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Vatican releases details of papal trip to Holy Land

Carol Glatz Catholic News Service | Apr. 8, 2009

VATICAN CITY -- On his first trip to the Holy Land, Pope Benedict XVI will meet with Jewish, Muslim and Christian leaders, stop at the Dome of the Rock and the Western Wall in Jerusalem, and visit a refugee camp in Bethlehem, West Bank, the Vatican said.

The May 8-15 visit will take the pope to holy sites in Jordan, Israel and the Palestinian territories. The schedule, published March 26, said the pope would visit the new King Hussein Mosque in Amman, Jordan, stop at Jesus' baptism site at the Jordan River, and make a pilgrimage to Mount Nebo, where Moses once looked out at the Promised Land.

The pope's program calls for encounters with Israeli political leaders, Christian leaders, Jerusalem's most prominent rabbis and the city's leading Muslim cleric, the grand mufti.

Pope Benedict also will visit the Yad Vashem Holocaust Memorial in Jerusalem and celebrate public Masses in Amman, Bethlehem, Jerusalem and Nazareth, Israel.

Here is the detailed itinerary as released by the Vatican. All times are local, with Eastern Daylight Time in parentheses.

Friday, May 8 (Rome, Amman)

- 9:30 a.m. (3:30 a.m.) Departure from Rome's Leonardo da Vinci International Airport.
- 2:30 p.m. (7:30 a.m.) Arrival at Queen Alia International Airport in Amman. Welcoming ceremony. Speech by pope.
- 3:30 p.m. (8:30 a.m.) Visit to the Regina Pacis center in Amman. Speech by pope.
- 5:40 p.m. (10:40 a.m.) Courtesy visit to the king and queen of Jordan at the royal palace in Amman.

Saturday, May 9 (Amman, Mount Nebo, Madaba)

- 7:15 a.m. (12:15 a.m.) Private Mass in chapel of apostolic nunciature in Amman.
- 9:15 a.m. (2:15 a.m.) Visit to the Memorial Church of Moses at Mount Nebo. Speech by pope.
- 10:30 a.m. (3:30 a.m.) Pope blesses the cornerstone of the Latin Patriarchate's University of Madaba. Speech by pope.
- 11:30 a.m. (4:30 a.m.) Visit to the Hashemite Museum and the King Hussein Mosque in Amman.
- 11:45 a.m. (4:45 a.m.) Meeting with Muslim leaders, diplomats and rectors of the University of Jordan outside the mosque. Speech by pope.
- 5:30 p.m. (10:30 a.m.) Celebration of evening prayer in the Melkite Cathedral of St. George in Amman, attended by priests, men and women religious, seminarians and members of church movements. Speech by pope.

Sunday, May 10 (Amman, Bethany Beyond the Jordan)

- 10 a.m. (3 a.m.) Mass at Amman's soccer stadium. Homily by pope. Recitation of Angelus. Talk by pope.
- 12:45 p.m. (5:45 a.m.) Lunch with patriarchs, bishops and the papal entourage in the Latin-rite vicariate of Amman.
- 5:30 p.m. (10:30 a.m.) Visit to Bethany Beyond the Jordan, the site where Jesus was baptized.
- 6 p.m. (11 a.m.) Blessing of cornerstones for a Latin Catholic church and Melkite Catholic church at Bethany Beyond the Jordan. Speech by pope.

Monday, May 11 (Amman, Tel Aviv, Jerusalem)

- 7:30 a.m. (12:30 a.m.) Private Mass in chapel of apostolic nunciature in Amman.
- 10 a.m. (3 a.m.) Departure ceremony at Queen Alia International Airport. Speech by pope.
- 10:30 a.m. (3:30 a.m.) Departure for Israel.
- 11 a.m. (4 a.m.) Welcoming ceremony at Ben Gurion International Airport in Tel Aviv, Israel. Speech by pope.
- 4:15 p.m. (9:15 a.m.) Courtesy visit to President Shimon Peres in presidential palace in Jerusalem. Speech by pope.
- 5:45 p.m. (10:45 a.m.) Visit to Yad Vashem Holocaust Memorial in Jerusalem. Speech by pope.
- 6:45 p.m. (11:45 a.m.) Meeting with organizations involved with interreligious dialogue at the Pontifical Institute Notre Dame of Jerusalem Center. Speech by pope.

Tuesday, May 12 (Jerusalem)

- 9 a.m. (2 a.m.) Visit to the Dome of the Rock and courtesy visit to the grand mufti. Speech by pope.
- 10 a.m. (3 a.m.) Visit to the Western Wall.
- 10:45 a.m. (3:45 a.m.) Courtesy visit to two chief rabbis of Jerusalem at the Hechal Shlomo center. Speech by pope.
- 11:50 a.m. (4:50 a.m.) Recitation of the "Regina Coeli" prayer at the chapel of the Cenacle together with the Catholic ordinaries of the Holy Land. Speech by pope.
- 12:30 p.m. (5:30 a.m.) Brief visit to the Latin Patriarchate's co-cathedral.
- 1 p.m. (6 a.m.) Lunch with the Catholic ordinaries of the Holy Land at the Latin Patriarchate.
- 4:30 p.m. (9:30 a.m.) Mass in the Josafat Valley. Homily by pope.

Wednesday, May 13 (Jerusalem, Bethlehem)

- 9 a.m. (2 a.m.) Welcome ceremony in the square in front of the presidential palace of Bethlehem. Speech by pope.
- 10 a.m. (3 a.m.) Mass in Manger Square. Homily by pope.
- 12:30 p.m. (5:30 a.m.) Lunch with the Catholic ordinaries and Franciscan community of the Holy Land and the papal entourage in the Casa Nova guesthouse.
- 3:30 p.m. (8:30 a.m.) Private visit to the grotto in the Church of the Nativity.
- 4:10 p.m. (9:10 a.m.) Visit to the Caritas Children's Hospital.
- 4:45 p.m. (9:45 a.m.) Visit to the Aida refugee camp. Speech by pope.
- 6 p.m. (11 a.m.) Courtesy visit to the president of the Palestinian Authority in the presidential palace.

- 6:40 p.m. (11:40 a.m.) Farewell ceremony in the courtyard of the presidential palace. Speech by pope.

Thursday, May 14 (Nazareth)

- 10 a.m. (3 a.m.) Mass on Mount Precipice in Nazareth. Homily by pope.
- 12:30 p.m. (5:30 a.m.) Lunch with the Catholic ordinaries and Franciscan community of the Holy Land and the papal entourage in the Franciscan convent.
- 3:50 p.m. (8:50 a.m.) Meeting with Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu in the Franciscan convent.
- 4:30 p.m. (9:30 a.m.) Pope greets religious leaders of Galilee in the auditorium of the Basilica of the Annunciation. Speech by pope.
- 5 p.m. (10 a.m.) Visit to the Grotto of the Annunciation.
- 5:30 p.m. (10:30 a.m.) Celebration of evening prayer in the upper Basilica of the Annunciation in Nazareth attended by bishops, priests, men and women religious, seminarians, members of church movements and pastoral workers of Galilee. Speech by pope.

Friday, May 15 (Jerusalem, Tel Aviv, Rome)

- 7:30 a.m. (12:30 a.m.) Private Mass in chapel of the apostolic delegation in Jerusalem.
- 9:15 a.m. (2:15 a.m.) Ecumenical meeting in the headquarters of the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem. Speech by pope.
- 10:15 a.m. (3:15 a.m.) Visit to the Holy Sepulcher. Speech by pope.
- 11:10 a.m. (4:10 a.m.) Visit to the Armenian Apostolic patriarchate's Church of St. Jacob.
- 1:30 p.m. (6:30 a.m.) Farewell ceremony at the Ben Gurion International Airport in Tel Aviv. Speech by pope.
- 2 p.m. (7 a.m.) Departure from the Ben Gurion International Airport for Rome.
- 4:50 p.m. (10:50 a.m.) Arrival at Rome's Ciampino airport.

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