Transcript of Homily of HB Cardinal Pizzaballa, Sunday, 20 July, 2025.

Holy Family Church, Gaza City, Gaza Strip

Dear brothers and Sisters,

I am happy to be again among you in these tragic days. It was important to be here with Patriarch Theophilos, to show the unity of the Church and the solidarity of all the Churches in the world with you. The other Churches of Jerusalem are a bit jealous of Patriarch Theophilos and me, because they all wanted to be here. This is to say that everyone is present here with you in spirit and ready to support. Allow me to reiterate again that we as Christians, don't think only about Christians. Our heart is open to all. It is important to stress that. We are thankful for all what we have been able to do for you here, but we are also concerned for all what is happening in all Gaza.

You are not forgotten. You are in the hearts of all Churches and Christians of the world. When I get back to Jerusalem, I can assure you that we will do all what is possible to stop this senseless war. We will work on it, and in the end, we will succeed.

In the First Reading, the Patriarch Abraham is at the entrance of his tent. This reminded me of all the tents I saw in these days along the way. Abraham was outside the tent. He was old, Sara was old. They had no children, meaning that there was no more perspective of life for them. And those three men, who are symbol of the passage of God, visited him. These three men according to tradition are symbol of the presence of God. Remember the famous icon of the Trinity of Rublev. So, God visited him, and as consequence of the God visit, Abraham got a promise of life, a child. We must pray for the visit of God among us. But also, we must pray to be able to recognize such presence. You might not notice this because you live here, but every-time I came here - unfortunately not often – I can testify by experience that yes, God already visited you! Because I see in your presence, in many people, life inside you. In this sea of death, of destruction, life is present. Wherever there is one who is willing to give life for the other, God is present. I see a lot of solidarity; a lot of people are willing to give their life, to help. In this sea of hatred and violence, which is a clear sign of the power of the devil - who is present and very powerful - (big noise of explosion), in this sea of violence we see and experience that the Devil, albeit so powerful, cannot extinguish life in us. So, we must be strong and continue being a living presence here.

The second point I understand from the the Gospel, and I say that first of all to myself. There are a lot of things to do here in Gaza. Emergencies are everywhere. You talked to me about that. Many of you mentioned the problems of the life here, are concerned about the future… and the hospitals and Caritas and all the things we need to do. We have to be present and to do all what is possible to do, of course, but we shouldn't become Marta. We shouldn't allow these things to control our choices. The things to do will be enormous and we cannot do

everything. So, we have not to allow the things that have to be done to determine what we have to do. The love of God in us should determine what we have to do. We have to listen to God first, and if we listen to Him we will do all what is necessary, but with the right attitude. And this will open us to create relations, to expand our love, because the first thing we need in Gaza and in the Holy Land and everywhere, is not that much to solve all the problems, to do all kind of things (impossible to do), but how to give expression to the love in us. And the love in us should be first of all the love of God. With the love of God in us, we will also be able to realize all what is necessary.

So, I want to thank you for your example. Every time I come here, I go home with more that I learnt from what I gave. Remain united in Jesus. All the world is looking at you. Remain the light here in Gaza, not just for you and for Gaza, but for all of us. May the lord bless all of you.

And next time we are here we will enjoy Mansaf, Mashawi and also bouza (ice cream).