



**Brenelle D'Souza: |**  
**Student Witness to Faith**

**Summer Camp Counsellor/Sports Instructor**

**Michael Power/Saint Joseph's Catholic Secondary School**



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

Picture this, a seventeen year old girl who plays soccer and basketball at a competitive level and on her school's team, who spends hours studying to earn her honour roll average, and spends her summers trying to be the best camp counsellor she can be. She is an executive on her school's peer ministry, organizing food drives, retreats and social service projects. She spends her Wednesday evenings practicing with the mass band that plays every Sunday at Nativity of our Lord Parish while also serving as an altar server and a lector. Her greatest joy, however, is what she does every Friday night, coordinating and facilitating a faith based youth program for middle school students. Being a witness to my faith is what defines my life. I try to somehow involve my faith in all the programs and organizations I am a part of. I make the sign of the cross as I step forward to take a penalty shot, I say grace before I eat any meal, I say, "God Bless you." every time somebody sneezes and I listen to Christian music every chance I get. Yes, I do witness my faith in some large ways, but the best way to see me witness my faith is in the small everyday things I do. In order for my Catholic Resume to be accurate, it would have to include more than my volunteer positions at church and at school, it would have to include every little detail that proves to the world that I am a proud Catholic because that is what makes me a true witness to my faith.

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

“I see a generation rising up to take their place with selfless faith.” – Brooke Fraser

The youth of today are an incredible and unique generation of individuals. From a very young age, children have begun to face overwhelming obstacles: from losing their parents to death or divorce, to dealing with drugs, sex and violence. It amazes me how even when burdened by this heavy load, a large number of young people still manage to lead a religious and faithful life. Believe it or not there are thousands of Catholic young people around the world who love God and are not afraid to tell anyone. Just like every team needs a captain, every community needs a leader. I try to be that leader, at school, at home, on the court, at work and especially in my parish. My dream is to make these young people leaders in their community; my goal is to uncover the young people who can change the world with nothing but their incredible love for God and their unfailing faith. If the generosity, forgiveness and love of Jesus Christ were found among every young person today, then I strongly believe that young people would be truly happy and content with themselves. I believe that faith and a relationship with God is the missing ingredient in many of our lives, it fills that empty void that many of us feel and most of all it gives us hope and courage to continue living in a world that seems so unpromising. Armed with a new outlook on life and a courageous soul, the youth of today can become the difference of the future, influencing great changes and doing it all while living a life filled with the overflowing love of God.

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

My advice for a young Catholic trying to express their faith is simply don't be afraid. Don't be afraid that other people will judge you. Don't be afraid that you won't be accepted. Don't be afraid to stand up for what you believe. Don't be afraid to try something new, join a youth group. Don't be afraid to ask questions. Don't be afraid about making mistakes. Don't be afraid to be yourself. By just being you, someone who is trying to express their faith you are in fact expressing your faith. God will provide you with the rest. God loves you, just as you are. I'm not saying it's going to be easy, actually I'm saying it's going to be really, really hard. But God would never give you anything that you can't handle.