



# MARYKNOLL OFFICE FOR GLOBAL CONCERNS

## *Peace, Social Justice and Integrity of Creation*

[www.maryknollogc.org](http://www.maryknollogc.org)

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**January 29, 2024**

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### **Maryknoll OGC Director Returns from Visit to the Holy Land, Calls for Comprehensive Ceasefire**

**WASHINGTON, DC** – Susan Gunn, Director of the Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns, returned to Washington, DC, on Jan. 15 after a four-day visit to Israel and Palestine as part of a delegation of board members of Churches for Middle East Peace (CMEP). The delegation met with Patriarchs and Heads of Churches, pastors, political leaders, peace activists, and human rights leaders in Jerusalem, Bethlehem, and Ramallah, to listen to their concerns about the Israel-Hamas war and learn their perspectives on peace efforts.

Ms. Gunn said:

“After listening to the griefs and anxieties of Christian leaders and communities in the Holy Land as a member of the Churches for Middle East Peace delegation, I am convinced the only way forward is with a comprehensive ceasefire. A ceasefire is the only way to free the hostages, end the bloodshed, and address the growing humanitarian catastrophe. Only with a ceasefire can the universal hopes for safety and security be nurtured and grow into a reality. I feel a tremendous sense of responsibility, as a Christian and as an American, to deliver this message to elected officials in Washington, D.C.: call for a ceasefire now, stop sending more weapons of war, and focus on freeing the hostages, saving the people in Gaza from famine and disease, and opening imaginations to new ways of coexistence.”

For a comprehensive list of delegation participants and their quotes about the trip, see the [CMEP press release](#). [View the video and transcript](#) of the delegation’s prayer service for ceasefire at the Mount of Olives on Jan. 14.

#### **Meetings included:**

**Jerusalem:** Patriarch Theophilos III, Greek Orthodox Patriarch of Jerusalem; Bishop William Shomali, Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem; Bishop Sani Azar of the Lutheran Church of Jordan and the Holy Land; Rev. Canon Dr. Don Binder, Chaplain to the Anglican Archbishop in Jerusalem; and Human rights leaders and activists from HaMoked, Yesh Din, Breaking the Silence, Right to Move Palestine, Center for Jewish Nonviolence.

**Bethlehem, West Bank:** Roundtable discussion with 25 Christian ministers, including Lutheran Bishop Sani Azar, Rev. Munther Isaac of Lutheran Christmas Church, Rev. Mitri Raheb, president of Synod of Evangelical Lutheran Church of Jordan and the Holy Land, Rev. Dr. Jack Sara, president of Bethlehem Bible College, Rifat Odeh Kassis of Kairos Palestine, and the Naasar family of Tent of Nations.

**Ramallah, West Bank:** Prime Minister Dr. Mohammad Shtayyeh, Palestinian Authority; Head of School of Ramallah Friends School; Director of Star Mountain Rehabilitation Center; Dr. Mustafa Barghouti of the Palestinian Medical Relief Society; Staff of Al-Hag, the first Palestinian human rights organization in the West Bank.

Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns will host a [public webinar](#), “Trip Report: The Way Forward for Middle East Peace” alongside the Franciscan Friars of the Province of Our Lady of Guadalupe on Thursday, February 8, 4pm ET, featuring Ms. Gunn and Russell Testa, a fellow participant on the CMEP trip. Ms. Gunn is available for interviews and photos are available upon request.

*The Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns (MOGC) represents Maryknoll missionaries, who are Catholic men and women serving in impoverished communities around the world. The MOGC provides analysis and advocacy on issues of justice, peace and the integrity of creation that affect the countries and communities where Maryknoll missionaries serve.*

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