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### Faye Coates

Wilmer Amina Carter Foundation

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# Bridges That Carried Us Over Project

## Interview Summary

**Interviewee:**

Faye Coates

**Interviewer:**

Carolyn Tillman

**Interview Date:**

August 23, 2017

**Interview Location:**

Rialto, CA

**Length:**

00:44:15

**Interview Summary completed by:**

M. Camacho Nuno, 2024

**Description:**

Carolyn Tillman interviews Faye Coates, an amazing singer living in Southern California. She came from a family where craft skills were common. Though originally from St. Louis, Missouri, Coates eventually settled in Rialto in 1975 with her family as her husband was in the Air Force. Coates sees herself as a loving and kind person, leaning on her faith as guidance. Due to her husband being in the Air Force, she also lived for eight years in Germany. There, she expanded her musical talent as well as coming into contact with Nazi-affiliated people. The topic then turns to her activism in Rialto as she was in clubs like the Dr. King Committee, the National Council of Negro Women, and was also the first woman of color in the Rialto Women's Club. Coates herself is comfortable in integrated settings and is open about giving love from God to people. On the topic of her music, Coates talks about having a wonderful teacher from San Bernardino and how she became the official songstress for the city of Rialto. She is the city's only official soloist as well. After describing the honor it was meeting Dr. Dorothy Inghram and giving her a concert in the library she is named after, Coates talks about her children. Both of her sons have physical disabilities and is vocal about how she is a proud mother of what they have overcome. She mentions that one of her sons is blind and that he, alongside his wife, was able to obtain their PhDs, which she contributes to her being a dedicated mother. Coates talks about working as a substitute teacher in the Rialto School District and having concerts to raise money for scholarships and her church. The interview ends with Coates beautifully singing the song "They Crucified My Lord" for the people in attendance.

**Subject Topic:**

- Singing/Musical Talent
- The Archiving Black History in the Inland Empire Project
- Craft Skill
- Air Force
- Moving

- United Methodist Faith
- Racism
- Club Member
- Integration
- Dorothy Inghram
- College Education
- Physical Illness
- Substitute Teaching
- Fighting Against Racism
- Funding Scholarships

**Spatial Coverage:**

Name of Site (if relevant)	General Location/Address
The Dorothy Inghram Branch Library	1505 W Highland Ave, San Bernardino, CA 92411

**Temporal Coverage:**

1975 - 2017

**Key Events:**

- Faye Coates is mentioned to be a mezzo-soprano songstress laureate.
- Coates was born in St. Louis, Missouri, and is where she met her husband.
- Coates was a concert singer and had talent running in the family.
- Coates ended up with her husband and two sons in Rialto on December 30, 1975.
- The social climate was fine during that time.
- She is a loving person and likes to be kind to people.
- She eventually went to the United Methodist Church.
- She was able to study her musical talent while in Germany and later became an opera singer.
- Living in Germany, racism by Nazi-affiliated people, and losing a child to thalidomide.
- Being in the Dr. King Committee, the National Council of Negro Women, and being the first woman of color in the Rialto Women's Club.
- Feeling comfortable in integrated settings and his husband is a master sergeant, the highest position.
- Loving people and seeing that love as being given from God.
- Becoming the official songstress for Rialto.
- The first concert she gave was for Dr. Dorothy Ingram at the Ingram Library.
- Being a dedicated mother.
- Mix of music she sang at her concerts.
- Her youngest son and his wife got their Ph.D. together at the same university.
- The physical illnesses of both sons.
- Working in the Rialto School District as a substitute teacher.
- Giving concerts to fund scholarships and her church.
- Her son works in the equal opportunity and disability field.
- Coates sings for the people in the recording.

**Key Organizations:**

- Dr. King Committee
- The National Council of Negro Women

- The Rialto Women's Club
- Rialto School District

**Interview Index:**

<b>Media Format</b>	<b>Time (hh:mm:ss)</b>	<b>Topic Discussed</b>
Digital Video	00:01:15 - 00:12:59	Faye Coates' background and how she got to California and further musical education.
Digital Video	00:20:47 - 00:23:48	Singing in church, becoming a singer for the city of Rialto, and concerts given.
Digital Video	00:27:34 - 00:30:42	Her son, who is blind, and his wife were able to get their PhDs together.
Digital Video	00:32:55 - 00:35:58	Coates' legacy to the younger people and helping fund scholarships and her church.
Digital Video	00:38:12 - 00:43:53	Coates sings "They Crucified My Lord" for the people in the interview.

**Related Materials**

Additional oral history interviews are available from the Bridges That Carried Us Over Project at CSUSB, <https://scholarworks.lib.csusb.edu/bridges/>

**Full interview transcript can be found below.**

## Interview Transcript

### **Start of Interview:**

[00:00:00]

CAROLYN TILLMAN: Okay. We are going to begin. Today is August 23, 2017. My name is Carolyn Tillman, and I am interviewing Mrs. Faye Coates alias songstress for the City of Rialto, a mezzo-soprano songstress laureate. I'm doing this for the archiving Black history in the Inland Empire Project. Her name is spelled, first, Faye, F-A-Y-E, last name Coates, C-O-A-T-E-S. [00:01:00] We are interviewing in the home of Amina Carter in Rialto, California. Thank you, Faye, for taking the time to conduct this interview with us. I generally like to start our conversation, especially knowing that you were not born in California, but you got here somehow. And if you could tell me a little bit about your birthplace and upbringing and how you got to California.

FAYE COATES: Okay. How are you, Carolyn?

CAROLYN TILLMAN: I'm well, thank you.

FAYE COATES: Good. I was born in St. Louis, Missouri. And I lived in East St. Louis, Illinois, across Mississippi River there. And my husband, [00:02:00] I met while I was in St. Louis because my stepfather lived in St. Louis, and I went back home. He was still, he had heart trouble. And when my stepfather passed, I was packed up to go back home and I met this young man. Some friends had invited me out and it was really, really nice, because that was the love of my life. We were married 52 years. And it's been five years now that he's been gone with the Lord. And I can't tell you how much [00:03:00] I miss him. However, the Lord kept me here because he still had some work for me to do.

CAROLYN TILLMAN: Amen.

FAYE COATES: He gave me a talent of singing, and all my life I wanted to

become a singer, a concert singer like Marian Anderson. You know Marian Anderson stands up and she sings, and these beautiful notes come out of her mouth and she doesn't go all over the stage or dance. And that's the kind of singer that I am, a concert singer.

CAROLYN TILLMAN: Very good.

FAYE COATES: And I enjoy it very much.

CAROLYN TILLMAN: Who nurtured that talent in you? When was it discovered in you? Who nurtured it?

FAYE COATES: Well, I was named after a great aunt that was [00:04:00] from Berkeley Hills, California. And she was a concert pianist.

CAROLYN TILLMAN: Her name?

FAYE COATES: Her name was [Eva Army?], a great friend of Josephine Baker.

CAROLYN TILLMAN: Awesome.

FAYE COATES: Only she did one type of music, and Josephine did another type. But they were great friends and she saw that I had talent. And although she lived in California and we lived in East St. Louis, and later we moved to Detroit. And she still kept up with us. It was three of us girls. I was a singer, my sister, older than I was, the artist, and my baby sister was the seamstress. [00:05:00] She could just look at anything and make it. So that's telling you a little bit. My husband, that I later married, was in the Air Force, and he started out -- he was from Annapolis, Maryland, the Navy town. And instead of joining the Navy, he joined the Air Force and they sent him to March Air Force Base. I had never been to California, and before I knew it, we were on our way. That's how I ended up in Rialto.

CAROLYN TILLMAN: What year did you come to California?

FAYE COATES: I came to California in 1975, December the 30th.

CAROLYN TILLMAN: Okay. So, you get to California. [00:06:00] Do you have your family yet, or is it just you and your husband?

FAYE COATES: Yes, I have my family. I have two sons.

CAROLYN TILLMAN: Okay.

FAYE COATES: One son is the third, Daniel R. Coates III. And we came here, he was in the seventh grade. And my other son was in the second grade. So, we made Rialto our home.

CAROLYN TILLMAN: And together you have how many children?

FAYE COATES: Two.

CAROLYN TILLMAN: Two. Very good. So, you came in 1975. What was the climate? What did it look like? What was political climate? What was the social climate in Rialto at that time?

FAYE COATES: Well, the social climate was fine because he was still in the Air Force and we were stationed at [00:07:00] Norton.

CAROLYN TILLMAN: Okay.

FAYE COATES: So, it was nice because I met some wonderful people in San Bernardino.

CAROLYN TILLMAN: Who would those people be that were significant in your getting adapted to being in California?

FAYE COATES: Well, one thing I met my son. One went to middle school and the other one was in the second grade at the elementary school. And I met the principal and his wife and some other people. And we had to really get acquainted, because being in the Air Force and being the person that God made me, [00:08:00] I was a loving person. I've always been, and very friendly. And so, I didn't let anyone pass by me without speaking to them or them speaking to me. And if I spoke to them and they didn't speak, I would say, "Hey, I spoke to you. Didn't you

hear me?” And so sometimes I would get this look and I said, “Well, you know, if you see a cute little puppy or a cat out there on the street, you would say, ‘Oh, that cat is so pretty,’ and you would speak to him. So, I’m a human, loving human being, trying to do God’s will. So, I really expect for you to speak to me.” So, there would be a little chuckle. And then, you know, we would speak to each other when we see each other. So, [00:09:00] my pastor, my principal asked me if I would come to their church, was the United Methodist Church. And that was fine because I was raised Methodist.

CAROLYN TILLMAN: Okay.

FAYE COATES: So, I didn’t go to the church after he had asked me about three times. So, we were at -- I always liked to be busy, and I was at a council meeting, PTA, and the room was full of people because the meeting was about to start. And he said, “Oh, everybody, could I have your attention?” And everyone quiet down, and he said, “Faye Coates, I invited you to my church four times. You didn’t come, and I’m not going to invite you anymore.” Oh, needless [00:10:00] to say, I was so embarrassed. But I had to laugh. And I said, “Oh, I’m sorry, but I’ll come.” So that next Sunday, my family and I, the four of us were at the United Methodist Church.

CAROLYN TILLMAN: I think so.

FAYE COATES: And so that was about 43 years ago. So, I’ve been going to that church now almost 43 years.

CAROLYN TILLMAN: Awesome. Now, I assume your husband was in the military. Did you work as well?

FAYE COATES: I was a domestic engineer.

CAROLYN TILLMAN: All right.

FAYE COATES: My husband never wanted me to work, but we got married and we went to Germany. I honeymooned in Germany. It was during the time that they



had the travel ban. So [00:11:00] the Kennedys were in office. And in fact, we were overseas when Kennedy was assassinated. But that's the best thing that could have happened to me, going to Germany. I got to further study my music and God gave me the talent of being able to sing upper.

CAROLYN TILLMAN: Wonderful.

FAYE COATES: So, I finished part of my dream and I became an opera singer. So, it was really, really nice because as you know, there are very few African American [00:12:00] opera singers.

CAROLYN TILLMAN: True. Did you go to conservatory there?

FAYE COATES: I went to conservatory --

CAROLYN TILLMAN: In Germany?

FAYE COATES: No, in Detroit.

CAROLYN TILLMAN: Oh, okay. Tell us a little bit about your training in Detroit.

FAYE COATES: Well, it was really nice. I was in high school, and the high school teacher's name was [Grace Engle?]. She was so nice to me. And she saw that those people in her class that had, I won't say outstanding talent, but had a little more talent than some of the others, she helped them all that she could help them. So, she was instrumental in helping me go some to the conservatory.

CAROLYN TILLMAN: [00:13:00] Excellent.

FAYE COATES: And one of the other young ladies in our class, family sent her to Germany. And I would be saying, oh, I wish I could go to Germany. I wish I could go. But you see, God works in most outstanding ways. God is so good. I married this -- I met this man, and I married him. And I got to honeymoon in Germany and seeing in the different places in Germany. And since it's very few of us, it was really, really nice. I was treated like royalty.

CAROLYN TILLMAN: Wonderful. You should have been treated like royalty.

You are royalty.

FAYE COATES: Yes. Yes.

CAROLYN TILLMAN: How many years were you in Germany?

FAYE COATES: Eight.

CAROLYN TILLMAN: Oh. [00:14:00] That's a goodly amount of time to really get your craft in a country where much of that music was developed.

FAYE COATES: That's right. And of course, it was still people there that were Hitler people.

CAROLYN TILLMAN: So, you ran into some racism?

FAYE COATES: I did. Well, in fact, one of them was in my house because I had my first son in Germany, and she used to help take care of my son.

CAROLYN TILLMAN: Oh, my goodness.

FAYE COATES: Yes. And she left after a while.

CAROLYN TILLMAN: And what was the nature of your relationship?

FAYE COATES: No, she was not real mean or anything. But [00:15:00] I was expecting, I lost a little girl while I was there. Because they have a thalidomide drug that you take the morning sickness.

CAROLYN TILLMAN: Yes, yes. I'm very familiar with that.

FAYE COATES: Were born with this.

CAROLYN TILLMAN: Yes.

FAYE COATES: Well, then I lost my little girl. And then I had my son, my first guy. And I was expecting, and I asked her if she would wash the windows because it was getting close to Christmas. And she turned me off. And she left.

CAROLYN TILLMAN: Wow. Wow.

FAYE COATES: So, but otherwise, you know, she wasn't overly friendly, but we got along. She did her work, and then she left. So, I said, well, God knows what

he's [00:16:00] doing.

CAROLYN TILLMAN: Okay. So, by 1975, when you are here, you are an established artist.

FAYE COATES: Yes.

CAROLYN TILLMAN: So, when did Rialto discover that you could sing an opera?

FAYE COATES: Rialto, I just can't stay still. And I would join the different organizations. Like I was in the Dr. King committee, and I was in the NCNW.

CAROLYN TILLMAN: The National Council of Negro Women.

FAYE COATES: The National Council of Negro Women.

CAROLYN TILLMAN: The Rialto Women's Club.

FAYE COATES: I was the first woman of color for the Rialto Women's Club.

And I've been a member [00:17:00] of the Rialto Women's Club now for 35 years. I was a member for, I was one of the founding members, along with [Patty Eng?] for the Dr. Martin Luther King. We were the founders. She and I.

CAROLYN TILLMAN: Wonderful. Wonderful. I have been to those luncheons several times.

FAYE COATES: And it's just wonderful when you can become a part of -- well, we all know salt must have pepper with it. [00:18:00] So what is salt without the pepper? What is pepper without the salt? So, I always think of myself as being the pepper that has to be with the salt.

CAROLYN TILLMAN: You were very comfortable being in integrated groups. You didn't shy away from that.

FAYE COATES: Very comfortable. No, I'd never shied away from it because my husband was the only person of color in his work, in the Air Force. My husband was a chief master sergeant. That's as highest enlisted men go. And he worked

for the generals, and he was the director and everything. And it was no one else around but me. So, my husband always said, my goodness, you make the wall talk. [00:19:00] Well, I like the idea of God is loved. And God gives love. And if you give love, you will receive love. So, I always try to do God's will and be loving to everyone.

CAROLYN TILLMAN: Amen. Amen.

FAYE COATES: And He has taken care of me. And especially since Danny is with him now.

CAROLYN TILLMAN: Yes. Yes, So, tell me about the first time you sang. Was it like in a concert or did you just perform a number for somebody here in Rialto? What led to you becoming the Songstress of Rialto?

FAYE COATES: Mrs. Gwendolyn Roberts from San Bernardino, the music teacher, and she's also was [00:20:00] in charge of the metropolitan opera tryouts. Well, I had already tried out for the metropolitan opera tryouts, and I won second place in Detroit.

CAROLYN TILLMAN: Congratulations.

FAYE COATES: And it was something kind of unheard of, but I was so proud and happy about that. So, when I came here, I was trying to find a teacher, and I did find her. And one of the girls that studied with her lived in Rialto. So, word got around when I started studying with her that I was a singer and I could sing. And I was already doing work, helping in the city. And then [00:21:00] Tom Sawyer, one of the councilmen went to my church. So, of course, I joined the choir at church. We had a real nice choir. We still have a nice choir. And so that's how I started singing some for the city. They would ask me to sing. And then in 1980, that's a long time ago, you know, I was appointed the official songstress of the City of Rialto. And if I'm not mistaken, it was announced by the city manager two years

ago that I was the only city that had an official [00:22:00] soloist. So, that made me feel real good because it made me know that God is working and making our dreams come true, which is why I was so happy. I gave the first classical concert in Rialto. It was hard for me to believe because you are thinking that all of the cities have teachable things that they can teach the children.

CAROLYN TILLMAN: Yes. Now, was this the concert that you did on behalf of the National Council of Negro Women?

FAYE COATES: No.

CAROLYN TILLMAN: This was something different.

FAYE COATES: This was something different. This came way after. Well, first of all, the first concert that I gave was for Dr. Dorothy Ingram at the Ingram [00:23:00] Library. I met Dr. Ingram. Beautiful. She was a beautiful lady. And she asked me if I would give a concert. And I gave this concert of negro spirituals because we don't ever want our spirituals to be forgotten. And I was a member in the NCNW until they would have the meetings on the night that my kids, my oldest son was in sports and football, and I was a team mother and, well, you have to take care of your kids. So, I couldn't go to the meetings.

CAROLYN TILLMAN: Okay. Tell me about how you ended up doing the concert for NCNW. It was a fundraiser, correct?

FAYE COATES: It was a fundraiser. And Eldred --

CAROLYN TILLMAN: Marshall? [00:24:00]

FAYE COATES: -- Marshall. And I had fundraisers so that we could raise some money so that they could continue to be available.

CAROLYN TILLMAN: How old was Eldred at that time?

FAYE COATES: Played piano?

CAROLYN TILLMAN: Yes.

FAYE COATES: Oh.

CAROLYN TILLMAN: Magnificent.

FAYE COATES: I'm telling you; I'm just having chills here. He just would chill up from joy with the spirit involved in.

CAROLYN TILLMAN: Yes.

FAYE COATES: Eldred must have been, he was in college.

CAROLYN TILLMAN: Okay.

FAYE COATES: So, he was college age. And I often wonder how he's doing. But now I found out that he is doing this --

CAROLYN TILLMAN: Very well. [00:25:00] He's completing his doctorate program. He's now in New York City doing some conducting of their orchestra in New York.

FAYE COATES: Oh, boy.

CAROLYN TILLMAN: He's following his passion and his dream.

FAYE COATES: And history.

CAROLYN TILLMAN: Yes. Do you recall what songs you performed?

FAYE COATES: I performed -- I always give a mixed program. I have to have some operatic numbers. I have to have some (inaudible) numbers, some Negro spirit.

CAROLYN TILLMAN: Yes.

FAYE COATES: And I must have some (inaudible), I said that, right?

CAROLYN TILLMAN: Yes, yeah.

FAYE COATES: Folk songs.

CAROLYN TILLMAN: Okay. So, it was a good mix.

FAYE COATES: It was a good mix.

CAROLYN TILLMAN: Something for everybody to appreciate and [00:26:00]

attract to.

FAYE COATES: And I mix it up because I want to show the young people that they can do, if they want to do with God by their sides, they can do wonders.

CAROLYN TILLMAN: Yes, they can. Yes, they can.

FAYE COATES: And not for them, not to let anyone tell them they can't do this.

CAROLYN TILLMAN: Yes. Absolutely. Absolutely. So, what friends did you make here while you were in Rialto? That you -- so many?

FAYE COATES: So many friends. I remember when I met you.

CAROLYN TILLMAN: Yeah.

FAYE COATES: Yes. I was at a meeting and I didn't sing at that meeting. But you were such a wonderful, God's angel is who I call.

CAROLYN TILLMAN: Bless you. [00:27:00]

FAYE COATES: These young people that I meet that are so friendly, so loving. It just I couldn't go away and say, oh wow. I spoke to her and she didn't speak. No. You are such a loving one.

CAROLYN TILLMAN: I think your spirit knows when you're in the presence of someone who a similar spirit.

FAYE COATES: Oh, yes. Yes.

CAROLYN TILLMAN: Yes. Yes. Tell me, I heard you speaking to the younger girl yesterday. You said your parents both got PhDs together?

FAYE COATES: No. My son.

CAROLYN TILLMAN: Your son?

FAYE COATES: My youngest son.

CAROLYN TILLMAN: Okay. Okay.

FAYE COATES: And his wife.

CAROLYN TILLMAN: Oh, okay. They got their PhDs together.

FAYE COATES: They got their PhD. And they see I went to Wayne State for a while. [00:28:00] And who would think that they would get their PhDs --

CAROLYN TILLMAN: At the same university.

FAYE COATES: -- at the same university. My son is blind, and my son received a Rackham fellowship to the University of Michigan. And he went to the University of Michigan. And by him not being able to see, some of the people we're not too kind. I don't want to say anything. Let's say that God took care of him.

CAROLYN TILLMAN: I like that. Yes, because God will take care of us.

FAYE COATES: He really takes care of us.

CAROLYN TILLMAN: He sure does. No matter [00:29:00] what opposition you come against, he will take care of His own.

FAYE COATES: Well, he's taking care of me. I can barely walk, but I can walk -  
-

CAROLYN TILLMAN: Yes, you can.

FAYE COATES: -- with the walker. And he's going to see to it that I get my healing.

CAROLYN TILLMAN: So, your son, is he living in Michigan now?

FAYE COATES: Oh, no. My son lives in Berkeley.

CAROLYN TILLMAN: Oh, okay.

FAYE COATES: He works at the University of Berkeley. He has his PhD. His wife has her PhD.

CAROLYN TILLMAN: Wonderful. Congratulations.

FAYE COATES: Thank you.

CAROLYN TILLMAN: That's what all about mothering and PTAs --

FAYE COATES: I am a very proud mother, yes.

CAROLYN TILLMAN: -- and going to every event and standing right by them



and nurturing them.

FAYE COATES: That's how I wore my hip pocket.

CAROLYN TILLMAN: Pays off.

FAYE COATES: But it was worth it.

CAROLYN TILLMAN: That's it. Pays off.

FAYE COATES: [00:30:00] Both of my sons got higher education. The other son, as you say, my other son is in remission from having non-Hodgkin lymphoma. And you say, wow, both of her sons. I say, yes, but look what God is doing.

CAROLYN TILLMAN: Yes, he does.

FAYE COATES: I'm very proud of my kids and any other kid. As you see, the first thing I ask kids, the young lady that was there, are you in school. That's what I asked her.

CAROLYN TILLMAN: Yes. Yes.

FAYE COATES: And I think that that's what God wants me to do.

CAROLYN TILLMAN: Very, very, very good. Now it says you worked with the Rialto School District as well. Did you work with the Rialto School District?

FAYE COATES: I sure did. I was at the schools all day and so --

CAROLYN TILLMAN: [00:31:00] They said they going to put you to work.

FAYE COATES: One of the presidents gave me a job up there, but I used to, before we came out here, we were at Andrews and I used to serve at some of the schools in between children. All my boys are five years apart.

CAROLYN TILLMAN: Okay. Okay. Okay.

FAYE COATES: And I enjoyed it.

CAROLYN TILLMAN: You were used to being around the school community and you knew how things operated. And did you substitute teach or did you...?

FAYE COATES: I substituted teaching.

CAROLYN TILLMAN: Really?

FAYE COATES: Yes.

CAROLYN TILLMAN: Okay. All right. And so that means you run across kids all the time around here who remember you.

FAYE COATES: Well, I do. I really do. I was at the grocery store one day and someone -- the [00:32:00] line was kind of long and someone said, don't sneeze on me and don't cough on me. Sneeze in your shirt. So, I didn't pay too much attention to it. And then they said it again. I said, gee whiz. That's what I used to tell the kids. I was telling the person that was in front of me. And lo and behold, they said, "Mrs. Coates." I'm looking around. And I said, oh my goodness. It's one of the students. Look how you've grown. He said, "Well, you look the same. You look the same." But she used to tell us not to sneeze in the rooms because the germs go all over the room.

CAROLYN TILLMAN: Right. We tell that to the kids now, to keep everybody well in the classroom, and not out sick. What would you want your legacy to be, and what message would you [00:33:00] send to young people?

FAYE COATES: Well, you know, I do give concerts. The last one that I gave was last year. I give concerts to raise money to help on scholarships. And I give concerts to help my church. We had a 100-year celebration for the city. I gave a concert to help raise money for that. And we raised a nice amount of money. And the money that I raised for the four high schools, that's including the continuation school, we've given two scholarships to the continuation school [00:34:00] because it's very hard for them to find someone that would like to further their education. And it makes me feel so proud and so happy to know that I can do something to help these young people. We were losing members in our women's club, and the scholarships had dropped down very low. And I was so sad that it was the amount.

I said, oh, we've got to do something about this. So, at our next meeting, I took up a collection. Well, believe it or not, the building is so old until, I guess every time we have an earthquake, it will knock something loose. And some of the ceiling was falling down. And one of the ladies [00:35:00] wanted to take the money that I had collected to get the ceiling fixed. And I said, excuse me, I collected this money. And the people responded and gave the money to help on the scholarships. And I don't mean to sound pushy, but this money is going for what it was collected for. And I said, now if anyone is against that, you'll have to come by me.

CAROLYN TILLMAN: Good for you.

FAYE COATES: Because that's what this money will go for. And that's what that money went for. So now, you know, we are able to give four scholarships, 850 dollars each.

CAROLYN TILLMAN: Wonderful. Wonderful.

FAYE COATES: So [00:36:00] that's what I will hope that God will continue to let me sing in good voice and make money for the kids.

CAROLYN TILLMAN: Very good. Very good.

FAYE COATES: And I've had some kids that come up to me. In fact, one of them is going to Berkeley, and she looked my son up.

CAROLYN TILLMAN: Good.

FAYE COATES: Yes.

CAROLYN TILLMAN: Yes.

FAYE COATES: And my son is, what is that same, well, he takes after both of them, take after their mother, because I have been fighting for rights and for, there was a saying that I can't think of.

CAROLYN TILLMAN: The apple doesn't fall too far from the tree?

FAYE COATES: Yeah. And I say both of them [00:37:00] take after me because

my son works in discrimination and --

CAROLYN TILLMAN: Equal opportunity.

FAYE COATES: Yes. Equal opportunity. And I walk with the walker. So that means --

CAROLYN TILLMAN: And disability?

FAYE COATES: -- I'm disabled. My son is disabled. He works for the rights of those people. And I'm telling you, you see the news all what the news is and everything and all these things that are going on that are not right, but God is still working because, you know, these things that coming up here lately now and the people that are speaking out against racism and discrimination, you never would've thought that they would do that [00:38:00] before. But they're doing it.

CAROLYN TILLMAN: We're back at it again.

FAYE COATES: We are back at it again. And that is so wonderful. God is good.

CAROLYN TILLMAN: Amen. Amen. Now, you were going to sing for us before we closed out our interview. How would you like to do that? Would you like to introduce the song or give us some background on the song and then sing it? Or how do you want to do that?

FAYE COATES: I would like to give you some background, a little bit of background. I'll just tell you I'm going to sing "They Crucified My Lord." And you know, we all know that Jesus Christ died on the cross to save us and to take away our sin. And that Psalm just pulls at my heart. [00:39:00] (sings) They crucified my Lord, and he never said a mumbalin' word; they crucified my Lord, and he never said a mumbalin' word. Not a word, [00:40:00] not a word, not a word. Not a word. They nailed him to the tree, and he never said a mumbalin' word. They nailed him to a tree, [00:41:00] and he never said a mumbalin' word. Not a word, not a word,

not a word. I want Jesus to walk with me. I want Jesus to walk with me all along  
[00:42:00] this Christian journey. I want Jesus to walk with me all along this  
Christian journey, all along this Christian [00:43:00] journey. I want Jesus, Lord I  
want Jesus. I want Jesus to walk with me.

CAROLYN TILLMAN: Bravo, bravo, bravo, bravo. (applause) Thank you.  
Thank you. Thank you, [00:44:00] Mrs. Faye Coats. It has been such a pleasure to  
interview you, and you have such a story and a legacy. Thank you.

FAYE COATES: Thank you. God is good.

**End of Interview:**  
[00:44:15]