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A Spanish book on the documents of the Second Vatican Council prepared ahead of the Holy

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The Vatican office in charge of coordinating plans for the Holy Year 2025 announced they are launching a new website and releasing an app to help people register and to guide them along their pilgrimage in Rome.

By registering online at iubilaeum2025.va or on the jubilee app, people will receive a free digital "pilgrim's card," which will be needed to participate in jubilee events, especially gaining access to the Holy Door at St. Peter's Basilica, said Msgr. Graham Bell, undersecretary of the Dicastery for Evangelization's section that is coordinating the Holy Year.

The jubilee website was to go live May 10 and be available in nine languages, he said at a news conference at the Vatican May 9.

People can begin registering online starting in September, he said, "by clicking on the 'participate' button." After registering, people will be able to access a personal page on the site's "pilgrim's zone," which will also go live in September.

Registrants will receive a digital "pilgrim's card," which is a personal QR code needed to access jubilee events and better facilitate the pilgrimage to the Holy Door, the monsignor said. There also will be an option to purchase a "service card" for a nominal fee to receive special discounts for transportation, lodging, food and museums during the pilgrimage.

The jubilee website and app will give news and information on the Holy Door of St. Peter's and the other basilicas as well as offer the possibility of organizing one's own pilgrimage within the city, Bell said.

People can choose from three proposed pilgrimages: "the traditional pilgrimage of St. Philip Neri with the seven churches; the pilgrimage on the churches dedicated to the women doctors of the church and patrons of Europe; and the 'Iter Europaeum,' that is, the 28 churches in 27 different European countries, plus the church that represents the European Union."

"Tools are being prepared to better introduce pilgrims into these paths and to promote knowledge of the works of art in the various churches," he said. It marks "an important effort carried out in agreement with the (Italian) Ministry of Tourism, which will encourage the discovery of many places often unknown to tourists themselves."

"Rome has always been a cultural attraction and our aim is that the pilgrim may also become a tourist, just as the tourist may be fascinated by the pilgrim experience," said Archbishop Rino Fisichella, pro-prefect of the section.

Starting in September, he said, they will open an exhibition "with works by the great Spanish Renaissance artist, El Greco."

The pieces "have never left Spain and are being made available for this very occasion," he said. The exhibit will be held in the church of Sant'Agnese in Agone facing onto Piazza Navona and will feature El Greco's three masterpieces: "The Baptism of Christ," "Christ Carrying the Cross" and "Christ Blessing."

Other art exhibits will take place throughout the run-up to and during the jubilee, including ones that will rotate into places like hospitals and prisons, he said. "We want as much as possible for these events to have free access, in order to encourage the participation of citizens in the contemplation of beauty that allows a better relationship with the city and its people."

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Fisichella said Pope Francis has asked Catholics worldwide to prepare for the next jubilee year by spending 2023 studying the documents of the Second Vatican Council, especially its four constitutions, which focused on: the liturgy; the church as the people of God; Scripture; and the role of the church in the modern world.

"In order to help local churches in their catechetical, human and especially Christian formation paths, and to give younger people the opportunity to know and rediscover the central contents of the council," he said, the dicastery published a series of 35 small volumes titled, "Council Notebooks," in December.

The "notebooks" have already been translated into Spanish in one hardcover volume titled, "Cuadernos del Concilio," he said, and they are now being translated into English by ATC Publishers-India.

Since the pope wants 2024 to be dedicated to prayer in preparation for the jubilee, the dicastery will publish an in-depth series called "Notes on Prayer" to promote "the centrality of prayer, personal and communal," the archbishop said.

"We are studying the possibility of a 'school of prayer' with pathways that would cover the vast world of prayer," he added.

The opening and closing dates of the jubilee year will be announced in the pope's "Bull of Indiction of the Jubilee, which will be published according to tradition on the feast of the Ascension, May 9, 2024," Fisichella said.

The ordinary jubilee will begin with the opening of the Holy Door of St. Peter's Basilica in December 2024, he said, and there will be "major jubilee events" throughout 2025. For example, Jan. 24, 2025, will be dedicated to the World of Communications, May 30-June 1, 2025, will be dedicated to families, and July 28-Aug. 3, 2025, will be dedicated to young people.

The archbishop also announced that Italian composer Francesco Meneghello was the winner of the competition for an original score for the official hymn for the Holy Year 2025 that highlights its theme, "Pilgrims of Hope." The lyrics were written by Msgr. Pierangelo Sequeri, an Italian theologian, composer and musician.

The city of Rome has estimated more than 30 million people will come to Rome for the jubilee year.

At least 87 public works projects are set to begin at an initial cost of 1.8 billion euro. Projects include revamping key areas, increasing accessibility and transport, and improving reception services and infrastructure.