



NATIONAL CATHOLIC PARTNERSHIP ON DISABILITY

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Contact: Janice L. Benton  
[jbenton@ncpd.org](mailto:jbenton@ncpd.org)  
301-641-7195

### **Loyola Press 2017 “Opening Doors” Parish Award Winner Announced**

Washington, DC – The National Catholic Partnership on Disability (NCPD), in partnership with Loyola Press, is pleased to announce Saint Rose of Lima Parish, Gaithersburg, Maryland as the recipient of the Loyola Press 2017 “Opening Doors” Parish Award. The parish will receive from Loyola Press \$1000 and a plaque.

Three judges, representing the Archdiocese of Portland in Oregon and Dioceses of Wichita and Des Moines selected Saint Rose of Lima Parish after reviewing numerous applications from across the United States. In their review, the judges looked at ways parishes demonstrate a deep commitment to parishioners with disabilities providing access for full participation in all aspects of parish life: sacramental, catechetical, social, ministerial, and community service.

Judge Kelsey Rea, Director of the Office for People with Disabilities in the Archdiocese of Portland in Oregon, noted that: “The inclusive ministries of Saint Rose of Lima Parish are exemplary on all levels and are a wonderful model for other parishes across the country. It is clear that the full and active participation of everyone in all facets of parish life is very important, desired, and intentional, which leads all parishioners to a deeper life of faith and service as one Body of Christ.”

Upon learning of the award selection, Marsha Rivas, Chair of the NCPD Board of Directors, stated: “We are so pleased with the selection of St. Rose of Lima Parish for the Loyola Press Opening Doors Parish Award. We commend them for the many ways in which they have found to accommodate their parishioners with disabilities in order to enhance their service to and participation within the parish.”

The award will be presented to the pastor and parish community in the New Year by Janice Benton, NCPD Executive Director who notes: “Through this award I am pleased to acknowledge the work and compassion of Fr. Agustin Mateo Ayala and the staff and parishioners of Saint Rose of Lima Parish. One unique way in which the parish supports individuals with intellectual disability is through a group home located on the parish property. While an independent agency operates the group home, the parish reaches out to the residents in friendship and support, inviting them to actively participate in the life of the parish. This model is one that we hope is replicated throughout the country.” She adds, “We thank Loyola Press for their commitment to serving individuals with disabilities through their products and training, and their sponsorship of this award.”

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By granting this award to Saint Rose of Lima Parish, NCPD and Loyola Press hope to show parishes large and small, old and new, that sowing seeds of welcome to persons with disabilities and making accommodations for all to partake at the Lord's Table produces a bountiful harvest that nourishes the entire parish.

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Loyola Press is a Catholic publishing company providing materials and resources for catechists as well as all Catholics to grow in a greater knowledge and understanding of their faith. Loyola Press has been active in facilitating greater inclusion for people with disabilities in the church through their adaptive sacramental preparation kits and the *Adaptive Finding God* curriculum. Their mission, as appears on their website (loyolapress.com) states, "Loyola Press is much more than a publishing company. As a Jesuit Ministry, we strive to help you find God in all things and develop a deep, personal relationship with Jesus Christ. As an apostolate of the USA Midwest Province of the Society of Jesus (commonly known as the Jesuits), Loyola Press embraces the Jesuit passion for helping people to find God in all things. We continue the Jesuit tradition of excellence and service through the content we create and by being people for others."

Since 1982, the National Catholic Partnership on Disability (NCPD) has served the U.S. Catholic Church by providing resources, training, consultation and advocacy for the estimated 14 million U.S. Catholics who live with disability.

Visit [www.ncpd.org](http://www.ncpd.org) for more information on NCPD's programs and services.