Vatican

Vatican News



Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni applauds Pope Francis during a meeting about families and Italy's declining birthrate May 12, 2023, in Rome. The Vatican April 26 confirmed Meloni’s announcement that Francis will join a G7 discussion on AI in June. (CNS/Vatican Media)

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Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni announced that Pope Francis would participate in a G7 "outreach" discussion on artificial intelligence when the leaders of the world's leading industrialized nations countries meet in southern Italy in mid-June.

"This is the first time a Pontiff is participating in the work of the Group of Seven and this can only bring prestige to Italy and the entire @G7," Meloni wrote on X April 26 in a posting that included a video announcement.

Meloni, U.S. President Joe Biden and the leaders of Canada, France, Germany, Japan and the United Kingdom, along with top officials of the European Union are scheduled to meet June 13-15 at Borgo Egnazia in Puglia, Italy.

Matteo Bruni, director of the Vatican press office, confirmed Pope Francis' intention to participate and told Catholic News Service he believed the pope would attend the meeting, not just send a message.

Related: Pope Francis calls for international treaty on artificial intelligence

In her video announcement, Meloni called artificial intelligence "the greatest anthropological challenge of our time," and one requiring legal mechanisms to ensure it is "human-centered and human-controlled."

The prime minister said that in discussing the issue, she would like the government leaders to benefit from the ethical reflections that the Vatican has been promoting since 2020 with its "Rome Call for AI Ethics," a project coordinated by the Pontifical Academy for Life that has been signed by top leaders of Microsoft, IBM, Cisco and other major players in the field.

Meloni said Pope Francis will participate in the G7 "outreach" session to which representatives of other countries, not just G7 members, have been invited.

"I am convinced that the presence of His Holiness will make a decisive contribution to defining a regulatory, ethical and cultural framework for artificial intelligence,

because this field -- the present and future of this technology — will be another test of our ability, the ability of the international community to do what another pope, St. John Paul II, talked about in his famous speech to the United Nations on Oct. 2, 1979: 'Political activity, whether national or international, comes from man, is exercised by man and is for man.' "

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