

Vatican to Submit a Film for Oscar Consideration, Making Academy Awards History.

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[1236864011/](https://variety.com/2026/film/global/vatican-submit-film-oscar-consideration-1236864011/) The Vatican is set to submit a film for Oscar consideration for the first time in the 97-year history of the Academy Awards. “Green Lava,” an inspirational Vatican-produced documentary short featuring a young Italian man named Giacomo Mattivi who lives with Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy, will premiere this week in Los Angeles as a preamble to being submitted for Oscar consideration in the best documentary short film category. “Green Lava” will screen Sept. 18-24 at the Lumiere Music Hall in Beverly Hills. Following its theatrical run, the production team will complete the paperwork to submit it for Oscar consideration, according to a publicist for the film. The submission would mark the first time a film produced by the Vatican will be in the running for the Academy Awards. That said, the film will not specifically represent the Vatican in the race. Unlike the international feature film category, short films do not need an official submission or endorsement from a national government or a country-specific committee. “Green Lava,” which is directed by Lia Beltrami and Ali Aksu, follows Giacomo “as he faces life without his brother Mattia who has just succumbed to Duchenne,” says the film’s synopsis. “Defying societal expectations, Giacomo challenges the limitations imposed by his condition and finds strength in his community and in the natural world that surrounds him.” The 39-minute film, which is set against the breathtaking backdrop of the Dolomites, is described in promotional materials as “a poignant meditation on independence, the human spirit and the transformative power of community in the face of adversity.” “Giacomo’s story deserves to be known by everyone, and that is why we are delighted about the opportunity to include ‘Green Lava’ in the Oscar submission process,” said Paolo Ruffini, who heads the Vatican’s Dicastery for Communication — which is the office that controls the Vatican’s television, radio, online, publishing and newspaper operations — in a statement for Variety. Ruffini praised “Green Lava” for being “a story that is a celebration of life and friendship,” noting that it “teaches us the richness that the lives of people marked by illness can bear witness to and offer, as well as the vitality they can bring to the relationships around them.” Director-producer Beltrami’s company Emotions to Generate Change produced “Green Lava” in collaboration with Vatican News, Radio Vaticana and Vatican Media. “I live in the same village as Giacomo and his family,” Beltrami said in a statement. “The people who live in the Dolomites, the mountains, are very special people who care and tend to their families and their communities.” She added, “It is beautiful to see in today’s world that the community has rallied around Giacomo, they treat him automatically with kindness and inclusion. It is my hope that the world will see this film and be inspired to be like the people of the mountains.” By Nick Varelli.