

Vatican to establish Catholic-Muslim Forum

by UPI

VATICAN CITY - The Vatican and a group of Muslim scholars have agreed to establish a permanent Catholic-Muslim Forum and have scheduled an inaugural summit in November. The theme of the first meeting will be "Love God, Love Your Neighbor," The Times of London reported. Pope Benedict XVI approved the plan after three days of discussions in Rome. The forum is an indirect result of a speech the pope made in Regensburg, Germany, in 2006 that appeared to some to equate Islam with violence. Prince Ghazi bin Muhammed bin Talal of Jordan, concerned about the anger the pope's remarks stirred up in the Muslim world, suggested an open letter to the Vatican from Muslim scholars, the "group of 138." The first meeting is to be held at the Vatican from Nov. 4-6. The second will be in a Muslim country. Ali Aref Nayed, director of the Royal Islamic Strategic Studies Center in Amman, Jordan, said the goal of the discussions is to "return to the roots of faith and what we have in common."

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