



Pope Francis prays after walking through the Holy Door to inaugurate the Jubilee Year of Mercy in St. Peter's Basilica at the Vatican in this Dec. 8, 2015, file photo. In the background at left is retired Pope Benedict XVI, who walked through the Holy Door after Pope Francis. The pope has approved the theme, "Pilgrims of Hope," to be the motto for the Holy Year 2025. (CNS/Vatican Media)

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Orthodox Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew of Constantinople said he will host Pope Francis in 2025 and they will go together to Iznik, Turkey, to celebrate the 1,700th anniversary of the Council of Nicaea.

According to Radio Renascença, a radio station owned by the Portuguese bishops, the patriarch announced the trip during a visit to Lisbon May 15 to participate in an interreligious meeting. The Vatican did not confirm the trip.

The patriarch told reporters, "His Holiness Pope Francis wishes to celebrate this important anniversary together and plans to come to our country to visit the Patriarchate of Constantinople, and then we will proceed together to Nicaea," which is modern-day Iznik, "for an important historical celebration of this anniversary."

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In his document formally proclaiming the Holy Year 2025, Francis drew attention to the fact that the jubilee coincides with celebrations of the Nicaea anniversary.

The council, which began meeting in May 325, gave birth to the Nicene Creed, affirmed the full divinity of Christ and set a formula for determining the date of Easter.

According to Radio Renascença, Bartholomew said that an organizing committee of Catholics and Orthodox is being formed to plan the celebration and will meet soon.