

Walk For Freedom

On Saturday 24th March, 23 Pembrokeshire people met to make their stand for freedom. Local Christians and friends of the church took up the 'chains of injustice' on a freedom walk in Tenby, to demonstrate their disgust at the fact that 12 million people are held as slaves in our world today (UNICEF).

Local Tearfund volunteer Sharron Hardwick, shared her feelings: 'I am overwhelmed with sorrow at the thought of this oppression. I know how the Truth of Jesus can set us free from all things, so we as his Church **must** go to spread this freedom, we must take our faith and freedom and put them into action. Today we took our stand for justice and I hope that those who saw us or read about us will join our plight.'

The walk was made in support of Tearfund's work with children like Shiney, from Mumbai in India. As a child Shiney worked in a factory where she was beaten daily by her father and step mother. Desperate to escape, she accepted the offer of a man who promised her a new life, with riches in the Middle East. Instead, the man took all of her money and sold her into Mumbai's red light district, where she was forced to work as a prostitute. After 9 years of anguish she cried out to God, who answered her prayers by sending Tearfund Partner the Aruna Team.

'I felt as though a dark cloud and a huge weight that I'd been carrying for years had been lifted' says freed Shiney.

'During our freedom walk many local people were very supportive. We handed out 200 Tearfund 'Freedom' leaflets, giving people the chance to act by: sending off postcards to Tony Blair, signing declarations against people trafficking and support Tearfund's Children at risk Programme. Some locals seemed to know a little about people trafficking, while others were amazed by the facts, and sadly a few were not interested. On the whole, the Freedom Walk was very well accepted in Tenby town. I hope people now have more awareness of the facts of modern day slavery and will have the courage to act.' says Sharron Hardwick.

Christians are also caring for those who have been forced into prostitution in the UK. Churches from one town will often link up and form a charity that can reach out to some of these women. Tearfund partner the National Christian Alliance on Prostitution (NCAP) unites and equips these UK groups and other organisations working with people involved in or exploited by the sex industry.

'We must not give up the fight for justice. Even if only a few people send off the cards or make a donation, every little act makes a difference. After all, William Wilberforce played such a huge part in the abolition of slavery in 1807, facing much opposition. Yet, he did not give up. Driven by faith, he stood his ground and won the victory for freedom, I hope we can do the same.' continues Sharron.

If you would like to find out more about the work of Tearfund go to www.tearfund.org Also visit stopthetraffik.org

Together we can make a difference



