



July 23, 2020

Dear Father,

Earlier this year, accusations against David Haas concerning sexual impropriety and spiritual manipulation became public. Allegations of inappropriate behavior by those who work with the church independently, create pastoral challenges. As you know, the Diocese of Erie is committed to supporting anyone who has been harmed by persons of influence in our communities.

Survivors of sexual harassment and abuse deserve support and understanding. We have all suffered greatly because of those who have used positions of power or privilege to harm others. We have a responsibility to be mindful of this and do what we can to prevent further injury to those who have already suffered harm. We share this information in the interest of accountability and transparency and believe it may help people, as it has assisted us, in making informed decisions.

While the investigation of David Haas continues, Bishop Persico has decided that Mr. Haas may not give presentations at workshops, concerts or similar events hosted by the Diocese, parishes, Catholic schools, or other Catholic institutions in the Diocese of Erie. Likewise, the Diocese will not use Haas' compositions at Diocesan Masses and other Diocesan events. Also, the bishop encourages pastors, principals, and leaders of other Catholic institutions to consider following the Diocesan lead in this matter.

For those who use GIA, Inc. products, they have suspended their sponsorship and publishing relationship with Mr. Haas and have not sponsored his work since late January.

OCP (Oregon Catholic Press) has released this statement: "OCP has not published new music by Mr. Haas or sponsored him at events for decades, but in light of these allegations, we are immediately suspending all ties with him. While OCP's 2021 missals have already gone to print, we will determine the content of future publications in light of this situation. We take these allegations very seriously, and we stand with survivors and victims of abuse. We remain committed to prayer, reconciliation, human dignity, peace, and justice."

On the reverse side of this letter you will find resource information compiled by Laurie Delgatto-Whitten (writer, St. Mary's Press) that was sent to dioceses around the country. This information includes details on the accusations, investigations, and statements made regarding the David Haas situation. All of the information contained in this mailing will be made available in the next edition of the diocesan Information Bulletin, so that the internet links are easier to use.

Reverend Matthew J. Kujawinski,  
Administrator, Office of Worship