**Gaza: “Words are not enough!” – Irish Bishops call for solidarity at parish level**

Dear (Elected Representative),

Following the recent statement by the Irish Bishops, I wish to express my horror at the ongoing humanitarian catastrophe in Gaza.

In their statement, the Irish Bishops have said:

*“What is happening in Gaza – and the West Bank – is the death of tens of thousands of non-combatants, many of them women and children. This is unconscionable and disproportionate. It is immoral for world leaders to stand by inactively in the face of this outrageous tragedy for humanity.*

*People in parishes across the country are horrified by what they are witnessing. They may feel helpless*. ***But they can show their solidarity in different ways by lobbying their political representatives, by supporting humanitarian aid and, above all, by continuing to pray for an end to the conflict now and the resumption of peace, including the return of all hostages and prisoners***.”

In our own community, Beechwood Parish, Ranelagh, as a small act of compassion and solidarity with all those affected by the suffering in Gaza, including the hostages and their families in Israel, we have organised quiet gatherings on each Wednesday evening during June. Friends and neighbours are invited to visit the Church in Upper Beechwood Avenue between 9pm and 10pm to light a candle and take a moment for personal reflection. There are no speakers or formal prayers, just a peaceful, welcoming space with gentle music, open to all who wish to pause and reflect.

But as the Bishops rightly state **“Words are not enough!”.** Therefore, as your constituent(s),I am/(we are) calling on you, as one of our elected representatives in Dublin Bay South, to do all in your power to press the Government and the international community to

* Demand an immediate ceasefire;
* End the supply of arms to the region; and
* Act decisively to end the carnage and support peacebuilding efforts.

This will require moral courage and leadership. I/we hope you will take this opportunity to show true political responsibility in the face of ongoing human suffering.

Yours sincerely,