

SIGN-ON LETTER FROM U.S. CATHOLICS ON ISRAEL-PALESTINE

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We invite any and all Catholics to [sign](#) this letter and join us in sharing this message.

We, Catholics in the United States, **express our grief and dismay** over the horrors that have occurred in Israel-Palestine over the last six months. We also **bear witness to and speak out against the decades of injustice** that have plagued the Holy Land. **As Pope Francis has [said](#)**, “without justice, there is no peace.” The inherent dignity of all persons and their right to life is the basis of our concern for all Palestinian and Israeli lives and our hope for a solution in which systemic injustices are addressed and the rights of both peoples granted and upheld.

In May 2024, when this letter is being released, we continue to plead for an immediate and permanent ceasefire in Gaza and adherence to international law by all parties. [71% of U.S. Catholics](#) support a Gaza ceasefire, echoing the position of [Pope Francis](#), the [U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops](#), the [Society of Jesus](#), and [other U.S. Catholic organizations](#) and [leaders](#). As of this letter’s publication, **[over 34,000 Palestinians in Gaza—the majority civilians—have been killed](#)** by Israel’s military assault marked by indiscriminate bombing. We mourn each life lost. Tens of thousands more are severely injured without access to adequate medical care; half of Gazans are facing [famine](#); and most have been [displaced](#) from their homes, [70% of which have been destroyed](#). We are also deeply concerned about the recent [spike in attacks and killings](#) of Palestinians in the West Bank by Israeli soldiers and [settlers](#).

We also call for the release of all remaining Israeli hostages held by Hamas, including children and elderly, who were forcibly taken from their homes in southern Israel on October 7, 2023. We mourn for the **[nearly 1,200 people, mostly civilians](#)**, who were killed and the many others who were brutalized and traumatized during Hamas’ attack. At the same time, we call for the release of all Palestinian [political prisoners](#) held unjustly by Israel.

As U.S. Catholics, we recognize our country’s contribution to the present violence and to the ongoing systemic injustices in Israel-Palestine. We call on President Biden, a fellow Catholic, and other U.S. and international leaders, to do everything possible to ensure a permanent end to hostilities, including halting additional shipments of U.S.-funded offensive weapons to Israel, a return of all hostages, and the immediate distribution of robust humanitarian aid to Gaza.

We acknowledge that we have not paid enough attention to the situation in Israel-Palestine. For many American Catholics, there has been an unspoken feeling that Israel-Palestine is not really *our* problem—that it is a Jewish-Muslim issue. But this attitude was a mistake. We cannot forget that Christians, most of whom are Palestinian, are an integral part of the Holy Land. [Palestinian Christians](#) have long [pleaded that](#) Christians around the world listen to their [experiences](#) and support their struggle for full equality and rights.

We are equally concerned about the well-being of Muslims, Jews, and others who suffer in Israel-Palestine. As Catholics, we have a responsibility to oppose any action that threatens human life and dignity, and to be attentive to both Palestinian and Israeli fears and traumas. We also recommit ourselves to opposing antisemitism, Islamophobia, and anti-Arab discrimination. Christians have often failed in this regard, both in the past and [today](#).

We recognize that even before the current crisis in Gaza, the situation in Israel-Palestine was fundamentally unjust and marred by violence. Sometimes, those of us in the United States misperceive the Israel-Palestine situation as a conflict of equally matched sides. In reality, though, there is a great power imbalance, with Israel [denying many basic rights](#) to stateless Palestinians and governing much of their lives through [military occupation](#) and [illegal settlements](#) (in [the West Bank](#) and [East Jerusalem](#)), [blockade](#) (in Gaza), and other measures of control. Some of us have had the opportunity to [visit](#) the Holy Land and see some of these realities firsthand. We pray that in the land of Israel-Palestine, where seven million Jewish Israelis and seven million Palestinians live, a political solution can be achieved which ensures justice, equality, peace, security, and freedom for two peoples.

Guided by our faith, [the signs of the times](#), and our personal capabilities, we Catholics are called to pray, speak, and work for peace. As the people of God, the Church, we join together in the [hope](#) that the land where Jesus lived, died, and rose will one day see an end to bloodshed and know true justice and reconciliation.

Add your name to the letter at the form [HERE](#).