



REGARDING DANIEL MATTSON

I was devastated to learn on Monday that an accusation of sexual misconduct with an adolescent boy had been made on social media against my friend, Daniel Mattson. Dan is well-known to the Courage and EnCourage apostolates, and to the wider Catholic community, for speaking and writing on the topic of same sex attractions. While he has never been an employee of Courage International, Dan has shared his personal testimony at conferences organized by Courage; in the documentary film *Desire of the Everlasting Hills*, which Courage International produced; in numerous essays and interviews in various media; and in his memoir, *Why I Don't Call Myself Gay: How I Reclaimed My Sexual Identity and Found Peace*.

The misconduct alleged against Dan Mattson involves communications of an explicit and sexual nature conducted over the telephone and in internet video "chat rooms" more than 14 years ago, years before his involvement with the Courage apostolate. No physical contact with the youth is alleged to have occurred. Neither I nor my predecessor, Father Paul Check, had received any previous accusations of sexual misconduct against Dan.

The same afternoon that I learned of this very disturbing situation, I immediately reported the information I had to the Safe Environment Coordinator of the Diocese of Bridgeport (where the Courage Office is located) and to the Child Protective Services office of the State of Michigan (where Dan resides), as I am required to do by civil law and diocesan policy. The investigation in Michigan is ongoing. Dan Mattson will not be invited to speak or write, or to take any leadership positions, on behalf of Courage International for the foreseeable future. I will reserve further comment on this matter until the civil authorities have made a final determination in the case.

I know how painful this news will be to many people, particularly those who are survivors of abuse in their own lives or in the life of a loved one. I am praying earnestly for a just resolution to this matter, and particularly for the needs of the man who has brought this situation to light. I urge anyone who is aware of an incident of sexual misconduct or any kind of abuse involving a child, youth or other vulnerable person, to contact civil authorities immediately.

Father Philip G. Bochanski
Executive Director

30 January 2019