Vatican



People enjoy the evening in Matera, Italy, June 29, 2021. Pope Francis will visit the southern Italian city Sept. 25 to celebrate the closing Mass of the Italian National Eucharistic Congress. (CNS/Reuters/Yara Nardi)

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Pope Francis will make back-to-back pastoral visits to the Italian cities of Assisi and Matera at the end of September, the Vatican announced.

The pope will visit Assisi Sept. 24 to attend a meeting with young people participating in an Economy of Francesco event at a conference hall near Assisi's Basilica of St. Mary of the Angels, the Vatican said July 8.

The Economy of Francesco project, an initiative sponsored in part by the Vatican Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development, connects young economists, entrepreneurs, scholars and scientists with older experts to look for ways to make the economy better for more people and for the environment.

In a statement published shortly after the Vatican's announcement, the event's organizing committee — led by Archbishop Domenico Sorrentino of Assisi — expressed its gratitude to the pope and said his visit "fills us with joy."

"We pray for Pope Francis' health and continue to move forward with even more enthusiasm and strength in organizing the first in-person global meeting in Assisi," the statement said.

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"We are working to welcome the young people from more than 100 countries around the world, who have been actively working for months and those who have the desire to contribute to a new season of economic thought and practice," the committee said.

The pope will address the event's participants in the morning and will return to the Vatican by helicopter shortly after midday.

The following day, Sept. 25, the pope will fly again by helicopter to the southern city of Matera for the final Mass of the Italian National Eucharistic Congress.

Before celebrating the Mass, the pope will meet with a group of migrants and refugees in the city. He will then celebrate the closing Mass of the congress and, after, will bless and open a new soup kitchen.

Francis will then meet with local authorities before returning to the Vatican by helicopter.