

Father Patrick J. O'Connor Reinstated to Active Ministry

The Reverend Patrick J. O'Connor has been reinstated as an active priest. Father O'Connor has been on administrative leave and not permitted to engage in any form of priestly ministry or wear clerical attire since September 2003 because of a single allegation of sexual misconduct with a minor dating back to the late 1980's.

In accord with diocesan policy, the allegation of sexual misconduct was shared with civil authorities and given to the Diocesan Review Board, the independent body created to examine such matters. Father O'Connor and the individual who presented the allegation to the diocese fully cooperated with investigation conducted by the Diocesan Review Board. The Diocesan Review Board recommended that no instance of sexual abuse of a minor had been established and that there were no factors shown that should prevent the return of Father O'Connor to priestly ministry that includes regular contact with children.

As required by the *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People* and the *Essential Norms* of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, the matter was presented to the Vatican's Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith for review and determination. The Congregation concluded that Father O'Connor is to be allowed to exercise priestly ministry.

Father O'Connor has been appointed Chaplain to the Sisters of the Most Holy Trinity and Chaplain to Our Lady of Lourdes Shine, both located in Euclid.

The Diocese of Cleveland is committed to praying for the individual who presented this allegation and that person's family.

The Diocese of Cleveland continues its commitment to protecting children and helping to heal victims of abuse. We are deeply sorry of the pain suffered by survivors of abuse due to action of some members of the clergy, as nothing is more important than protecting children.

September 22, 2007