

Caritas Jerusalem employee killed while sheltering with her family in Gaza.

The Caritas Confederation is in mourning today after the devastating loss of a Caritas Jerusalem employee in Gaza.

On the 20th of October 17 people tragically lost their lives while sheltering in The St. Porphyrios Church Hall in Gaza, with dozens more sustaining injuries. These numbers expected to climb as others are still under the rubble.

The Orthodox Church compound was sheltering around 500 people, with around 80 in the Church Hall when it was hit. Among those in the hall were five dedicated members of Caritas Jerusalem's staff, along with their families.

It is with great sorrow that Caritas Australia reports the loss of a 26-year-old Caritas Jerusalem lab technician who lost her life alongside her toddler and husband, with her sister and her two children also among the casualties.

Kirsty Robertson, CEO of Caritas Australia, said, "Today, with heavy hearts, we pray for those who lost their lives in this attack, all those who have lost their lives in this conflict, and all continuing to live through these unimaginable days in Gaza. We pray for our Caritas Jerusalem brothers and sisters, that they may find the strength to deal with the harrowing challenges they face.

"I draw from the words of Pope Francis: "Let the weapons be silenced; let the cry for peace be heard from the poor, from the people, from the children". We stand in solidarity with our colleagues and pray for the safety and protection of all civilians. We pray for peace."

To support Caritas Australia's Gaza Appeal, visit www.caritas.org.au/donate/emergency-appeals/gaza-crisis/ or call 1800 024 413 toll free.

ENDS

Media contact: Tara Harvey 0484 002 021 tara.harvey@caritas.org.au or caritasmedia@caritas.org.au