

# *Touched By An Angel*

July 21, 1999

Michael P. Farris, Esq.  
Home School Legal Defense Association  
17333 Pickwick Drive  
Purcellville, VA 20 132

Dear Mr. Farris,

I am glad to hear you have already been in contact with Lisa Dolab from our office regarding our episode "Into the Fire." I would like to respond as well.

The subject of this particular episode was religious cults and the potential dangers of participating in a cult. The lead character was portrayed as a deceitful, lying manipulator who used good people and good intentions for personal gain and self-glorification. In his brief exchange with one of the angels, the cult leader misuses the privilege and right of home schooling as one of several smokescreens intended to disguise his unnatural control over an entire community of followers.

Please be assured that there was never any intention to explore or question home schooling. In question was the sanity of a single madman who would lie about anything, including the education of the children in his care.

The reference to teaching certification was a last minute and ill-considered rewrite for which I take full responsibility. I can offer only the time constraints that television filming imposes as a reason for any oversight.

I am the aunt to six nieces and nephews who have been home-schooled since the age of five and who now attend or have graduated from college. I have received many letters and e-mails over the past three years thanking me for my consistently positive portrayal of home schooling on Touched By An Angel's sister show "Promised Land." I have frequently found myself in the position of defending home schooling to the media, which I have done passionately.

I shall continue to be a vocal supporter of home schooling and I shall seriously consider your suggestion that we include an actual, intentional exploration of home schooling in a future episode. Should we manage to find a suitable story, I will be happy to contact you.

Please forward my sincere apologies to any home-schooled children or parents who were offended by the episode.

Sincerely,



Martha Williamson