

Media Statement



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TO: ALL MEDIA

DATE: 23 SEPTEMBER 2021

RE: PASTOR SENTENCED TO 37 YEARS IMPRISONMENT FOR RAPE

A Congolese Pastor of God Is Love ministries, Bafomba Willy Emeka (48) was sentenced by the Pretoria High Court to 37 years imprisonment for multiple offences. The Court ordered that his name be added on the National Register for Sexual Offenders. He was also declared unfit to possess a firearm.

This is after he was convicted on the 22 September 2021 for 19 counts of rape, 3 counts of sexual assault, being illegal in the country and possession or using falsified permanent residence permit.

Emeka committed all the rapes and sexual assaults offences to five women who were members of his congregation, between 2015 and 2018 in and around Bronkhorstspuit

In raping and sexually assaulting the women, Emeka used the same modus operandi. He would tell them that they had a problem and that he needed to pray for them and bless them in order for him to help them. Emeka told one of his victims who was also assisting with baby-sitting Emeka's children that by sleeping with him he was helping her take things that were inside her out, and until those things came out she would not be able to conceive. This continued for years from 2016 to 2018 until the women stopped attending the church after Emeka while at church told the congregation that he is the one that made her pregnancy to disappear.

One of Emeka's victims fell pregnant. Because of the rape, the woman could not tell who the father of her child was between the pastor and her husband. When the woman testified in court the DNA results to determine who the father was were not yet out.

Emeka was arrested in 2018 after his victims reported him to one other pastor in church who then encouraged them to report to the police. Emeka has been in custody since his arrest though he denies ever committing those offences.

The State Advocate, Dorah Ngobeni argued that South Africa is faced with two pandemics, the Covid-19 and abuse against women and children. In order to deal with the pandemic of abuse against women and children the courts needed to act decisively, she said. Pastor Emeka was in a position of trust, the congregants trusted and confided in him and used that information to prey on them in order to perform all those kinds of offences, she added.

The National Prosecuting Authority Welcomed the sentence.

Lumka Mahanjana

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