



Christians rise to Easter challenge with donations

By NAMAN ARORA

KIND-HEARTED Christians have 'risen' to the Easter challenge issued by the dean of St Christopher's Cathedral in support of the GDN's 'Save a Life in Gaza' Ramadan campaign.

As parishioners and supporters flocked to the premises in Manama, as well as Awali Church yesterday to mark Easter Sunday, they opened their hearts and donated baby milk and food supplements in support of families devastated during the ongoing conflict in Gaza.

"We took up the GDN campaign as a continuation of our attempts to help those affected by this conflict," the Very Reverend Dr Richard Fermer told the GDN.

"For Easter, we turned around the altar of the Cathedral to represent the empty tomb of Jesus Christ and we had offered a challenge to fill it with food supplements and dried baby milk, as a symbol of hope and new life and the passage from darkness to light, hatred to love.

"The response has been phenomenal and between the two churches in Manama and Awali, we have managed to fill the tomb and then some!"

The donations came during the five Easter services organised by the church. The first of these took place on Saturday evening, followed by a pre-dawn prayer service yesterday. At 10am yesterday, the Awali Church held a prayer service, followed by one at 11am at the Manama cathedral. Easter Sunday prayers concluded with a final service last night in the capital.

Alongside donations, churchgoers and leaders also offered prayers of hope for the Palestinians devastated by the conflict and blessed the donations, which are set to be delivered to the relevant charities in the coming days.

"For Christians, the empty tomb represents the resurrection of Jesus Christ and although, normally, we line it with linen representing his grey clothes, this time we decided to fill it with life-giving supplies as an offering of hope and light," the dean added.

The GDN has teamed up with the kingdom's oldest charity Bahrain Red Crescent Society and its sister operation, the Palestine Red Crescent Society, which has listed items desperately needed.

- They include:
- Hygiene kits
 - Dignity kits
 - Baby milk and food supplements
 - Medical equipment.

More than 32,000 Palestinians have been killed and 75,000 injured in Israel's military offensive on Gaza since October 7 last year, the Gaza health ministry has said in a statement.

Thousands more dead are believed to be buried under rubble and more than 80 per cent of Gazans have been displaced, many at risk of famine.

In the northern Gaza Strip, the United Nations has warned famine is imminent



■ Father Richard, centre, conducts the morning service yesterday at the St Christopher's Cathedral



■ The turned-around altar and tomb, filled with donations of baby milk and food supplements

as early as May.

Last week, the World Court unanimously ordered Israel to take all necessary and effective action to ensure basic food supplies to Gaza's population.

As reported previously, the world appears united in a push for a ceasefire in Gaza to avert a man-made famine following Israel's war with Hamas.

This is the GDN's third annual holy month community initiative. Last Ramadan, 40 tonnes of aid went to earthquake-devastated Syria. The GDN's chief reporter Mohammed Al A'ali joined a delegation that witnessed the aid being handed over to the Syrian Red Crescent Society.

For more details on how to support the GDN Ramadan community campaign,



■ Members of the congregation and choir sing Easter hymns during the evening service

contact Mr Al A'ali on 17620222/39659635.

The listed items can be dropped off at GDN Media's security office at The Press in East Riffa, our commercial of-

fice on Exhibitions Avenue and the BRCS headquarters, both located in Hoora.

Those preferring to donate cash can reach BRCS on 17293171, or email info@

rcsbahrain.org - or directly through the Benefit app Charity-BahrainRedCrossSociety-Donations/Palestine option. naman@gdnmedia.bh

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■ Altar girls walk through the church at the end of the service



■ More than 150 people attended the St Christopher's Cathedral special Easter Sunday dawn service. Held for

the second year in a row, the 90-minute-long sunrise service was conducted exclusively in Tamil and led by the Reverend

Dr Franklin Isaac, who also serves the Mission to Seafarers. Above, the congregation during the service.