Archdiocese of Tuam

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A PASTORAL MESSAGE
from
ARCHBISHOP FRANCIS DUFFY
on the occasion of the
Day of Prayer and Reflection for Gaza on Sunday, 24th August 2025

I join with Archbishop Eamon Martin, Archbishop of Armagh, in calling for Sunday 24th August to be a day of prayer and reflection for the suffering people of Gaza and for all who are the innocent victims of this terrifying and protracted war.

Over the summer many people have become increasingly troubled by the news reports of a deteriorating situation, with hunger emerging amidst the death and destruction. There is also the terrible plight of the hostages and their distraught families. Pope Leo XIV has called for "a ceasefire, the release of hostages, and full respect for international humanitarian law."

The Irish Bishops' statement of June of this year was clear that the deaths of tens of thousands of non-combatants, many of them women and children, "... is unconscionable and disproportionate. It is immoral for world leaders to stand by inactively in the face of this outrageous tragedy for humanity."

I encourage you to show solidarity, in any way you can, for the plight of the people of Gaza and in the land of the Lord's birth, by supporting humanitarian aid, and by praying for peace, a ceasefire, justice and a return of all hostages.

Cardinal Pierbattista Pizzaballa, the Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem, commented "Christ is not absent from Gaza. He is there crucified in the wounded, buried under the rubble and yet present in every act of mercy, every candle in the darkness, every hand extended to the suffering."

Please join people all over Ireland, on Sunday 24th August, praying for peace. Pray at Mass, at adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, pray at home for peace and for the necessary humanitarian aid to reach those who are in need. May our prayer be a light in the darkness for those who suffer, and may Our Lady, Queen of Peace, intercede for all who long for lasting peace.

With every good wish and blessing,

Francis Duffy
Archbishop of Tuam
Apostolic Administrator of Killala