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Pope Francis addresses the meeting, "Faith and Science: Towards COP26," with religious lead

Pope Francis addresses the meeting, "Faith and Science: Towards COP26," with religious leaders in the Hall of Benedictions at the Vatican in this Oct. 4, 2021, file photo. (CNS/Paul Haring)

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Vatican City — November 9, 2023
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Pope Francis will travel to Dubai in the United Arab Emirates Dec. 1-3 to address the U.N. climate conference and to help inaugurate the Faith Pavilion where religious leaders and organizations will meet to share information and strategies for convincing governments to take real steps to protect the environment.

The conference, commonly known as COP28, "can represent a change of direction, showing that everything done since 1992 (with the adoption of the U.N. Framework Convention on Climate Change) was in fact serious and worth the effort, or else it will be a great disappointment and jeopardize whatever good has been achieved thus far," the pope wrote in *Laudate Deum* ("Praise God"), a follow-up document to his 2015 encyclical "*Laudato Si*', On Care for Our Common Home."

In the document, the pope expressed his hope that government representatives would consider "the common good and the future of their children, more than the short-term interests of certain countries or businesses. In this way, may they demonstrate the nobility of politics and not its shame."

Releasing the schedule for the pope's trip Nov. 9, the Vatican said he would address the conference Dec. 2 — the closing day of the World Climate Action Summit — and spend the rest of the day in "private bilateral meetings," although the Vatican provided no indication of which religious or government leaders he would be meeting.

The schedule did not indicate that the pope would visit St. Mary's Church, the only Catholic parish in Dubai.

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Here is the schedule for Francis' trip as released by the Vatican; all times are local, with Eastern time in parentheses:

Friday Dec. 1 (Rome, Dubai)

–11:30 a.m. (5:30 a.m.) Departure by plane from Rome's Fiumicino airport to Dubai.

–8:25 p.m. (11:25 a.m.) Arrival at Dubai's World Central Airport. Welcome ceremony.

Saturday Dec. 2 (Dubai)

–10 a.m. (1 a.m.) Pope attends COP28 at Expo City. Speech by pope.

–10:30 a.m. (1:30 a.m.) Pope holds private bilateral meetings until lunch.

–3:30 p.m. (6:30 a.m.) Pope holds more bilateral meets.

Sunday, Dec. 3 (Dubai, Rome)

–9 a.m. (midnight) Inauguration of the Faith Pavilion at Expo City. Greeting by pope.

–10:15 a.m. (1:15 a.m.) Farewell ceremony at Dubai's World Central Airport.

–10:45 a.m. (1:45 a.m.) Departure by plane for Rome.

–2:40 p.m. (8:40 a.m.) Arrival at Rome's Fiumicino airport.

This story appears in the **COP28 Dubai** feature series. View the full series.