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**Talitha Kum Japan is an established network group among Association of Major Superiors of Women Religious and Association of Major Religious Superiors in Japan in collaboration with J-CaRM (Catholic Commission of Japan for Migrants, Refugees and People on the Move) commissioned by CBCJ (Catholic Bishop Conference of Japan) to counteract trafficking in persons.**

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"Today, the church needs most is the ability to heal wounds and to warm the hearts of the faithful... Mercy is the very foundation of the Church's life. All of her pastoral activity should be caught up in the tenderness she makes present to believers; nothing in her preaching and in her witness to the world can be lacking in mercy. The Church's very credibility is seen in how she shows merciful and compassionate love." (Pope Francis MV 10)

Father Juan Haidar S.J. of Sophia University explained why Pope Francis uses the word 'Mercy' rather than 'Love' deliberately as follows; the word 'Mercy' expresses one aspect of 'Love' and the Pope considers the importance of this aspect, which means 'excess' or 'exaggerated'. Pope Francis wants us to become a Church that welcomes everyone with love because each one of us has experienced God's mercy and love in our own lives.

I become more aware of the reality of our modern society. The reality of modern slavery is that it continues to exist in our modern world which is so astonishing and shocking for many of us, as Religious and faithful. The reality of this modern day slavery and human trafficking are hidden crimes. Pope Francis' messages and actions opened my eyes to this reality. I feel I have something to do with it. I feel the need for increasing awareness of this reality.

I am grateful to be part of the steering committee and establishing Talitha Kum Japan. I feel it is the time to reach out to our brothers and sisters in need and to become witnesses to God's Mercy through the action of the whole Church as Pope Francis is calling us to become!

- Sr. Junko Shioya, aci - Chairperson of the Steering Committee of Talitha Kum Japan

## Workshop in Nagoya Diocese:

### "The Current Situation of Human Trafficking in Japan & Support to the Victims of Trafficking"

The workshop was held on February 17, 2018 at Nunobiki Church, Nagoya, Japan. The theme of this workshop was "The Current Situation of Human Trafficking in Japan & Support to the Victims of Trafficking in Persons". This workshop was co-organized by the Society of Divine Word (JPIC Section) and Missionary Sisters Servants of the Holy Spirit (Seirei-kai), Justice and Peace Committee of the Diocese of Nagoya and **Talitha Kum Japan**. The current situation of human trafficking in Japan was presented in this workshop and discussed about the kind of support that we can provide for the victims of human trafficking.

The opening remarks was delivered by Bishop Goro Matsuura, Chairman of Catholic Commission of Japan for Migrants, Refugees and People on the Move (J-CaRM) and Bishop of the Diocese of Nagoya. He mentioned that human trafficking in Japan refers as modern slavery and the United Nations has been pointing out that for the past twenty years. There are an estimated 70,000 victims in Japan. He also mentioned the establishment of Talitha Kum Japan as a network group to counteract human trafficking.

Sr. Nida Indelible, a Carmelite sister and a member of the Steering Committee of Talitha Kum Japan gave the presentation about the case of human trafficking in Kyoto Diocese and how she got involved in the rescue operation of JFC case. In the case of trafficking of Japanese Filipino Children (JFC) in Gifu Prefecture, she reported that there's quite a number of JFC who were rescued from night clubs. Many Filipina women had been deceived and exploited concerning their occupation and wages, etc. They were rescued after they escaped from the owner of the club. In another case in Kyoto, students from abroad had been forced to work for long hours and had been treated unjustly by the employer. Support and assistance were provided for their lawsuit case against the owner of the Japanese school.

Ms. Motoko Yamagishi, a member of J-CaRM steering committee, talked about the underlying problems behind the Technical Intern Training Program, such as low-wages, long hours of labor, debt, exploitation, forced deportation, sexual harassment, and so forth. Many technical intern trainees suffered from these causes. Since the number of trainees are expected to increase in the coming years, the question was raised on how can we extend our help and support as members of the Church.

Presentation by Motoko Yamagishi

Lastly, Sr. Junko Shioya, A.C.I., Chairperson of the Steering Committee of Talitha Kum Japan reported on how the Talitha Kum Japan was established. She also gave a presentation about the South East Asian Conference that



# JULY 30

## World Day Against Trafficking

Theme 2018:

### Trafficking and Migration

The 2018 World Day against Trafficking in Persons invites us to accompany with prayer and our efforts the commitment of the United Nations in its Meeting on Migration (Global Migration Compact). Let us give this reality a significant centrality in our lives and in our hearts, opening ourselves to welcome, hope and encounter. Let us give light to freedom by fighting slavery.

Let us pray:

When we hear children, women and men being deceived and taken to unknown places for sexual exploitation, forced labor and organ trade, our hearts feel indignation and our spirits suffer, because their dignity and rights are violated by threats, deceit and violence.

Oh God, help us fight against all forms of slavery. Together with St. Josephine Bakhita we ask you to put an end to human trafficking.

Give us the wisdom and strength to be close to those who have been wounded in their body, heart and spirit, so that together we may reach the promise of life and tender and infinite love that you offer to our exploited brothers and sisters.

Touch the hearts of those responsible for this serious crime and support our commitment to freedom, your gift for all your sons and daughters. Amen.



was held in Thailand. This followed by Q&A and small group discussion.

Since many cases of human trafficking have been occurring in the Diocese of Nagoya, many people participated in this workshop. There were approximately eighty participants that filled the meeting hall. It was a meaningful and successful workshop. We hope to hold more workshops around the nation in the future.

### Visit at the Foreign Workers Relief and Support Center (Shelter)

On February 18, some members of the Steering Committee of Talitha Kum Japan visited the Foreign Workers Relief and Support Center in Gifu Prefecture. This center was established in October 2015 and has served to support the technical intern trainees for a number of years. The center has received 137 cases of consultation and have accepted 72 people in the shelter. The staff explained to us about the various cases of consultation; support for the victims; existing situations at the shelter and the operating system of shelter and other difficulties that they are facing.

There's lots of consultation cases of workplace accidents of trainees that have been accepted recently. We heard about the damages caused due to the employers covering up the workplace accidents; psychological and emotional distress suffering of those staying in the shelter for a long time due to various reasons; and emotional and spiritual support for them.

We also heard about the cases of the victims of labor exploitation; understanding the labor rights; negotiation with the employers to claim the workers' rights and how to resume their job. We were extremely impressed by the staff dedication and the work they do.

We were able to meet and talked with some people staying in the shelter. It was very inspiring and insightful that we had from this visit. We learned a lot for future activities of Talitha Kum Japan to prevent human trafficking and to protect the victims from the labor exploitation.

### Update and Recent Cases - Technical Intern Trainee

A 22 year-old Vietnamese woman, Miss T came to Japan as a technical intern trainee. She started working in a sewing factory in Shikoku. She had been treated unfairly at work as follows: forced to work for long hours from 8:30 a.m. to 3:00 a.m. but no overtime pay was given; received a low monthly salary for only 70,000 to 80,000 yen and forced to live in unsafe and unsanitary conditions dormitory with five other trainees in a congested dormitory.

The company started to harass her after she complained about her working conditions. She was afraid that they would forced her to return home and so, finally she ran away from the company. She is a typical victim of trafficking from the technical intern training system.

She consulted with the labor union in Tokyo and they started negotiations with the company. It took almost half a year to finish her case against the employer. Ms T was unable to find work and had no means of getting income for her daily living while the case was going on. She moved from her friend's house to another for a place to stay at that time. Talitha Kum Japan provided her an emergency financial support for her daily living. After winning her case against the employer, she returned the money to Talitha Kum Japan. We were so happy to see her come back from her normal life and able to return home with joy!!!



Photo: Some members of TK Japan Steering Committee and Staff at the Support Center

[We thank you for your generous financial support for Talitha Kum Japan. Your donation will be used to provide support for victims of human trafficking for shelter expenses, living expenses, legal case work, translation/interpreter, Newsletter, Seminars and Workshops Awareness Program]