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PLEASE SAVE US: COVID-19 HAS NOW ENTERED OUR HOMES

When the first wave of Covid-19 hit Zambia in March 2020 we all scampered and took cover. Compliance to guidelines to fighting Covid-19 was at highest in the first three months. We soon developed familiarity with the virus as statistics played out in our favour with very few fatalities and very high numbers of recoveries. Complacency has since set in and we are now in harm's way as Covid-19 has now resurfaced in Zambia with vengeance in a strain that is spreading more quickly and easily than the previous strains. The new coronavirus variant is not joking. The second wave of Covid-19 is severe and is thriving on complacency and acute disregard of the standard Covid guidelines by both national leaders and the general public.

Unlike during the first wave of Covid-19 when we were accustomed to hearing of Covid cases at a distance, this time around, most of us have now Covid cases in our homes. Covid is no longer remote statistics out there. Unfortunately most of us now know of family members and friends who have become victims of Covid-19. Some of us have even lost our beloved ones to Covid-19.

It confounds any form of reason that despite this grave reality in our midst, people continue with business as usual. JCTR is not only concerned but also worried that if non-compliance to Covid guidelines continues, our public health system will soon be overwhelmed leading to avoidable deaths. It is evident that Zambia is now facing a health crisis. This crisis calls for leadership at all levels to help the country wade out of the crisis.

JCTR believes that the government must take a lead in enforcing Covid preventive measures by putting in place robust measures to contain the spreading of this new strain of the virus. Therefore, JCTR joins other stakeholders in calling the government to enforce wearing of masks in public places such as shopping malls, markets, bus stations and in public and private vehicles where there is more than one person on board. We call for the full return and robust enforcement of the measures that were announced by the Head of State back in March and April last year.

JCTR also urges the government to temporarily stop all public gatherings, including all political rallies of any shape or form. We call on the Head of State to consider putting a halt to visiting of development projects because such visits inevitably draw crowds of people thereby endangering their health in this Covid era. The safety and the lives of the Zambian people must be an all-time priority. Thank you.

Note: Attribute statement to Father Alex Muyebe, S.J., JCTR Executive Director

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