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The Holy See Pavilion at Expo 2020 Dubai

From 1 October 2021 to 31 March 2022, the Holy See will be present with its own Pavilion at Expo 2020 in Dubai.

The Pavilion is intended to be an encounter between aesthetics, science and faith under the banner of fraternity and intercultural and interreligious dialogue. It has taken as its symbols two historical encounters: that between Saint Francis and Sultan Malik Al-Kāmil, which took place 800 years ago, and that of Pope Francis with the Grand Imam of Al-Azhar, Ahmad Al-Tayyib, in Abu Dhabi, on 4 February 2019. The Holy Father's wish is to give continuity to the *Document on Human Fraternity for World Peace and Living Together*. Despite the Covid-19 pandemic and the economic crisis, the decision has been to be present with the sobriety that has distinguished the Vatican pavilions of previous editions, not least because this is the first Universal Exposition celebrated in a Middle Eastern country with a Muslim majority.

The theme of the Pavilion is "Deepening the Connection", to underline the need to build increasingly solid relationships between peoples, cultures and faiths and is part of the general Expo theme "Connecting minds, Creating the Future".

The composition of the Pavilion - designed by Msgr. Tomasz Trafny and the architect Giuseppe Di Nicola - includes a reproduction of Giotto's fresco "Francis Meets the Sultan" in the Basilica of Assisi, a video-installation, and the display of the precious edition of the Abu Dhabi Declaration on Fraternity, edited by LEV. The edition has a bilingual English-Arabic text and contains introductory contributions by His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Emir of Dubai, and Pope Francis. There are also reproductions of Michelangelo's "Creation of Adam" from the Sistine Chapel, a digitised version of the Tower of Winds made by NTT Data, and some uniforms of the Papal Swiss Guard.

Particularly noteworthy is the exhibition of the originals of some important manuscripts from the Vatican Library: 1) The incipit of an Arabic translation (ca. 800-830) of Theon Alexandrinus' *Manual Tables* (palimpsest fragment from the *Bayt al-Hikmah* in Baghdad); 2) the *Liber Abbaci* by Leonardo Pisano (*Fibonacci*, c. 1170 - c. 1250) on

the introduction of Arabic numerals in the West; and 3) Observations on the Gregorian calendar reform by the Portuguese astronomer Tomás de Orta (†1594). The exhibition is accompanied by a short documentary produced by the Vatican Library.

Visitors will be welcomed and accompanied by the Franciscan Youth.

Cardinal Gianfranco Ravasi, president of the Pontifical Council for Culture, will be present for the opening ceremony, while the National Day of the Holy See will be celebrated on 19 March 2022.

An app to make the experience accessible to those unable to visit Dubai in person is being finalised.
