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## **Disability Ministry Advocate Wins National Award**

(May 21, 2014, St. Louis, MO.)

Dr. Nancy Thompson was awarded the Distinguished Service Award for 2014 by the National Conference for Catechetical Leadership (NCCL). Dr. Thompson, the Director of Programs and Diocesan Relations for the National Catholic Partnership on Disability (NCPD) and a leader in disability ministry received this prestigious award at the NCCL annual convention held May 19 - 22 in St. Louis, Missouri.

The award recognizes and applauds Dr. Thompson's many years in developing catechetical materials to serve the needs of children and adults with disabilities. Through her work, thousands of peoples have encountered the Good News of Jesus.

"Dr. Thompson's energetic leadership at NCPD and her deep faith have benefited the entire church by creating practical, uplifting tools for catechesis and sacramental preparation for children and adults with many types of disabilities," said Susanna Herro, Chairman of the Board of NCPD.

Since joining the staff of NCPD in 2007, Dr. Thompson has infused her work with the professionalism gained by earning her doctorate in applied ministries in 2000 with an emphasis that included ministry with people having disability. Her rich faith life, as a Discalced Carmelite Secular brings an additional dimension to her efforts. An area where she excels is providing countless hours of consultation to diocesan and parish staff. Tom Racunas, Director of the Ministry with Persons with Disabilities for the Diocese of Wichita, Kansas said, "Dr. Thompson's assessment of the status of the office of this ministry along with her loving and patient guidance was invaluable to me as a new director in 2010! Dr. Thompson continues to be a resource and mentor to me."

In an endeavor that will prove extremely valuable to the future church, Dr. Thompson has guided the volunteer professionals and family members of the NCPD's Autism Task Force (ATF). New catechetical and sacramental preparation resources to educate students on the autism spectrum and/or with intellectual and developmental disability will soon be available on the NCPD website, [ncpd.org](http://ncpd.org).

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