

Tomlin Leads Dove Nominees

Worship leader Chris Tomlin leads this year's Dove Award nominees with seven nods, including Song of the Year for "Amazing Grace (My Chains Are Gone)."

✖ **February 23, 2009** – Worship artist Chris Tomlin leads this year's list of Dove Award nominees with seven nods, including ones for Artist of the Year, Male Vocalist of the Year and Song of the Year for "Amazing Grace (My Chains Are Gone)."

Natalie Grant and newcomer Francesca Battistelli followed with five nominations each, including for Female Vocalist of the Year, Pop/Contemporary Album of the Year, Song of the Year and Pop/Contemporary Recorded Song of the Year.

Also nominated for New Artist of the Year, Battistelli garnered the most nominations of any new female artist in the history of the Gospel Music Awards. "I am thrilled and honored to just be nominated," Battistelli said. "It's humbling to be among such great company, especially as a new artist, and being nominated for Song of the Year is a dream come true. I'm still soaking it all in!"

Popular Christian band Casting Crowns also received five nominations, including for Artist of the Year. Other nominees in that category include Steven Curtis Chapman, Fireflight, Marvin Sapp, Third Day, and TobyMac.

For the first time, listeners will be able to voter for the winners in the Artist of the Year and New Artist of the Year categories. Fan voting begins on Thursday and will be conducted through the Gospel Music Channel Web site and at . The fan vote will account for one-third of the total vote in those two categories.

"Christian and gospel music expresses itself in many different

ways, and we applaud all nominated artists for their unique contributions to the music landscape,” said John W. Styll, president of the Gospel Music Association. “The powerful messages of redemption, hope and joy found in the music of our Dove nominees come during a season in history when our country and the world need inspiration and encouragement.”

Considered the Grammy Awards of Christian music, the 40th Annual GMA Dove Awards will be held April 23 at the Grand Ole Opry House in Nashville, Tenn., and will be broadcast live on the Gospel Music Channel.