



**NCPD Welcomes the Most Reverend Michael F. Burbidge,  
Diocese of Arlington, VA, as Episcopal Moderator**

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**Washington, D.C.** - The National Catholic Partnership on Disability (NCPD) is pleased to announce that the Most Reverend Michael F. Burbidge, Bishop, Diocese of Arlington, accepted the invitation to serve as incoming Episcopal Moderator for NCPD, effective January 1, 2022. Bishop Burbidge succeeds the Most Reverend Joseph E. Kurtz, D.D., Archdiocese of Louisville, KY, in this vital role.

Bishop Burbidge's ministry is devoted to helping his flock recognize the infinite, God-given worth of every human being, paying special attention to those who are so frequently on the margins such as people with disabilities. He consistently raises awareness of mental health concerns such as suicide, addiction, and depression.

Prior to assuming her position as Executive Director for NCPD, while still serving in the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston, Charleen Katra read an article from the Arlington Catholic Herald. Katra states that "that article spoke volumes about the heart of their Bishop. In it, Bishop Burbidge's commitment to being a Church for all was evident: a Church that puts flesh on the gospel values we profess. In addressing his leadership, in schools and parishes, he stated his expectation that the Diocese of Arlington was to be a place of welcome for persons with disabilities. From that moment, I looked forward to meeting Bishop Burbidge. Now, NCPD Boards and staff are elated and grateful for this opportunity to advance our mission under the leadership of Bishop Burbidge."

Bishop Burbidge was ordained a priest of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia by John Cardinal Krol in 1984. In 1998, he was made Honorary Prelate to His Holiness Pope John Paul II, with the title of Monsignor. Monsignor Burbidge was appointed Rector of St. Charles Borromeo Seminary in 1999. In 2002, he was named Auxiliary Bishop of Philadelphia and Titular Bishop of Cluain Iraird. On June 8, 2006, Pope Benedict XVI named Bishop Burbidge the fifth Bishop of the Catholic Diocese of Raleigh. On October 4, 2016, Bishop Burbidge was announced by Pope Francis as the fourth Bishop of the Catholic Diocese of Arlington.

"Throughout my ministry as a bishop, I have looked for opportunities to improve the way in which people with disabilities are able to participate in our Catholic Faith, particularly in the areas of the Sacraments, Catholic education and youth activities. The opportunity to serve as Episcopal Moderator for NCPD is an honor and joy. I pray that during my time as Episcopal Moderator, we are able further integrate people with disabilities in all aspects of the Church and our broader society," said Bishop Burbidge.

Bishop Burbidge currently serves the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops as a Member of the Pro-Life Committee. He also serves on the boards of The Catholic University of America, Catholic Distance University, and Mount St. Mary's University. Bishop Burbidge is the current Chairman of the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception Finance Committee.

Archbishop Kurtz, former Episcopal Moderator of NCPD, notes "I have the greatest esteem for Bishop Michael Burbidge as he begins service as Episcopal Moderator of NCPD. His courage and compassion as well as his tireless efforts to promote the dignity of every human person makes him ideal to serve."

Archbishop Kurtz served as Episcopal Moderator of The National Catholic Partnership on Disability for five years. He oversaw many NCPD milestones including the *Catechesis and Persons with Disabilities* conference at the Vatican sponsored by the Pontifical Council for the Promotion of the New Evangelization and the revision of the U.S. Bishops *Guidelines for the Celebration of the Sacraments for Persons with Disabilities* in 2018, the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the *Pastoral Statement of U.S. Catholic Bishops on Persons with Disabilities*, NCPD's first academic symposium at The Catholic University of America, and the executive leadership transition in 2019 of 15-year Executive Director Janice Benton to Charleen Katra.

Episcopal Moderators serve in an advisory capacity to certain national organizations. In such instances, the leadership of the organization asks a member of the hierarchy if he is willing to assume this role. There is no direct involvement of USCCB in the selection process.

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*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.*