

24 HOURS OF PRAYER FOR GAZA
Sunday, 24 August 2025

Why Solidarity Matters: The Heart of Our Faith

In our comfortable world, we've grown to settle for what might be called "the bare minimum" - giving ourselves credit for the minimum gesture. Catholic Social Teaching calls us to something far deeper.

Pope St. John Paul II taught us what real solidarity means:

"Solidarity is not a feeling of vague compassion or shallow distress at the misfortunes of so many people, both near and far. On the contrary, it is a firm and persevering determination to commit oneself to the common good; that is to say to the good of all and of each individual, because we are all really responsible for all."

— *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis*, 38

In this light, the initiative "24 Hours of Prayer for Gaza" is about more than feeling sorry for people in Gaza. It's about recognising that their suffering diminishes us all, that we are genuinely responsible for one another, that their children matter as much as our own.

Practical Ways to Respond Today

Remember: It is better to choose even ONE of these with genuine intention than to nod at all of them and end up skimming past them.

FOR THOSE WHO CAN COMMIT TIME:

Morning (6am-12pm)

- Attend Mass and offer it specifically for Gaza
- Spend 30 minutes in Adoration if your church is open
- Pray the Rosary slowly, dedicating each decade to families in Gaza

Afternoon (12pm-6pm)

- Fast from lunch and offer the hunger in solidarity
- Read St Paul's Letter to the Philippians 4:6-9

Evening (6pm-Midnight)

- Join (online) with the parish prayer group at 7pm
- Light a candle at home at 9pm - spend 10 minutes in silent prayer
- Pray with your family before bed for specific needs: children without parents, medical workers, those searching for food

Note: St Michael's Church is open for Personal Prayer throughout the day till 8pm with Sunday Evening Divine Mercy Prayer and Eucharistic Adoration at 7pm.

FOR THOSE WITH LIMITED TIME:

Choose ONE and do it fully:

- Set three phone alarms during the day (morning, afternoon, evening). When they ring, stop for 2 minutes and pray: "Lord, I don't know their names, but you do. Comfort them."
- Give up something you enjoy today (dessert, TV, social media) and each time you think of it, remember Gaza
- Teach your children one simple prayer for peace and say it together
- Light a candle in your window tonight as a sign of solidarity

For Families:

- At dinner, discuss: "If we had to flee our home tonight, what would that feel like?"
- Have children draw pictures of peace to put in your window
- Pray one decade of the Rosary together for families like yours in Gaza
- Choose a family fast: no screens, sweets, or music for the day

A Prayer for Gaza

To use privately or with others throughout the day

Lord Jesus, you walked the roads of Palestine,
You know its stones, its olive trees, its people.
Today that land is torn by violence and fear.

We confess we often give ourselves a "bare pass" -
feeling good about minimal gestures
while avoiding real solidarity with those who suffer.

Transform our comfortable distance into costly proximity.
Change our vague concern into firm determination.
Turn our passive consumption of religion
into active participation in your compassion.

For the children of Gaza who sleep in fear,
For parents who cannot protect their young,
For doctors working without supplies,
For all who search for food and water,
For those who have lost everything:
Lord, have mercy.

We are all connected to each other.
Help us to remember this truth today
And to carry Gaza and the concerns of so many
in our hearts.
Through Christ our Lord, Amen.