PRAYER FOR THE WORLD DAY AGAINST TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS: "TRAPPED BEHIND SCAMMERS"

Offered by Fr Dr James Ngahy, MAfr

Almighty and ever living and loving God,
you are a God who has created us in your image and likeness (Gen. 1:26); and as such you want and expect us to live together in love and genuine, sincere solidarity as brothers and sisters without any score of exploitation, oppression, abuse or any concocted manipulation that dehumanises or disfigures our human dignity as per your creative human intentionality.

We are living in the 21st century, in a "Global Village" with its own positivities and negativities, engraved with its own peculiarities and particularities — one of which is "Trafficking in Persons: Trapped in the Scam or Trapped behind Scammers."

Surely, the Global Village phenomenon, on the one hand, brings connectivity and connectedness to humanity; while, on the other hand, it dismantles the traditional boundaries of space, time, religious and cultural values with manipulated promises of a better life or greener pasture "outside there", beyond our family, village, society, country, and indeed, our continent. The result of this opium comes out clearly: that "the betterment of life is not, or is never, here in Zambia or in Africa, but rather outside there in the North — in Europe, America or even Dubai!"

Many of our brothers and sisters die tragically in the Sahara Desert or in the Mediterranean Sea; others in transiting illegally through our country because of being "Trapped in the Scam" or by the scammers!

God almighty, through your mercy and love, rescue us, rescue those trapped in such a scam so that they may become the persons you have called them to be, in your image and likeness.

Almighty God,
let this very public awareness campaign today, led by TAKUZA with their partners and collaborators, expose and prevent trafficking in persons for forced criminality in scam centres. And those who are not trafficked, especially our young ones, let them come to realise that "Prevention is better than cure!" In fact, the "Devil you know is better than the

'Angel' you don't know!" Meaning that, "The Poverty you know is better than the Scammer you don't know!" "Being in the Moon light is always better than being in the Dark."

We very earnestly pray that our activities today and the effort we make, be joined with those of the United Nations[1] in trying to curb, eliminate and eradicate the same things we are encountering in our country, in our region as SADC, and in our continent, Africa.

Heavenly Father,
today, we come before you with a heavy heart, feeling trapped and uncertain, but with hope and trust in you. You see the deceit that has been set before many of your people, especially the young ones, or those who are vulnerable to economically attractive norms without considering the risks and consequences that may consequently emerge. You know the fear and confusion it brings when all goes wrong. Lord, we earnestly ask for your divine wisdom and protection over our minds, our finances, and our peace. Expose every hidden lie and bring the truth into the light. Give us wisdom to take the right steps, courage to break free from these traps, and discernment to avoid such snares in the future. **Surround us with honest and helpful people who can guide us toward safety against this evil.** Such as: the anti-trafficking human person officials in their official capacity, the government officials in their entirety (immigration, police, internal security/intelligence), religious leaders, organisations, individuals of good will standing against this evil.

Almighty God, restore what has been lost, and let these trials become a testimony of your deliverance. We trust in your justice, your mercy, and your unfailing love. May you, oh God, continue to anchor us in the very spirit of: "Prevention is better than cure!"

May this our activity today be a successful source in pragmatic terms guided by you, oh God, who liberates your people who are "Trapped in the Scam."

Amen!!!

[1] The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) was established in 1997 through the merger of the United Nations Drug Control Programme (UNDCP) and the Centre for International Crime Prevention (CICP), initially named the Office for Drug Control and Crime Prevention, and later renamed UNODC in 2002.