

# Christians4Palestine -Ireland

Bulletin

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**'Peace, justice and equality for all our brothers and sisters in Palestine, Jew, Christian and Muslim'**

## Introduction

**Christians4Palestine Ireland** is a multi-faith, cross-community activist organisation that works to raise awareness of the ethnic cleansing of the Palestinian people and the injustices perpetrated against them. The vast majority of the traditional news media has heavily censored the horrific events in Palestine and provided a narrative that is not balanced or objective. This bulletin, published on a fortnightly basis, aims to provide articles and information to broaden knowledge and understanding of the region. It will provide readers with projects they can engage with to stop the ongoing Genocide.

### Let us Know and help spread the word

We need your help. Please contact us if:

- you would like to know more about cross community services we hope to hold in the very near future in support of Gaza/Palestine.
- your church has demonstrated support for the Palestinian People suffering genocide.
- you would like to hold a cross-community service or fund raising activity for Palestine/Gaza.
- you could help distribute future editions of this bulletin outside churches or to place them in church foyer

Send your contact information

Your name

Email

Phone number

Church Name

Pastor/Priest name

To

**christians4palestine@outlook.com**

## Why is Gaza different?

There are a number of very destructive wars occurring at this time across the world. Palestine, Sudan, Myanmar and Ukraine are examples of those. All these wars are to be condemned but Gaza has a number of factors that make it different and more significant.

The population in Gaza is **trapped**, They cannot escape from Gaza because of the **illegal Israeli blockade** and the strict Egyptian control near the southern border. Israel controls the land borders air and sea. It **illegally** controls the food, electricity, water and medical aid that enters Gaza. **Currently it has been blocking all these essentials from entering the country for over 6 weeks.**

The media coverage of Palestine, by publicly funded news outlets such as BBC and RTE, has been **biased** at best and at times they have omitted significant stories because it would paint a negative picture of the Israeli Government its brutal campaign. This has been a deliberate strategy to **manipulate public opinion**. Israel has waged a very aggressive media campaign influencing the media coverage.

There are important factors that make the Gaza a special case in terms of asymmetric warfare. Many organisations and courts have declared the Gaza campaign by Israel as a **Genocide** and that crimes against humanity have been committed. The **International Criminal Court (ICC)** issued arrest warrants for Israeli ministers accused of crimes against humanity. The **International Court of Justice (ICJ)** have declared a potential Genocide – issued directions to Israel to prevent a genocide– which it failed to follow. The Israeli regime with the support of the US and other Western countries continues to flout international law and fails to hold perpetrators to account

The Israeli Zionist Regime has a huge, heavily armed and well-funded army (supported by the **US, UK and Germany** mainly). It has illegally occupied Gaza and the West bank since 1967. In addition to directly arming the Israeli regime these countries have also supplied logistics and intelligence, **making them complicit.**

## How can you help stop the Genocide?

It is difficult to watch horrific images coming from Gaza on a nightly basis. Nevertheless it is important to keep up to date with the current situation and how you can help. It is also vital to educate your friends and family on Gaza and the erosion of a free press and individual freedoms of citizens that have occurred as a result of the Government/Press bias.

## What is BDS and how do I get involved?

**Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS)** are a positive series of actions aimed at targeting the Israeli Regime and companies who support it. BDS was a key factor that ended the Apartheid Regime in south Africa that oppressed the majority black population. The strategy is to select a few significant companies and to have a big impact by getting people to focus their spending power on them.

We encourage you to change your buying habits and support local produce and companies by buying from them

### BDS Targets

- A. Check products country of origin and boycott **Israeli products**.
- B. Boycott **Starbucks** – buy your coffee in local coffee houses
- C. Boycott **McDonalds** – buy your food in local cafes and restaurants

## Further Reading Online

1. Christians face extinction amid Israeli assaults: Palestinian pastor
2. The Gospel According to Francis - Bradley Jersak
3. How Should Christians Respond to the Horror of Gaza? – Slugger O'Toole

## A Tribute to Pope Francis by Rev. Munther Isaac

Palestinian, and Palestinian Christians in particular, have lost a dear friend today. Pope Francis was beloved in Palestine. He conveyed true compassion to Palestinians, most notably to those in Gaza during this genocide. His pastoral heart was evident in his insistence on calling the Christian community besieged in Gaza on a constant basis, even from his hospital.

Some years ago, Pope Francis visited Bethlehem. We all remember the iconic image of him praying at the Wall. This is what I wrote about this incident in my book "The Other Side of the Wall".

When Pope Francis stopped, touched the wall, and said a prayer, it was truly a monumental moment that made waves in world news. Pope Francis couldn't help but notice the ugliness of this concrete structure at the heart of Bethlehem. This wall should make us all uncomfortable. To this discomfort, the Pope couldn't help but react and reach out. By responding in this manner, the Pope touched more than the wall. He touched the ugliness of the occupation and war. He touched the depth of our suffering. With humility and weakness, he looked injustice in the eyes, and challenged it.

What did he say in his prayer? The truth is, I don't want to know. Some words are better left unspoken. The image of him standing next to the wall and praying will forever be engraved in our memories. For me, this image went everywhere. On my office wall, Facebook page, desktop wallpaper. For us as Palestinian Christians, this image was stored deep into our memory. And when this wall falls one day (not if, when), we might go back to this moment and this prayer as one of the key moments that led to its fall.

At the end of the day, the Pope left, and the occupation and the wall remained. But we were left with a renewed sense of hope—knowing that we are not forgotten. We were left with a mandate to continue lamenting the current situation, to fight against injustice . . . and to pray. (The Other Side of the Wall, pp. 182-183).

The Pope left our world today, and the occupation and the wall remained. Even worse, he left our world while a genocide continues to unfold. Back in November he wrote: "I am thinking above all of those who leave Gaza in the midst of the famine that has struck their Palestinian brothers and sisters given the difficulty of getting food and aid into their territory... According to some experts, what is happening in Gaza has the characteristics of a genocide. It should be carefully investigated to determine whether it fits into the technical definition formulated by jurists and international bodies."

Today I wonder: Will the millions who will mourn his death these coming days respect this wish of his? Will they care for Gazans and Palestinians the way he did?

May his soul rest in glory with his Savior. Humanity lost a special soul today.

**Rev. Munther Isaac is a Pastor in Lutheran Christian Church in Bethlehem and has witnessed first hand the Israeli Oppression of the Palestinian People**

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