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Vatican confirms June date for Israeli/Palestinian 'prayer summit'

by Joshua J. McElwee

NCR Today

The Vatican confirmed Thursday that Pope Francis will be hosting a prayer summit June 8 at the Vatican along with the presidents of Israel and Palestine.

The summit is the fruit of an invitation the pontiff made to Israel's Shimon Peres and Palestine's Mahmoud Abbas during his three-day visit to the Holy Land last weekend.

Confirming the event with a statement Thursday, the Vatican press office did not give a place where the summit will be held but said it would take place in the afternoon and that both leaders had accepted the invitation.

Making the invitation while in the Palestinian city of Bethlehem Sunday, Francis said it would be a time for the leaders to "join me in heartfelt prayer to God for the gift of peace."

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