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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
November 8, 2013

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## **Two National Catholic Disability Groups Gain by Growing Together: The National Catholic Partnership on Disability partners with the National Apostolate for Inclusion Ministry**

(November 8, 2013, Washington D.C) Two national Catholic disability organizations, the National Catholic Partnership on Disability (NCPD) and the National Apostolate for Inclusion Ministry (NAFIM) recently voted to forge a new bond with a renewed commitment to engaging Catholics with intellectual and developmental disabilities in the full life of the Catholic Church.

NCPD announced at their national conference in Houston, Texas that NAFIM, which has focused on intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) since 1968 will join forces with NCPD and continue its ministry as a Council on IDD within NCPD. NCPD was established more than 30 years ago by the U.S. bishops to encourage dioceses in disability ministry. Recognizing the rich history of NAFIM, Fr. Bob Malloy, who was a founding leader of both organizations, praised the new structure because it will strengthen the ministry outreach.

"Both NCPD and NAFIM provide excellent resources and consultation. The opportunity to share expertise, especially in the area of creating resources for people with autism and other developmental disabilities, was an example of the increased synergy that helped guide both organizations to decide on a closer relationship," said Janice Benton, Executive Director of NCPD.

NCPD, emphasizing the word "partnership" in its name, welcomes NAFIM's leadership into a new partnership where some will serve on NCPD's board of directors and others will lend their expertise to the newly created Council on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities within NCPD.

Susanna Herro, chairman of NCPD's board of directors, and Deacon Larry Sutton, chairman of NAFIM, emphasized in their remarks that by joining forces, the ministry will advance and grow stronger. With NCPD's outreach to USCCB offices and on the diocesan level and NAFIM's emphasis on individual and parish outreach, combining their strengths will mean that Catholics with developmental disabilities will have easier access to excellent resources to become more vibrantly engaged in their faith.

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