

instinct

Written by Instinct Staff
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Dear Instinct,

I would like to nominate my parents, Nancy and Richard Cannon, for Instinct's "Parents of the Month." For two years now, they have been listed on my website, truthsetsfree.net, providing support for parents and friends of GLBT children. Even now, while I am away at grad school, they continue to support me in my personal endeavors, as I continue my outreach to GLBT Christians, pursue priesthood in the Episcopal Church and navigate the plains, valleys and mountaintops of my relationship with my boyfriend, Chris. They have been a tremendous support to me and a part of my life where I know that I am safe sharing my dreams and fears, my anxieties and joys.



Justin Cannon
Berkeley, CA

"There are so many things that make me proud of Justin," Nancy says. "But to be very honest, I am most proud of his growth in character and in love. I have also seen him deflect homophobia without retaliation or hostility, but with graciousness. I am very proud of the courage and strength of character it takes to do that over and over."

We wanted to give the amazing Richard and Nancy a chance to address parents. "Please do all you can to love, accept and listen to your GLBT children. They need you desperately! Don't be afraid to say that you are confused or that you need time to sort things out. But it is so important for all of us—especially

those struggling to understand and accept their sexual identity—to hear the words ‘I love you and I accept you as you are,’” Richard says. “We are all in the process of growing and discovering who we are, and sexual identity is only one area of our lives. So if your child is GLB or T, this is not all that they are, even if they think so. Don’t miss sharing an important part of your child’s growth and development.”

“I have never heard a story of a parent who regretted embracing their child fully amidst the knowledge that he or she is gay. Our children have already suffered way too much at the hands of a society that harbors ignorance and distortion around homosexuality,” Nancy says. “Please do not add even a moment more to their suffering. If your child has your support and unconditional love, most likely they will be able to navigate this difficult time in history. If they don’t have your support, you could be the one that pushes them toward a tragic outcome.”

It’s obvious that as people whose faith is central to their lives, Justin’s parents are inspirations, to strangers as well as to their own sons. He credits their loving leadership with giving him the strength to find his own path, one set on helping others.

“What has remained the common denominator through this entire journey has been their love for me as their child,” Justin says, “and as one created in the image of God.”

Thanks to Chokerz4Men.com for sending Justin a free necklace! Visit Chokerz4Men.com for more information.

If you would like to nominate your mom (or dad), send an e-mail to parent@instinctmag.com!