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CASTING CROWNS RECEIVES FIVE NODS FOR 4OTH ANNUAL DOVE AWARDS, INCLUDING "ARTIST OF THE YEAR"

Platinum-Selling Band Celebrates Fifth Nod for Group of the Year, Plus Christmas Album of the Year Honors for *Peace On Earth*

(Nashville, Tenn.) Feb. 20, 2009 – Four-time Group of the Year Dove Award winners, **Casting Crowns**, celebrates five nominations today for the 40th GMA Dove Awards, including **Artist of the Year** and a fifth consecutive nod for **Group of the Year**.

Additionally, the band is nominated for **Christmas Album of the Year** for its 2008 chart-topping, first Christmas project *Peace On Earth*. The top-selling album reached No.1 on iTunes Christian albums chart, and No. 3 on iTunes overall Holiday albums chart in 2008, topping seasonal releases from Faith Hill and Elvis Presley.

Lead singer Mark Hall said, "It's been an amazing year of ministry for Casting Crowns. We are proud to be a part of Christian music and we thank GMA for making the Dove Awards such a special event."

Casting Crowns receives additional Dove nods in the Short Form Music Video category for its powerful music video "Slow Fade," appearing on the band's recent RIAA Gold-certified *The Altar and The Door Live* DVD/CD, which also picks up a nomination today for Long Form Music Video.

Both of the band's previous live DVD releases (*Live From Atlanta* (2004) and *Lifesong Live* (2006)) have reached RIAA Platinum status, along with its 2 Platinum albums *Casting Crowns* (2003) and *Lifesong* (2005), and current Gold album *The Altar and The Door* (2007). For more information on Casting Crowns and for concert listings, please visit www.castingcrowns.com.

For the first time, fans will become stakeholders in the Dove Awards with an opportunity to vote for the winner of Artist of the Year along with New Artist of the Year. Fan voting, which will be conducted through the Gospel Music Channel website (www.gospelmusicchannel.com) and at www.doveawards.com, will open on February 26, the same day online voting opens for GMA members. The cumulative fan vote, which will continue through the live Dove Awards broadcast, will account for one-third of the total vote in those two categories.

About Casting Crowns – Casting Crowns is headed by frontman/principal songwriter Mark Hall, youth pastor of Eagle's Landing First Baptist Church near Atlanta. Earlier this month, the band served as the featured guest artist at the 2009 National Prayer Breakfast in Washington, D.C., performing for President Obama, Tony Blair and 3,000 dignitaries. Casting Crowns' third studio recording, *The Altar and The Door*, achieved an historical debut at No. 2 on *The Billboard 200* chart with 130,000 first-week copies sold, making it the highest debut in the country that week and the second highest CD seller of *any kind* in America. The album wrapped 2008 as *Billboard*'s No. 1 "Top Christian Album" of the year, and Casting Crowns was ranked the No.1 "Top Christian Album Artist." The GRAMMY-winning group has sold more than 4 million records, and delivered eight consecutive No. 1 singles at Christian AC radio.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, CONTACT: Print, TV, Talk Radio, contact: Alisha McArthur, 615/261-6330, alisha.mcarthur@pmgsonybmg.com.