

# Defending All Life

*Stroke survivor promotes rights of patients and the disabled*

By William R. Genello  
Catholic Light Editor

Kate Adamson was living the California good life. She was 33, a wife and mother of two children, and the picture of health.

Then a brainstem stroke brought her idyllic world to an abrupt end – or so thought many people, including her doctors, who figured her odds to survive were less than one-in-a-million.

Now, 11 years later, Ms. Adamson is a living testament to faith and the power of prayer. And she travels the world to provide spiritual and moral support to patients and the disabled.

She brought her inspirational story to Northeastern Pennsylvania last week. She talked to students at Bishop Hannan and Bishop O'Hara high schools, was interviewed by CTV: Catholic Television and *The Catholic Light*, and gave the keynote address at the annual Respect Life Prayer Breakfast hosted by the Scranton Chapter of Pennsylvanians for Human Life.

The devastating stroke had left Ms. Adamson in a condition called “locked in syndrome.” She was completely paralyzed, unable to even blink her eyes or communicate in any way.

But she could talk to God.

“I spent time praying, and I promised to serve Him if He gave me my life back,” she said.

She wasn't the only one praying. The second night after the stroke, a doctor told her husband, Steven Klugman, to contact a funeral home.

“I went into Kate's room to say goodbye, but I found myself powerfully moved by the Holy Spirit to pray, so I dropped to my knees,” Mr. Klugman said. “When I walked in Kate was dying, but after I finished the most sincere heartfelt prayer I will ever pray, the room filled with an intense white light and from that moment on Kate was no longer dying. Her face had dramatically changed and the death mask was gone; her eyes were now filled with life instead of death.”

Mr. Klugman had just become a pastor at a local Christian church, and when his wife was taken to the hospital the church came together “in a wonderful example of how we as brothers and sisters are the body of Christ.”

“We turned the waiting room into a prayer room, people praying and playing worship music around the clock,” he said. “Kate was never alone during her 70 days in the ICU. In her room we had worship music or the Bible on tape going 24/7.”

The couple is convinced that all those prayers ultimately led to Kate's miraculous recovery.

Some studies have shown that prayer can benefit a person's physical condition, according to Dr. Greg Burke,



**Kate Adamson speaks at the Respect Life Part of the typically large contingent from the Diocese Prayer Breakfast conducted by the Scranton of Scranton that traveled to Washington, D.C., for the Chapter of Pennsylvanians for Human Life. annual March for Life.**



**Eighth-graders from Epiphany School in Sayre, led by Father Andrew S. Hvozdovic, participated in the March for Life and stopped at the Supreme Court to pray that the justices will decide future cases in defense of life.**

a staff physician at Geisinger Medical Center in Danville who has an interest in the interplay between spirituality and medicine. This applies not only to the person praying, but others offering intercessory prayers on their behalf.

“I also believe it's appropriate for doctors to pray for their patients' recovery,” he said. “I think many probably do, but they might not express it publicly.”

Dr. Burke addressed the issue of providing appropriate care to patients with dire medical conditions, comparing the cases of Terri Schiavo and Pope John Paul II.

Mrs. Schiavo, he explained, did not have a terminal illness and denying her food and water amounted to “passive euthanasia” and a profound moral failure. The late



**Clergy, religious, students and faculty at Marywood University held their own March for Life on the campus, followed by a Mass and supper hosted by the Little Sisters of the Poor.**

pontiff, on the other hand, was entering the last days of his life when he decided not to re-enter the hospital.

“The Church recognizes that when someone is suffering from a terminal illness and death is imminent, food and hydration are not mandated – they probably won't help and may even be burdensome,” Dr. Burke said. “Church teaching shows a great deal of wisdom.”

Ms. Adamson spoke at a rally for Mrs. Schiavo, and following her starvation death she testified before Congress on the subject of persons with disabilities.

“Every case is different, and you never know what the outcome will be, but everyone needs hope and encouragement,” she said.

And most of all: “You have to be on speaking terms with your Father.”

(Ms. Adamson welcomes people to contact her through her website at [www.katesjourney.com](http://www.katesjourney.com).)