



Susan Hookong-Taylor: Teacher Witness to Faith



Married to Kyle Taylor, two children, Evan and Julia

Bachelor of Arts, Christianity and Culture, Bachelor of Ed.

Humber College Jazz Program

Freelance Musician, Session Singer (TV and Radio), Recording Artist

Worship Leader/ Liturgical Musician

Vocal Music Teacher--TCDSB

If you had to create a Catholic Resume which highlighted ways you are a WITNESS to the Catholic faith, what would be on it?

I would say first I am married and I have two children: this is the first, all- encompassing, and on-going piece in terms of witnessing to my faith.

I, as well, have been a musician all my life. At one point in my life as a musician, it came into sharp focus that anything I was able to accomplish at all, in music or otherwise, was through grace. The next humbling reality that showed itself like a mountain suddenly rearing

up on the horizon, was that any and all gifts I have been given are best used in service of God and others.

Martin Luther once said, "I care not who writes a nation's laws, but let me write her songs, and I will bring that nation back to God." He truly understood the power of music: how intrinsically it is connected to our spirit and soul; how it can draw a person out of themselves; how it can build faith; and connect us with one another and with God.

My work as a vocal music teacher calls me to witness daily through music: a great part of what I do is to teach very small children songs about Jesus. I have the privilege of watching them make those heart connections to God and each other, watching the words and melodies take root in their hearts, and watching their faith being encouraged by the singing of these songs.

*One extra-curricular initiative that I have been involved with is called **the Beads**, which is a gathering that happens every other month at the **Family Treehouse Café**. It is an opportunity for us to connect, then express and share a Culture of Life through the arts. I'm excited about this work, as it gives an opportunity for artists to share their work and discuss how faith informs what they do. I'm also excited because we are contributing to the work of the Café whose entire proceeds go to the Sisters of Life (Toronto), and the Missionaries of the Poor (Jamaica).*

<http://www.catholicregister.org/component/k2/item/13645-music-ministry-aims-for-the-'flushing-out-of-catholic-culture'>

What kind of difference do you hope to make in living a life based on Jesus' teachings?

*To respond to the call to live a life based on Jesus' teachings, or, to "take up your cross", is, I believe, first and foremost about entering into relationship with God in Christ. Therefore, the only real difference that I could hope to make would be in me, through my saying "yes" to Christ. And even then, the difference would be made **in** me, not **by** me, through the mysterious interplay of God's grace and my own will.*

From there, my hope would be to follow closely and to respond quickly to the prompts of the Holy Spirit, and through so doing, I would hope that the people around me would see the Hope to which we all have been called.

I would hope to be a person of peace. I would hope, as Mother Teresa says, to be a person that "sees Christ in each one, even in His most terrible disguises." I would hope that my heart would be moved to act with love and compassion towards those around me. As a dear friend of mine, Jennifer Martin, wrote, "Please break my heart, O God, with what breaks Your heart, O God." I would hope to love without counting the cost.

What advice do you have for a young Catholic finding ways to express their faith?

"Be not afraid." **Jesus**

"Go out into the world and preach the good news. Use words when necessary." **St. Francis**

"Pray, hope, and don't worry." **St. Pio**

"Pray without ceasing." **Mother Teresa**

And,

"Go to church". **Chris Rock**

