

Cardinal Dolan: Pope will have ‘profound, lasting impact’ on New Yorkers

By Catholic News Service

NEW YORK – The 30 hours or so Pope Francis will spend in New York in September will be relatively brief, but “his presence here among us will have a profound and lasting impact on all New Yorkers, said Cardinal Timothy M. Dolan.

“As Catholics, we rejoice in knowing that our Holy Father is coming to visit us, and we eagerly look forward to showing him how our faith is being put into action in this community,” the New York cardinal said in a statement June 30.

His comments followed the early morning release by the Vatican of the detailed schedule of Pope Francis’ Sept. 19-22 visit to Cuba and his Sept. 22-27 visit to the United States.

“As New Yorkers, we know that we can offer an example to the entire world of how people of different faiths can not only live together in peace and harmony, but also come together in a spirit of mutual cooperation and respect for one another,” Cardinal Dolan said.

Pope Francis is scheduled to depart Washington at 4 p.m. (local time) Sept. 24 and arrive at New York’s John F. Kennedy International Airport an hour later. That evening he will celebrate vespers with priests and men and women religious in St. Patrick’s Cathedral and deliver the homily.

Early in the morning Sept. 25, the pontiff visit the headquarters of the United Nations to greet officials and give a speech. Mid-morning he will participate in an interreligious meeting at the ground zero 9/11 Memorial and give a speech there. The rest of his itinerary includes a visit to Our Lady Queen of Angels Catholic Elementary School in East Harlem and a meeting with children and immigrant families. That evening he will celebrate Mass. Early on Sept. 26 he will depart for Philadelphia.

“We look forward to having the opportunity to join with Pope Francis in prayer, as we praise God for the many gifts he has given us, and ask for the Lord’s grace and wisdom in helping us continue to reach out in love and mercy to those less fortunate than us,” said Cardinal Dolan in his statement.

In May, during a celebration of World Communications Day in the neighboring Diocese of Brooklyn, one of the speakers predicted America will fall in love with Pope Francis when he visits in September.

Pope Francis is “appealing in ways that no pope has been in years,” said the speaker, Austen Ivereigh, author of “The Great Reformer, Francis and the Making of a Radical Pope.”

The pope finds new ways to express the teachings of the church, but he is not changing doctrine as many seem to think. He rejects a church of wealth, power and ego, and instead emphasizes a church of and for the poor, explained Ivereigh.

“He teaches an old-fashioned religion in new terms that sound different,” said the British-born author. “For Francis, mercy is the key to evangelization.”

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