Dear World Interfaith Harmony Week committee,

I have seen God. I have seen Him in the eyes of those who have lost their loved ones, homes and cities. I have seen Him in the midst of the chaos and screams. I have seen Him in their smiles. “Inner peace comes from inside,” Arwa, a Gazan PCRF social worker taught us, “I say today’s the best day and tomorrow’s even better.”

I have traveled the world and I have seen Him in the eyes of the soldiers who cried tears of regret, “I didn’t know we were there to kill children no different than ours.” I have seen Him in helpers who clean, “Sometimes I’m so tired to say that I’m tired,” confessed a Mexican woman in Las Vegas. She looked at those who gambled and commented, “They waste thousands of dollars in five minutes and I work thousands of hours for barely enough dollars to cover my debt and feed my starving children.”

I know how ugly Evil can be. The root of all Evil begins from greed and confusion. We, humans, are all prone to commit the most atrocious and heinous of crimes. Thankfully, God is the most kind, the most merciful. He forgives. He forgives us all but needs us to repent and apologize and work to build a better world. He wants us to serve, to give, to love.

I was too exhausted when Gazan children lost their lives. I had just given birth and I didn’t want to work (and I always work). I didn’t want to start another campaign (because I know how much work and effort any campaign needs to be successful). My sisters, far kinder than me, wanted us to work #ToRebuildGaza. I always wanted to make the world a better place but I did not want to work from the hospital bed. I had a so-called “plan.” I should’ve known better for He is the best of planners. When God wants something, all the forces in the world cannot stop what He wants from happening. Even an over-exhausted stay-at-home mom of a newborn and a toddler whose family is half across the world can have the energy to work to rebuild Gaza.

#ToRebuildGaza became a worldwide campaign. Hundreds, actually thousands, worked together to sell stickers and fundraise to rebuild Gaza. Three weeks in, I was secretly hoping I would feel like I had done enough. “Ok, now, can I please rest?” I asked Him and received more messages from people who wanted to help and heal. A direct answer, “No. Not yet.”

I have submitted to Him. I also have recognized others who have. They are people from all around the world of different religions, ethnic backgrounds and positions. A professor of Islamic mysticism once said, “There are many roads to the Truth,” explaining those who are Muslim, Christian, Jewish, Buddhist, Hindu and so forth. I believe those who submitted to Him, the ultimate Truth, are the kind ones. You’ll see God when you meet them. Their eyes sparkle as they save lives, feed the hungry, share their knowledge, clean floors, build homes and plant trees. Their mere existence allows you to feel unconditional love. He heals us through them.

I can’t thank you enough for allowing us to pray together to rebuild Gaza. Attached is a short film of the many prayers we received from all around the world. We really want to win but even if we don’t, we have tried and we find solace in the knowledge that to Him even trying is enough.

If we win, we would want the funds to go to the Palestine Children’s Relief Fund to build the first Pediatric Cancer Dept in Gaza in honor of Huda al Masri, may she rest in peace. Why PCRF? Because when I was too exhausted, I thought of Huda, a Palestinian refugee who inspired her American husband to start a foundation to save thousands of children. A woman who passed away five years ago while praying for her husband, daughters, loved ones, and her “children in Gaza.”

May God bless each and every one of you.

Thank you for reading my words.

Salam,

Dina