

Caritas Australia shares a humanitarian plea from the Churches of Jerusalem

Caritas Australia has received a statement from the Churches of Jerusalem, titled *Defending the Dignity and Presence of the People of Gaza*.

The statement calls attention to the responsibilities of those with Christian faith to extend their compassion to those in the Holy Land, stating that “As custodians of the Christian faith and conscience in this sacred land, we raise our voices in sorrow and steadfast resolve in the face of the ongoing suffering in Gaza. The devastation that has unfolded before the eyes of the world is a profound moral and humanitarian tragedy. Thousands of innocent lives have been lost, and entire communities stand in ruin, with the most vulnerable - children, the elderly, and the sick - enduring unimaginable hardship”.

Reporting of fatalities in Gaza ceased in October 2024, at which point over [48,000](#) people had been reported dead, including over 13,000 children, with thousands of people missing.

Responding to the possible future of Gaza, the Churches of Jerusalem said, “Amid this anguish, we are compelled to speak against the grave threat of mass displacement, an injustice that strikes at the very heart of human dignity. The people of Gaza, families who have lived for generations in the land of their ancestors, must not be forced into exile, stripped of whatever is left of their homes, their heritage, and their right to remain in the land that forms the essence of their identity. As Christians, we cannot be indifferent to such suffering, for the Gospel commands us to uphold the dignity of every human being. The words of our Lord remind us: “Woe to those who make unjust laws, to those who issue oppressive decrees, to deprive the poor of their rights and withhold justice from the oppressed” (Isaiah 10:1-2).”

The Patriarchs and Heads of the Churches in Jerusalem also made clear a “call for the release of all captives from both sides so that they can be safely reunited with their families”.

The statement concluded, “As we lift our prayers for those in mourning, for the wounded, and for those who remain steadfast in the land of their forefathers, we remember the promise of Scripture: “The Lord upholds all who fall and lifts up all who are bowed down” (Psalm 145:14). May the God of mercy strengthen the afflicted, soften the hearts of those who hold power, and bring forth a peace that upholds justice, preserves human dignity, and safeguards the presence of all people in the land to which they belong. ”

Sally Thomas, Humanitarian Manager at Caritas Australia said, “In response to this call from the Churches in Jerusalem, Caritas Australia continues its steadfast support of program partners in Gaza. The region exists in a fragile state of peace, enabling greater levels of life-saving humanitarian support to enter the region. We extend our thanks to our supporters and assure them that their generosity is felt by their brothers and sisters in need in Gaza.”

The Caritas Australia Gaza Emergency Appeal has been running since October 2023, during which time partners have supported 226,225 families, comprised of 1,357,350 people, with emergency food, shelter assistance and clean drinking water, as well as psychosocial support for children.

To support Caritas Australia’s Gaza Emergency Appeal, visit www.caritas.org.au/gaza or call 1800 024 413 toll free.

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