

Churches deny support to gays and lesbians

To the Editor:

Thanks to Dr. John Sergent for his article on homosexuality and moral leadership (Oct. 28).

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As active members of the Nashville chapter of Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays, my wife and I are well acquainted with the needless suffering of homosexual young people and their families. It is suffering that nearly always arises from the teaching of churches and their leaders.

I spent most of my active professional life as a university chaplain, in which many troubled students sought my help in coming to terms with their hidden awareness that they were lesbian or gay. I will always be grateful for the opportunities I have had to be an agent of God's love and compassion for homosexual young people in the face of the churches' unwillingness to accept them as they are.

It is said we have a moral obligation to be intelligent. By failing to exercise critical thought in the interpretation of Scripture, church leaders make life miserable for many young people and undermine their families.

A young gay man told me that his devout mother said to him that she wished he had never been born. Another said that he would not be welcome to spend Christmas at home. Hearing these stories is doubly painful for me because my church still affirms exclusionary language on homosexuality, though many of our churches and clergy reject those positions, as I do.

I am profoundly grateful for the intelligent and courageous leadership in the Episcopal diocese of New Hampshire.

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