News



An ambulance pulls up to an Italian military plane at Rome's Ciampino airport late Aug. 13 to transfer children from Gaza to the Vatican-owned Bambino Gesù pediatric hospital for treatment. (CNS/Courtesy of Bambino Gesù hospital)

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As the Israeli-Hamas conflict continues, three more children arrived in Italy on a military transport plane late Aug. 13 for treatment at the Vatican-owned Bambino Gesù pediatric hospital.

A 6-month-old baby boy, who already had undergone an amputation, was admitted to the Rome hospital's general surgery ward; a 13-year-old boy was placed under the care of the neurology department for a brain injury; and a 2-year-old girl, who has celiac disease, was admitted to general pediatrics for treatment of malnutrition, the hospital said in a statement Aug. 14.

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The new arrivals bring to 20 the number of children from Gaza who have been treated at the pediatric hospital since the conflict began in October 2023. With medical care and supplies lacking in Gaza, the first patients arrived in Italy in January 2024 thanks to lobbying efforts by the Franciscan Custody of the Holy Land and negotiations involving the governments of Italy, Israel, Palestine and Egypt.

The hospital statement Aug. 14 said the Gaza patients have arrived with a variety of urgent medical conditions, including amputations, burns, malnutrition, cancers, heart disease and congenital heart defects, infectious diseases and neurological disorders.

"Every time we welcome children coming from war-torn areas, we are faced with fragile lives that carry both pain and hope," Tiziano Onesti, hospital president, was quoted as saying.