Culture



This image released by Aldeas Scholas Films shows Pope Francis. "Aldeas–A New Story" is a new feature-length documentary and global cultural project developed by Scholas Occurrentes, the global educational movement founded by Pope Francis, in collaboration with Academy Award-winning director Martin Scorsese. (AP/Aldeas Scholas Films)

Jake Coyle

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Associated Press

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Martin Scorsese is producing a documentary made with Pope Francis that will chronicle the late pontiff's work with cinema in the global educational movement he founded before his death.

"Aldeas — A New Story" will feature conversations between Francis and Scorsese, including what the filmmakers say are the Pope's final in-depth on-camera interviews for a film. The documentary will detail the work of Scholas Occurrentes, a non-profit, international organization founded by the pope in 2013 to promote the "Culture of Encounter" among youth.

Part of that organization's work has included filmmaking under the Aldeas initiative. The documentary will show young people in Indonesia, Italy and the Gambia participating in Aldeas and making short films.

Aldeas Scholas Film and Scorsese's Sikelia Productions, which announced the documentary Wednesday, said the film is "a testament to the enduring belief that creativity is not only a means of expression but a path to hope and transformation."

Before his death, Francis called Aldeas "an extremely poetic and very constructive project because it goes to the roots of what human life is, human sociability, human conflicts ... the essence of a life's journey."

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No release date was announced for the film.

"Now, more than ever, we need to talk to each other, listen to one another cross-culturally," Scorsese said in a statement. "One of the best ways to accomplish this is by sharing the stories of who we are, reflected from our personal lives and experiences. It helps us understand and value how each of us sees the world. It was important to Pope Francis for people across the globe to exchange ideas with respect while also preserving their cultural identity, and cinema is the best medium to do that."

Scorsese met numerous times with Francis over the years, and their conversations sometimes informed work undertaken by the 82-year-old filmmaker of "The Last Temptation of Christ" and "Silence." After meeting with Francis in 2023, Scorsese

announced that he would made another film centered on Jesus, though that project — an adaptation of Shūsaku Endō's "A Life of Jesus" — hasn't yet gone into production. Last fall, Scorsese produced an eight-part docudrama series for Fox Nation called "Martin Scorsese Presents: The Saints."

Francis died on April 21 and a conclave to elect a new pope is scheduled to begin on May 7.

This story appears in the **The Legacy of Pope Francis** feature series. View the full series.