

**Prayer Petitions: 24 August 2018**  
**ACT PALESTINE FORUM**  
**PRAYER VIGIL FOR PEACE IN THE MIDDLE EAST**  
**24<sup>TH</sup> of every month**

*Every day in the month ahead, we continue to pray with and for our sisters and brothers in Palestine and Israel who have called for an ecumenical prayer vigil across the globe on the 24<sup>th</sup> of every month.*

APF encourages its friends and partners to visit the [APF website](#) and [APF Facebook](#) page often to find, and also contribute, updates, photos, stories, advocacy ideas, and special prayers.

A special thanks to DSPR for contributing to this month's prayers.

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ACT Palestine Forum Prayers

24 August 2018

**Prayer Focus: Blockade and the Gaza Strip**

- The Gaza Strip has put under blockade since the early nineties almost with the establishment of the Palestinian National Authorities.
- The blockade got increasingly tightened over time specially with the start of the second Intifada in 2000 and then Hamas's takeover of power in 2007/2008. <https://www.ochaopt.org/location/gaza-strip%20>
- At the same time, Rafah crossing with Egypt got almost completely locked starting 2007 which further deteriorated the access situation and thus all aspects of life in the Gaza Strip. The days in which the crossing is closed increased from 158 in 2006 to 329 days in 2017. <https://www.ochaopt.org/page/gaza-crossings-movement-people-and-goods>
- The constraints entailed all types of people and goods including patients, laborers, humanitarian aid workers, students, families, food items, fuels, cooking gas, agricultural inputs and outputs, construction materials, etc.
- This resulted in decreasing the access to most of the basic materials and services. According to UNSCO report "Gaza Ten Years Later; 1017) the following changes in access issues were observed:
  - The met fuel demand decreased from 60% in 2010/2011 to 26-46% in 2016/2017.
  - Departure of people via Israel decreased from more than 500,000 people in 2004 to less than 200,000 in 2017.
  - The average monthly truckloads entering Gaza decreased from almost 10,000 in the year 2006 and before to almost 4000 in 2014. It increased after 2014 war to reach the pre2007 levels with no regard to the population increase and increase in demand in the Strip.
- All this in addition to three wars and worsening political divide resulted in huge impacts on the socioeconomic conditions of the people in the Gaza Strip as noted by the latest Palestinian Consensus in 2017 which can be summarized as following:
  - The unemployment rate is 43.6% and the average daily wage rate is 59.4 NIS only
  - The poverty rate increased from 38.8% in 2011 to 53%; while the severe poverty increased from 21.1% in 2011 to 33.8% in 2017.
  - The monthly spending per capita in the strip decreased from 110 JD in 2011 to 91 JD in 2017.

- The average Palestinian living in Gaza spends 35.7% of his income on food

## **Prayers**

### **Prayers for Oneself in Time of Need**

Almighty God, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, come to my help and deliver me from this difficulty that besets me.

I believe Lord, that all trials of life are under Your care and that all things work for the good of those who love You.

Take away from me fear, anxiety and distress. Help me to face and endure my difficulty with faith, courage and wisdom.

Grant that this trial may bring me closer to You for You are my rock and refuge, my comfort and hope, my delight and joy.

I trust in Your love and compassion.

Blessed is Your name, Father.

Amen

<https://www.stmarymagdalenechurch.org/prayers02.html#AlmightyGod>