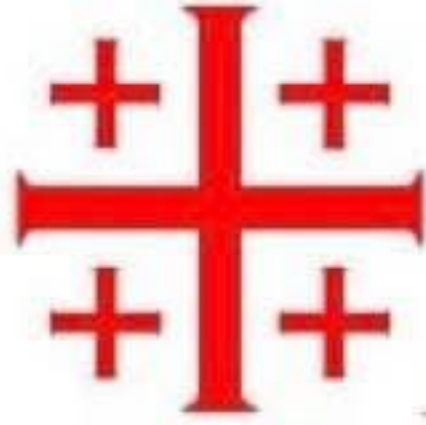




PATRIARCHS AND HEADS OF THE CHURCHES IN JERUSALEM

STATEMENT ON THE ATTACK ON HOLY FAMILY CATHOLIC CHURCH IN GAZA

July 18, 2025

Jerusalem, The Holy Land

We, the Patriarchs and Heads of the Churches in Jerusalem, join together in profound solidarity with the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem and the people sheltering in Holy Family Catholic Church in Gaza, as we bear witness to the heinous attack by the Israeli Army on the church compound there on Thursday morning, July 17, 2025. This attack not only caused damage to the Church complex, but also left three dead and ten wounded—with even the parish priest, Fr. Gabriel Romanelli, being among the injured.

In unyielding unity, we strongly denounce this crime. Houses of worship are sacred spaces that should be kept safe. They are also protected under international law. Targeting a church that houses approximately 600 refugees, including children with special needs, is a violation of these laws. It is also an affront to human dignity, a trampling upon the sanctity of human life, and the desecration of a holy site.

We, the Patriarchs and Heads of Churches in Jerusalem, call upon world leaders and United Nations agencies to work towards an immediate ceasefire in Gaza that leads to an end of this war. We also implore them to guarantee the protection of all religious and humanitarian sites, and to provide for the relief of the starving masses throughout the Gaza Strip.

Our prayers and support remain steadfast, calling for justice, peace, and the cessation of the suffering that has descended upon the people of Gaza.

—The Patriarchs and Heads of the Churches in Jerusalem