



16/12/2023

Around noon today, December 2023 ,16 a sniper of the IDF murdered two Christian women inside the Holy Family Parish in Gaza, where the majority of Christian families has taken refuge since the start of the war. Nahida and her daughter Samar were shot and killed as they walked to the Sister's Convent. One was killed as she tried to carry the other to safety. Seven more people were shot and wounded as they tried to protect others inside the church compound. No warning was given, no notification was provided. They were shot in cold blood inside the premises of the Parish, where there are no belligerents.

Earlier in the morning, a rocket fired from an IDF tank targeted the Convent of the Sisters of Mother Theresa (Missionaries of Charity). The Convent is home to over 54 disabled persons and is part of the church compound, which was signaled as a place of worship since the beginning of the war. The building's generator (the only source of electricity) and the fuel resources were destroyed. The house was damaged by the resulting explosion and massive fire. Two more rockets, fired by an IDF tank, targeted the same Convent and rendered the home uninhabitable. The 54 disabled persons are currently displaced and without access to the respirators that some of them need to survive.

In addition, as a result of the heavy bombing in the area, three people were wounded inside the church compound last night. Furthermore, solar panels and water tanks, which are indispensable for the survival of the community, were destroyed.

Together in prayer with the whole Christian community, we express our closeness and condolences to the families affected by this senseless tragedy. At the same time, we cannot but express that we are at a loss to comprehend how such an attack could be carried out, even more so as the whole Church prepares for Christmas.

The Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem follows this developing situation with great concern and shall provide additional information as needed.