



Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown

Tony DeGol

Secretary for Communications

925 S. Logan Boulevard

Hollidaysburg, PA 16648

Telephone: (814) 695-5579

Facsimile: (814) 696-9516

Cell: (814) 937-1418

E-mail: tdegol@dioceseaj.org

January 11, 2018

MEDIA ADVISORY

Diocese Creates Office to Oversee Youth Protection Efforts; Welcomes Director

(HOLLIDAYSBURG, PA) – The Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown has announced the creation of the Office of Children and Youth Protection and the hiring of Cindy O’Connor as the Director of that office.

The Office of Children and Youth Protection will be responsible for implementing and overseeing the full Diocesan response to the Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People established by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) and compliance with the law. Through online and in-person educational training programs, presentations, and resource materials, the Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown will be able to assist church personnel in responding to the mandates of the Diocese’s safe environment policies. Additionally, the office will oversee required background screenings and training of church personnel consistent with the Diocesan safe environment policy and assist in the internal investigation process relating to child abuse allegations involving church personnel.

As Director of the Office of Children and Youth Protection, O’Connor will oversee the efforts to protect children and young people in the Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown. Her responsibilities will include creating safe environments, reviewing organizational structures for maximum efficiency, increasing and coordinating communication efforts, implementing best practices for record keeping, and ensuring all compliance measures are being met.

Since 2004, O’Connor has served in a leadership role for several local non-profit agencies. Her extensive experience includes coordinating programming for youth development, engagement, and prevention and volunteer recruitment and management. Her background and community involvement has provided her multiple opportunities to work with diversified and vulnerable populations, understand the importance of building relationships of mutual respect, and, above all, ensure the safety for all.

O’Connor has a degree in Organizational Leadership and Management from Saint Francis University in Loretto. She is a member of Resurrection Parish in Johnstown.