



July 18, 2025

Come, bless the Lord, all you servants of the Lord, who stand by night in the house of the Lord! Lift up your hands to the holy place, and bless the Lord. —Psalm 134:1-2

Dear Church,

As reported by the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem and major news outlets yesterday, an Israeli military strike on Holy Family Church in Gaza City killed three people and injured several more, including the Catholic parish's priest, the Rev. Gabriel Romanelli. We mourn the loss of Saad Salameh, Foumia Ayyad and Najwa Abu Dawood, who were killed in this attack.

For two thousand years, Christians have built structures in which to pray, worship and build faithful community, sanctuaries of spiritual — and sometimes literal — refuge. Throughout nearly two years of deadly violence in Gaza, Holy Family Church has provided this sanctuary for hundreds of Christians and their Muslim neighbors.

The Israeli military's repeated targeting of churches, as well as schools, hospitals and other civilian infrastructure, sends a clear message: no place is sacred. Any Palestinian in Gaza, from the youngest infant to the eldest grandparent, can become a military target. This is wrong. As Christians, we are called to uphold the sacredness of human life, a tenet of our faith that we share with neighbors of many other faiths around the world.

This church urges the U.S. government, as well as Christian leaders in our nation, to join Pope Leo XIV's renewed call for an immediate ceasefire. This church continues to call for international laws to be upheld that would grant the people of Gaza unhindered access to humanitarian aid, medical aid and safe shelters.

We urge dialogue between regional leaders to strive for a just peace in the Holy Land.

Lord, have mercy.



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