Divine Liturgy, as well as separate meetings with political leaders, young people and families as well as members of the Roma community.

He will visit the capital, Bucharest, the cities of Bacau, Iasi, Sibiu, Blaj and the Marian shrine in Sumuleu Ciuc, a neighborhood of Miercurea Ciuc and an important place of pilgrimage for Hungarian Catholics, especially on Pentecost, which is June 9.

The overwhelming majority — almost 82 percent — of Romania's 20 million inhabitants say they belong to the Romanian Orthodox Church led by Patriarch Daniel. About 6 percent of the population identifies itself as Protestant and over 4 percent identify as Catholic, belonging either to the Romanian Catholic Church — an Eastern rite — or the Latin rite.

The Vatican released the following schedule March 25, leaving out the exact times for a number of events. Times listed are local, with Eastern Daylight Time in parentheses.

Friday, May 31 (Rome, Bucharest)

- 8:10 a.m. (2:10 a.m.) Departure from Rome's Leonardo da Vinci International Airport for Bucharest

- 11:30 a.m. (4:30 a.m.) Arrival and welcoming ceremony at Henri Coanda International Airport in Otopeni, near Bucharest.
- Courtesy visit with President Klaus Iohannis and meeting with Prime Minister Viorica Dancila in the Cotroceni Palace.
- 1 p.m. (6 a.m.) Meeting with civil and political leaders and members of the diplomatic corps at the Cotroceni Palace. Speech by pope.
- 3:45 p.m. (8:45 a.m.) Private meeting with Romanian Orthodox Patriarch Daniel at the patriarchal palace. Meeting with members of the Orthodox synod at the patriarchal palace. Speech by pope.
- Joint Prayer of the Our Father in the new Romanian Orthodox cathedral. Greeting by pope.
- Celebration of Mass at the Catholic Cathedral of St. Joseph. Homily by pope.

Saturday, June 1 (Bucharest, Bacau, Miercurea Ciuc, Iasi, Bucharest)

- 9:30 a.m. (2:30 a.m.) Departure by plane for Bacau.
- 10:10 a.m. (3:10 a.m.) Arrival at Bacau airport, transfer by helicopter to municipal stadium in Miercurea Ciuc.
- Celebration of Mass at the Marian shrine in Sumuleu Ciuc. Homily by pope.
- Transfer by helicopter to the Iasi airport.
- 5:25 p.m. (10:25 a.m.) Visit to the Our Lady Queen of Iasi Cathedral.
- Marian gathering with young people and families in the square across from the government Palace of Culture in Iasi. Speech by pope.
- 7 p.m. (Noon) Departure by plane for Bucharest.
- 8 p.m. (1 p.m.) Arrival at Bucharest's Henri Coanda International Airport in Otopeni, near Bucharest.

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Sunday, June 2 (Bucharest, Sibiu, Blaj, Sibiu, Rome)

- 9 a.m. (2 a.m.) Departure by plane for Sibiu.
- 9:40 a.m. (2:40 a.m.) Arrival at the Sibiu airport and transfer by helicopter to Blaj.
- Celebration of the Divine Liturgy and the beatification of seven martyred bishops of the Eastern-rite Romanian Catholic Church at Blaj's Liberty Field. Homily by pope. Recitation of the "Regina Coeli" prayer.
- 1:20 p.m. (6:20 a.m.) Lunch with the papal entourage.

- Meeting with members of the Roma community. Greeting by pope.
- Transfer by car to the city stadium.
- Transfer by helicopter to the Sibiu airport. Farewell ceremony.
- 5:30 p.m. (10:30 a.m.) Departure by plane for Rome's Ciampino airport.