

# Christmas Celebration in Gaza and Golden Jubilee of Sr. Bridget Tighe FMDM



GAZA – On Sunday, December 17, 2017, one hundred Christians from the Gaza parish gathered to celebrate Christmas with Bishop Marcuzzo, Patriarchal Vicar in Jerusalem and Palestine. This celebration was also a highlight for Sister Bridget, Franciscan sister of the Divine Motherhood, who celebrated her Golden Jubilee.

One year after the inauguration and the blessing of projects sponsored by the Latin Patriarchate in the parish of Gaza – renovation work on the school, the presbytery, the Church, installation of solar and photovoltaic panels and installation of a large gate to secure the Church square – Bishop Marcuzzo came to celebrate the traditional Christmas Mass of the parish: a celebration more than we expected. Indeed, many journalists were present to welcome him. In the same way, the Scouts of the parish gathered especially to welcome the Bishop with fanfare.

This celebration was also an important moment in the life of Sister Bridget Tighe, Irish, who celebrated her Golden Jubilee – fifty years of consecrated life. She is currently the only Franciscan sister of the Divine Motherhood to be present in Gaza. After more than 20 years of social service in Jordan in Amman, she joined Gaza where she has just completed her third year. For the occasion, the Mother Superior of the Franciscans of the Divine Maternity made the trip to live, with Sister Bridget, this very special moment of her life.



During this celebration, the Patriarchal Vicar was accompanied by Father Mario, Parish Priest, and Father Victor, parochial vicar. The Sisters of the Incarnate Word, the Missionary Sisters of Charity and Mother Ines, Vicar of the Superior General of the Sisters of the Rosary, were present to attend the event. At the end of the celebration, the young scouts performed on stage inviting us to relive the nativity of Jesus after the annunciation

of the Angel Gabriel to the Virgin Mary. The show ended with a traditional dance performed by five young girls from the parish.

Bishop Marcuzzo then visited the premises of the Missionary Sisters of Charity who care for dozens of infants and children with disabilities whose parents cannot attend during the day. The sisters also take care of some elderly women at the end of their lives. The parish intends to acquire a house in front of the Church to enable the Sisters to take care of more elderly people. The acquisition of this property will be used to create a retirement home on two floors: one dedicated to men and the second to women.

The Bishop also took the time to answer journalists' questions, particularly concerning the status of Jerusalem. Like Pope Francis, the Holy See, the Apostolic Administrator, Archbishop Pizzaballa, and local Middle East leaders, Bishop Marcuzzo reaffirmed that "to preserve peace in Jerusalem, a divine city that belongs to all, no unilateral decision must be taken and no one must touch the *status quo* in force".