

Child and Youth Protection Clearances

Several months ago, I informed all Visitation Parish volunteers that both the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and the Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown (along with all other dioceses in the United States) required that they obtain, renew, or update their required youth protection. At that time, given the fact that we had experienced both an unexpected turnover in administration of the Child and Youth Protection (hereafter CYP) program in the parish, and the proximity of a major fundraising event, I stated that *“if you are in the process of obtaining or renewing your clearances you may continue to volunteer,”*¹ with the assumed expectation that all complete this requirement in a timely fashion. Upon review of our parish records, there are still a of number of individuals who have either failed to complete the process of obtaining or renewing their clearances or who have not provided the parish with the required paperwork to verify that the process has been completed. **This is a significant problem for our parish.** To be direct, failure to be in compliance with these requirements will result at best result in a fine levied against the parish to the amount of thousands of dollars and at worst an inability to engage in current and future fundraising activity. You can only imagine how the lack of income would devastate our parish community. **Therefore, I am asking that all volunteers who have not completed the requirements for clearances for the CYP program attend to this matter IMMEDIATELY.** If you require assistance, you may contact Catherine Bennett, the parish secretary and administrator of the CYP program for our parish and she will gladly assist you with the process. Unfortunately, if a potential volunteer is not **at least** in the active process of completing his or her clearances, state law and diocesan regulations will prohibit you from volunteering. **I want all volunteers to know how deeply grateful I am for all the time and effort that you put forward to allow our parish to function well. I do depend upon you. Accordingly, I am pleading with you to please help me to assure that we are in compliance with these requirements that assure both your safety and ours. THANK YOU.**

¹ Parish bulletin, insert, Sunday, March 16, 2025