

# Pro-Life Heroes

Pat



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There are myriad reasons why we are Pro-Life. *Pro-Life Heroes* chronicles the activities of everyday people making tremendous sacrifices to defend innocent human Life.

The night was like many others before it. Pat, her youth pastor, and a seven boys from her youth group were on the way home from a church function. The boys dropped the youth pastor off first, but instead of driving Pat home, they drove to a nearby golf course. On that fateful evening in 1952, all the boys raped Pat.

Pat stumbled home seeking solace and comfort from her family but instead was told to never mention the incident. Feeling shameful, Pat kept silent until she could no longer deny the symptoms of pregnancy. Her father sought to “solve” the problem by taking Pat to a doctor for an abortion. Pat was uncertain of what an abortion actually was, but she knew somehow that her baby was going to be killed. Having no choice but to obey her father, Pat went to the appointment, but the doctor refused to perform the abortion because the pregnancy was so far along. When this option closed, her father sent her to a home for unwed mothers in San Antonio. At the maternity home, Pat was made to understand that her only option was to place the child for adoption. Pat struggled with her decision, but she knew that she would have no support from her family in raising the child. At fifteen, she was in no position to be on her own. Pat decided the best gift she could give her child was a stable home and loving parents--she placed the baby girl she named “Elizabeth” for adoption.

As was the case in most adoptions in 1952, “Elizabeth’s” adoption was a closed one. Pat signed an agreement to never try to seek out the daughter to whom she had relinquished all rights, and she kept that agreement.

Fast-forward thirty-three years to see Carol, a lovely woman elated at the birth of her own daughter. Despite her glee with her new baby, Carol still felt a hole in her life that she needed to fill. Carol had always known she was adopted, but she never knew the circumstances of her birth or subsequent placement for adoption. Having given birth to her own daughter, Carol longed to know the woman who chose to give her life so many years ago.

Carol persistently navigated through the maze of paperwork, social workers, and counseling, and even hired a private investigator to assist in finding her birth mother. Finally, the day came when she received the name and phone number of her birth mother. With both trepidation and joy, Carol made the phone call, and soon the

two were reunited just outside Houston.

The unexpected reunion with her biological daughter provided Pat newfound strength to break her long held silence about the pain of her past and the circumstances surrounding Carol's conception and birth. Pat was able to reach out for healing and share her past with her four grown children, who now knew of their sister.

Reflecting on their lives, both Pat and Carol have valuable insights. Carol knows that her life, though conceived in a tragic manner, has blessed others. She is a wife, a mother, and an artist who inspires those around her. Carol had always been Pro-Life, and learning her past only strengthened that resolve. She wishes that lawmakers would pass a law requiring that an abortion be registered as a death. Such a measure, Carol feels, would impress upon the woman and her doctor the gravity of the choice they are making.

This real Pro-Life hero, Pat, is a woman of strength whose story should be heard and applauded. When asked about the rape exception that even some Pro-Lifers make for abortion, Pat answers in a sincerely disturbed voice, "Why would someone blame the baby?" Pat says the most difficult aspect of her experience was reaching a point of forgiveness both towards the boys who raped her and her father who failed her. She prays that the boys and her father found similar forgiveness and that they were spared anger and guilt--a remarkable prayer, but a prayer of victory. Pat's experience reminds Pro-Lifers that what young girls need (as she needed) is sympathy and support. Aborting Carol would have only led to another tragedy and more suffering for Pat. While recognizing the sadness of her story, both she and we rejoice at her strength in choosing life. The circumstances of a child's conception do not determine that child's worth, and the pain of a rape certainly cannot be erased by the pain of an abortion.