



DIOCESE OF
SAN JOSE

NEWS RELEASE

1150 North First Street
San Jose, California 95112

Diocese of San José Statement on David Haas Sexual Abuse and Spiritual Manipulation Allegations

San Jose, CA, July 16, 2020: The following statement was distributed internally to all pastors, staff and liturgical ministers in the Diocese of San Jose on June 22, 2020:

As reported on June 14, 2020 by the Catholic News Agency, liturgical music composer David Haas has been accused of sexual abuse and spiritual manipulation. Recent allegations claim that Haas engaged in “a repeated, unethical abuse of the professional and spiritual power he has had in church music circles,” reportedly targeting “multiple women using techniques that abuse prevention experts identify as grooming, coercing women into sexual favors, and exploiting women who had previously experienced abuse.”

The Diocese of San Jose takes these allegations very seriously. We are resolute in our solidarity with all victims and survivors of sexual abuse. In response to these allegations, we have suspended the use of David Haas’ music in the Diocese of San Jose until further notice, effective immediately. As it is traumatic for victim/survivors of clergy sexual abuse to see a credibly accused priest or deacon exercising his ministry at the altar, so we wish to avoid causing further trauma to anyone by the use of Mr. Haas’ music, as he has been accused by multiple adult women over many years.

Mr. Haas’ home archdiocese, the Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis, issued a statement on June 16, 2020, which provides additional perspective: “The Haas matter illustrates the challenges of responding to allegations of inappropriate behavior by lay persons who work with Catholic groups. We are committed to supporting anyone who has been harmed by persons of influence, prominence, or power in our communities. At the same time, we recognize the importance of having a fair and appropriate forum that provides due process for those who have been accused.

“However, the complaints about Haas are particularly concerning since they involve offenses against the dignity of the human person and are alleged to have occurred at Catholic events. We are committed to safe environments for all. We offer our support for those who have been harmed to come forward.”

We recognize that many parish communities in the Diocese of San Jose include Mr. Haas’ music as part of their core sung repertoire, and that suspending its use may require additional planning to seek out resources beyond Mr. Haas’ compositions. To help with



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that, the DSJ Liturgical Commission, in consultation with twelve local music directors, assembled a guiding document that offers alternative songs as options for some of Mr. Haas' most-used pieces. [Please follow this link to access the document.](#) The suggestions presented here are not the only songs you can use – they are a starting place that can hopefully guide you to find repertoire choices that serve as reasonable alternatives.

The Diocese of San Jose strictly adheres to a zero-tolerance policy and promptly notifies law enforcement and child protective services when abuse is reported, in accordance with mandated reporter laws. If an adult victim/survivor is looking to report a case of Clergy Abuse, or sexual abuse involving Church personnel, we encourage them to first contact their local civil authorities (Law enforcement). Once a report is filed with the local civil authorities, individuals are encouraged to contact the diocesan Office for the Protection of Children & Vulnerable Adults at (408) 983-0113. All reports are confidential to protect the rights of the victim. Reports to the Diocese are accepted by either online submission or by phone. For online submission, please use the following URL to access our secure third-party reporting server designated for this purpose: <https://opcva.ethicspoint.com> or contact our toll-free 24-hour reporting hotline at 844-372-1691.

For further information on the Holy See's procedural norms to combat sexual abuse, please refer to the Vos Estis Lux Mundi document.

[Click here to access the guiding document for music selection alternatives.](#)

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