

**“The love of life and thanks to God is the basis of everything” says Caritas worker in Gaza.**

Since the outbreak of violence in Gaza, 31,988 Palestinians have lost their life in the small enclave, with over 1.4 million Palestinians pushed into the Rafah governorate, which has since come under fire.

Caritas Australia's partners working in the region have provided multi-purpose cash assistance to over 127,000 people, emergency shelter for over 1,500 people and bedding supplies to more than 17,000 people. Working with the World Food Programme, food parcels have been distributed to over 22,000 families.

In turn, partners share sobering words and stories – coming from their own teams working on the ground in Gaza, as well as the people they are helping.

Over half of the population of Gaza is [under 15](#) years old, ensuring this conflict is devastating families. These families are telling our partners: “The only thing we own now is ourselves. We lost all our money. We need food, money, and shelter even if it is only temporary.” Another said, “All our plans and hopes of raising our children in a healthy manner are now shattered.”

The employees of Caritas partners on the ground have now spent months balancing being victims of the conflict and humanitarian workers responding to an emergency. All 45 of these workers have been displaced, many having moved multiple times.

One reflected on the scale of the suffering, stating that: “The sheer brutality of this war has left no corner untouched, and the streets echo with the cries of those who have lost their loved ones. In this humanitarian crisis, the stories streaming from Gaza show suffering beyond comprehension.”

Another shone a light on the plight of those with infant children, saying, “In the war on Gaza, being the mother of an infant means double the fear: the fear of death due to the inability to escape from bombing, in addition to the fear of not being able to feed the child due to the scarcity of water and food.” At the start of the conflict there were [52,000](#) pregnant women in Gaza. This month the UN [reported](#) doctors are seeing a rise in infant deaths due to malnutrition.

Another Caritas colleague gives a poignant lesson in gratitude, saying:

“The most important lesson I learned from this harsh experience is to thank God for the simplest things that I had before the war. My message for people is to love the life that you live. Don't miss an opportunity to live with your friends, family and children. Sit in every corner of your house and savor all of the details. Be happy and excited when you go to your work.

To watch death with your own eyes, to experience shrapnel falling on you in a terrible and crazy way, to be strong for your family and children, to lose your closest friends, to miss your previous life: All of these things make me thank God that we are still alive. The love of life and thanks to God is the basis of everything.”

To support Caritas Australia's Gaza Appeal, visit [www.caritas.org.au/gaza](http://www.caritas.org.au/gaza) or call 1800 024 413 toll free.

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