

## Day of fasting and prayer for peace: the continuous prayer of Christians in Gaza

Today is a day of prayer, fasting and abstinence for peace in the Holy Land, promoted by the Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem, Card. **Pierbattista Pizzaballa**, announced on October 11 in a note on behalf of the Assembly of Catholic Ordinaries of the Holy Land. It read: "Once again we find ourselves in the midst of a political and military crisis. Everything seems to speak of death. Yet, in this time of sorrow and dismay, we do not want to remain helpless. We feel the need to pray, to turn our hearts to God the Father." This was followed by an invitation to all members of the Patriarchal Diocese, which covers Israel, Palestine, Jordan and Cyprus, to observe the day today, Tuesday October 17. The invitation was immediately echoed by the Italian Bishops' Presidency, which made a similar appeal to its dioceses, in communion with those of the Latin Patriarchate, to "offer to God the Father our thirst for peace, justice and reconciliation."



[the parish priest in Gaza, told SIR: "Last night was rather quiet. I have just spoken to Father Yusuf. He told me that everyone in the parish is in good health. Our faithful in Gaza will also participate in the day, offering their suffering caused by the war and what little they have." From Bethlehem, where he is stranded because of the war and anxious to be reunited with his faithful, Father Romanelli sent a message for this Day of Prayer in which he recalls that "Fasting, abstinence and prayer are very important because they allow us to raise together our plea for peace and our cry against war." The priest also called for "the opening of humanitarian corridors necessary for the well-being of thousands of civilians, an end to the bombing of Gaza, freedom for the prisoners and medical care for the thousands of wounded. We boldly call for peace in Gaza, in the whole of Palestine and in Israel, so that a ray of hope may open up for all our peoples." "Last night was rather quiet. Yesterday there was a warning of Israeli bombing here in the area - \*\*Sister Maria del Pilar\*\* told SIR. Here in the parish we heard the rumble of the bombs, but thank God we had no problems. Everyone is well and we began the day praying for peace, as requested by our Patriarch, Card. Pizzaballa."](#)



[a member of the Congregation of the Sisters of the Rosary in Jerusalem, told SIR. Last night, at around 9pm, as bombs fell in the area near the parish, the nun said: "They are bombing and we go to the church to pray. Only there do we feel safe, next to Jesus." These words were repeated many times during these days of war.](#)

