

Dates set for pope's visit to Mexico

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MEXICO CITY -- A spokesman for the Mexican bishops' conference confirmed details of Pope Benedict XVI's upcoming visit to Mexico originally published by the newspaper Reforma, which reported the papal visit would occur March 23-26.

The spokesman, Father Manuel Corral, stressed that details of the visit "are not official," although he said the pope would only visit the state of Guanajuato and its environs in west-central Mexico. Father Corral said specific details of the visit would likely be made public before the end of the year.

Reforma, citing comments from the president of the bishops' conference, Archbishop Carlos Aguiar Retes of Tlalnepantla, reported that Pope Benedict would celebrate Mass March 25 at the Parque Guanajuato Bicentenario in Silao, near the city of Leon and 220 miles northwest of Mexico City.

Pope Benedict also is expected to visit Cuba during his trip, the first to both countries since he was elected in 2005.

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