

# ***Human Trafficking Awareness Day January 11th***

By Diann L. Neu



## **The Call**

January 11th is National Human Trafficking Awareness Day. Human trafficking, referred to as modern-day slavery, is the fastest growing and second most profitable criminal industry in the world. More than 27 million women, men, and children have become victims of human trafficking for labor and sexual exploitation. Trafficking can and does occur in all parts of the world, including the U.S. Large sporting events like the Super Bowl attract human trafficking, especially for sexual exploitation of women. Read Mary E. Hunt's new article on human trafficking entitled "[Women and Children First.](#)"

## **Stories of Trafficking**

Excerpted from [www.polarisproject.org](http://www.polarisproject.org)

Amanda learned that her cousin was with a pimp who was advertising her for commercial sex on various websites.

A teacher became concerned about one of her students, a 14 year-old girl, and spoke with classmates who directed the teacher to multiple postings advertising the young girl for commercial sex on backpage.com.

A woman in Cameroon contacted the National Human Trafficking Resource Center about a friend who had moved to the U.S. several years ago whom the caller feared was a victim of domestic servitude.

With four children between them and a 16-year relationship, Mari couldn't imagine leaving Darrell. She didn't see any viable options, even though he was physically abusive and forced her into commercial sex when money was tight.

Brittany met a man at her local mall who offered her a job at his restaurant. Instead of working as a waitress, Brittany was forced to sell sex in a hotel room.

And many more....

### **Prayer of Solidarity**

Holy Compassion, you who hear the cries of those in anguish,  
Be with us now to bring them to safety and to speak out against those who exploit.

Holy Love, you who shout with us "No" to human trafficking in all its forms,  
Be with us now to restore freedom to the trafficked and their families.

Holy Justice, you who rage with us against the injustices of trafficking,  
Be with us now to take action to prevent and end this violence.

Holy Wisdom, you who know the worth of every human being,  
Be with us as we erase this sinful practice from the face of the earth.

© Diann L. Neu, Co-director of WATER, dneu@hers.com

### **Take Action**

Seek Help. Report a tip. Call the Polaris Project trafficking hotline  
1.888.3737.888:

[www.polarisproject.org/what-we-do/national-human-trafficking-hotline/report-a-tip](http://www.polarisproject.org/what-we-do/national-human-trafficking-hotline/report-a-tip)

Recognize the signs of trafficking:

[www.polarisproject.org/human-trafficking/recognizing-the-signs](http://www.polarisproject.org/human-trafficking/recognizing-the-signs)

When you travel, check out the "Human trafficking letter to hotels" developed by the Sisters of Mercy Justice Team:

[www.mercyinvestmentservices.org/component/content/article/476](http://www.mercyinvestmentservices.org/component/content/article/476)

Learn more about human trafficking by reading the recent issue of *Centerings* on trafficking by the 8<sup>th</sup> Day Center for Justice:

[www.8thdaycenter.org/pdf/centerings/WinterCenterings2011FINAL.pdf](http://www.8thdaycenter.org/pdf/centerings/WinterCenterings2011FINAL.pdf)

Use prayer services from the Intercommunity Peace & Justice Center:

[www.ipjc.org](http://www.ipjc.org)

Support the International Violence Against Women Act:

[www.ucc.org/justice/human-rights/human-trafficking.html](http://www.ucc.org/justice/human-rights/human-trafficking.html)

Prevent trafficking at the Super Bowl:

[www.ucc.org/justice/womens-issues/human-trafficking.html](http://www.ucc.org/justice/womens-issues/human-trafficking.html)

Watch *Lives for Sale*, a documentary on immigration and trafficking produced by Maryknoll and Lightfoot Films in association with Faith & Values Media:

<http://www.livesforsale.com/index.html>

Encourage airlines to sign [The Code of Conduct for the Protection of Children](#) so that their employees will be alert to the warning signs that traveling children might be victims of trafficking.



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**Women's Alliance for Theology, Ethics and Ritual**

8121 Georgia Ave, Suite 310  
Silver Spring, MD 20910  
301.589.2509

[www.waterwomensalliance.org](http://www.waterwomensalliance.org)

[water@hers.com](mailto:water@hers.com)

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8121 Georgia Avenue  
Suite 310  
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910-4933  
US

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