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Sunday, May 14, 2017

My Dear Christ's Faithful of the Diocese of Crookston,

I, like you, am deeply saddened and troubled whenever I hear allegations of sexual abuse by a clergyman and certainly when I hear of allegations of misconduct by a bishop. I know you understand that there are two sides to every story and there is another, a very different side to the story reported last week.

As a result of the legal action now taken by Mr. Vasek, civil and church processes have begun that take a thorough and fair look at the allegation. As was indicated in the statement from the Diocese of Crookston released last week, Msgr. Grundhaus has been removed from active priestly ministry. I, your bishop, deny that I "in any way forced, coerced or encouraged Mr. Vasek to not pursue" making allegations against Msgr. Grundhaus.

These processes that have begun, will take time. While we are dealing with this matter, I ask, please (1) be patient and kind and non-judgmental; (2) pray daily for a fair, just and timely resolve to this matter; (3) include the following prayer in the Prayers of General Intercession in every Sunday Mass celebrated in the Diocese of Crookston: *Let us pray for a fair and just resolve to all our law suits and for all persons harmed in any way in matters involving sexual abuse, let us pray to the Lord ...* (4) join me in making each Friday a day of fasting and abstinence from eating meat as a sign that we know our most important sustenance comes from our loving God.

I and the Diocese of Crookston do take seriously all allegations of sexual abuse and we continue to work to provide a safe environment for all. I will do all I can to keep you informed as these matters move forward.

In the Name of the Lord Jesus,

Most Reverend Michael J. Hoepfner  
Bishop of Crookston