

July 18, 2005

Mr. Tom Cruise
c/o Lee Anne DeVette
Cruise/Wagner Productions (C/W)
5555 Melrose Ave
Bldg 200
Los Angeles, CA 90038

Dear Mr. Cruise:

I've been watching the news, or at least the gossip, about you unfold in recent weeks. Since I am not a celebrity, I have no idea what it must be like to have your life dissected before the national and international media each day.

I simply wanted to write a short letter to let you know that someone is remembering you by name in daily prayer. Perhaps that awareness can be for you, in some small way, a refuge amidst the violent tempest of publicity that surrounds your life.

I am writing to you as a young Catholic and artist living in Los Angeles. I moved here from Minnesota two years ago to pursue screenwriting and to serve in some capacity in the spiritual slums of Hollywood. I hope you won't take offense at my offer of prayers for you, or interpret them as some manipulative form of proselytism. I'm not praying for any particular outcome, other than that the will of God be accomplished in your life.

I have no idea what you believe, only the greatest curiosity to understand. It's been a source of frustration for me to watch as people in the media analyze, dissect, repurpose and otherwise abuse your reputation. I hope there are people in your life who will go out of their way to treat you humanely, to listen to you, and to seek to uncover whatever is best and most noble in you.

I know that, at one time, you were a Catholic, and actually attended a seminary. I was in seminary myself at one time. Seeing as you are no longer a practicing Catholic, I suspect that your experience in the seminary may have been as miserable as my own, if not more so.

I've also observed with disappointment the sort of unhealthy curiosity the media has taken in your personal affairs, and in particular, your sexuality. Many people give themselves license to hold your life under a microscope, justifying this behavior with any number of excuses. The most popular excuse I hear usually reduces to this formula: anyone who chooses life as a celebrity in Hollywood had better expect to have every detail of their lives placed before the public eye. Oftentimes, embedded in comments like this are sentiments of jealousy and envy, and a certain destructive cramping of the human spirit. For my part, I believe that questions about your personal dealings, orientation, and interior life are very personal and the public has no right to information about these things. This is not to say, however, that I feel no particular obligations to you. All of us, no matter what our background, are members of the human family, and this alone should awaken in us a sense of solidarity... at least enough to recognize the value, the dignity, and the unrepeatability that each person represents. Within the human family, we are all, in some sense, entrusted to one another.

It is with this understanding that I write this letter. I offer the promise of my prayers for you daily, that, in the midst of your life you will somehow discover the peace and joy of a truly human existence. My own conviction is that such a thing is found in discovering and conforming to the divine will, and so that is the manner of my prayer for you.

Simply know of my prayers and best wishes.

Yours,

Clayton Emmer