NATIONAL CATHOLIC REPORTER
Published on *National Catholic Reporter* (http://ncronline.org)

Congressional candidate Joe Kennedy III: the listener

Tom Gallagher | Sep. 27, 2012 NCR Today

For any Irish person, listening might not be second or third nature. We Irish types love laughter and storytelling. When there's a roomful of us, quiet rarely reigns supreme.

Now comes Joe Kennedy III, the congressional candidate for the 4th District in Massachusetts. He graduated from Stanford and Harvard. He's a former prosecutor and Peace Corps volunteer.

You may recall that his father, Joe II, personified the gregarious Irish nature, full of energy and life, the quintessential backslapper.

JK3 is different.

He speaks softly. He listens intently.

According to a recent profile piece [1] in *The Sun Chronicle* of Attleboro, Mass., JK3's mother, Sheila Kennedy, explains the reason her son is quiet by nature.

"I think he's soft spoken because he likes to listen more than he likes to talk. If more politicians listened instead of talked, the world would be a better place. But, being thoughtful and soft spoken shouldn't be taken for weakness," she said.

A recent policy session on energy provided JK3 an opportunity to listen:

> Kennedy's preference for listening was on display last week when he attended a meeting of the New England Clean Energy Council consisting of executives in the world of alternative energy.
>
> He brought his four-page energy position paper with him, but rather than taking over the room, he said he was there to listen. He said he wanted to be a "sponge" and learn from the real experts on wind and solar power.
>
> "There is a lot of knowledge in this room ... I'd like to do as little talking as possible," he said.

JK3 recognizes that his family name is something he can avoid. He also knows his campaign success is entirely up to him:

He also addressed questions about his family legacy, saying he has great pride in the accomplishments of his father, grandfather and great uncles.

But, Kennedy said, he said is running his campaign as his own man.

"At the end of the day, I own it. I'm the one running," he said.

Source URL (retrieved on *04/19/2014 - 02:26*): http://ncronline.org/blogs/ncr-today/congressional-candidate-joe-kennedy-iii-listener

Links:
[1] http://www.thesunchronicle.com/news/local_news/he-s-not-your-father-s-kennedy/article_0dfc68b1-21bd-53ad-830a-fb9023777afd.html?mode=print