



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
December 7, 2023

Contact: Charleen Katra
ckatra@ncpd.org
(771) 203-4477

The National Catholic Partnership on Disability Receives a Lilly Endowment Inc. Grant for Parish Disability Program Formation

The National Catholic Partnership on Disability has received a \$500,000 grant from Lilly Endowment Inc. to help establish the Making Parishes Everyone's Home program. The project is being funded through Lilly Endowment's Thriving Congregations Initiative. The aim of the initiative is to encourage the flourishing of congregations by helping them deepen their relationships with God, enhance their connections with each other, and contribute to the vitality of their communities and the world.

The Making Parishes Everyone's Home program is a three-year plan to train parish leaders to implement best practices that address the needs of persons with disabilities, who comprise a fourth of the U.S. population. This program will reach over two thousand parish leaders in the United States and equip NCPD to educate exponentially more parishes in years to come. Two primary components will be 1) a national conference in 2025 that will address a wide range of disability needs in parishes and dioceses across the United States and 2) a Parish Mentorship Initiative starting in the fall of 2024. This initiative will be an opportunity for teams of pastoral leaders from across different areas of the country to work together over two years to forward disability support in their respective parishes. The program also includes a national survey to gather current disability data and create additional online learning opportunities.

"Parishes are only able to thrive when all members of the Body of Christ are present," said Charleen Katra, Executive Director of NCPD. "Through the Thriving Congregations grant initiative, NCPD can use its unique expertise to help parishes thrive by teaching best practices and models for disability ministry. This program allows parishes to learn not only from NCPD but also from thriving dioceses and parishes across the United States that successfully implement disability practices through the Parish Mentorship Initiative. All Parish Mentorship Initiative participants will be funded to attend the conference in 2025 in-person and participate in ongoing virtual meetings. We are extremely grateful to Lilly Endowment Inc. for helping to provide this opportunity to parishes and dioceses who would otherwise not have the financial ability to receive this comprehensive disability formation."

NCPD is one of 105 organizations that has received grants through a competitive round of the Thriving Congregations Initiative. Reflecting a wide variety of Christian traditions, the organizations represent mainline Protestant, evangelical, Catholic, Orthodox, peace church and Pentecostal faith communities. "Congregations play an essential role in deepening the faith of individuals and contributing to the vitality of communities," said Christopher L. Coble, Lilly Endowment's vice president for religion. "We hope that these programs will nurture the vibrancy and spark the creativity of congregations, helping them imagine new ways to share God's love in their communities and across the globe."

About Lilly Endowment Inc.

Lilly Endowment Inc. is a private foundation created in 1937 by J.K. Lilly Sr. and his sons Eli and J.K. Jr. through gifts of stock in their pharmaceutical business, Eli Lilly and Company. While those gifts remain the financial bedrock of the Endowment, it is a separate entity from the company, with a distinct governing board, staff and location. In keeping with the founders' wishes, the Endowment supports the causes of community development, education and religion and maintains a special commitment to its hometown, Indianapolis, and home state, Indiana. A principal aim of the Endowment's religion grantmaking is to deepen and enrich the lives of Christians in the United States, primarily by seeking out and supporting efforts that enhance the vitality of congregations and strengthen the pastoral and lay leadership of Christian communities. The Endowment also seeks to improve public understanding of diverse religious traditions by supporting fair and accurate portrayals of the role religion plays in the United States and across the globe.