

Q&A

Q: “Fr. Alex, are any famous people Orthodox? I heard there are some movie stars who might be.”

There are definitely some famous people who are Orthodox, and you might be thinking of Tom Hanks specifically. He came to the Orthodox Faith through his wife, who grew up going to St. Sophia Cathedral in Los Angeles. Among people who convert to Orthodoxy, this is a common way: they meet someone, fall in love, and then gradually learn about the faith with the help of their spouse, new family and parish priest. To share a personal story, I once “churched” the baby of Chris Cornell whose band, Soundgarden, was part of the Seattle “grunge” movement in the 90s. He became Orthodox a few years ago. For over a decade, I’ve loved his music and have been a big fan. I’ve got to say I was a bit star-struck and had to work to keep my focus. I kept having to remind myself that this moment was not about me, but about his little child being offered to God. In the end, I played it pretty cool (I didn’t shove a camera in his face or beg an autograph) but I still feel a bit silly about almost losing it.

The thing to remember is that regardless of what you do in life, the Orthodox Faith has a fullness that attracts. Actors, musicians, doctors, police officers, stay-at-home moms—everyone is looking for the ultimate life-changing experience and will find it in Christ. We’re all the same and very equal in this. To our Lord, fame, money, nice cars and earthly power aren’t important. These things fade; His love never does.

To Him, you and I are “superstar” enough.