

Good afternoon everyone. My name is Maria and 18 years ago today I was born, three months premature, I was a twenty six week fetus and weighed only two pounds four ounces. I was in the hospital for three months after my birth because I had a lot of health problems that the doctors wanted to monitor and after my release I stayed with a friend of my birth parents before I was put into foster care. My mom and dad, who are here with me today, met me on May 24, 1989 when I was placed in their foster home which was all in God's plan for my life. My parents had been married for 9 years all the while praying for God to bless them with children and so they were very excited. They didn't know until they met me that I was blind and deaf and was not expected to walk, talk or be a normal functioning child. But God had a much better plan for my life and chose to heal me miraculously before I was 6 months old. My parents prayed for me every night when they put me to bed and played Christian lullaby tapes every time I took a nap or went to bed. At the the age of 9 months I had minor surgery to remove excess tissue on my ear where the doctors considered me to be a normal 9 month old. My parents were allowed to adopt me when I was 18 months old and have prayed for me and blessed me with a Christian education while being home schooled.

I was very excited when Mrs. Bettega asked me if I would speak today and share my story because I know that God has blessed my life amazingly and has given me a deep love for Him and for special needs children because I was a child with many special needs. This past September I began taking courses at Schoolcraft college where I am pursuing a degree in Music and hope to also add a degree in Special Needs Education and Music Therapy. I would like be able to work with special needs children, hospice, nursing home and hospitalized patients.

My parents have always been a blessing in my life and from the time I was an infant in my stroller participated in Right to Life rallies, marches and the Life Chain on Woodward Ave. I also remember as a little girl lighting a candle on my birthday that burned all night long for all the babies lives that have been taken. I pray that some day the law that allows abortions at anytime during a women's pregnancy which would have included me at 26 weeks will be overturned because every life is precious and every child is a gift from God.

God Bless and thank you for allowing me to share my story and a special thank you to my sister Ashley who is here today and my boyfriend Keith and his mom who also came to support me. I love them all very much.

Maria Litwinczuk
21 January 2007
Age 18

