

**Rt Rev Brian M Noble
Bishop of Shrewsbury**

To all Priests, Deacons and Religious

Our Ref: AdCI/091221

21 December 2009

***** STRICTLY EMBARGOED *****

UNTIL 11.00 AM ON 22 DECEMBER 2009

**Dear Father / Deacon
Dear Sisters / Brothers**

My dear People

It's now 14 years since my appointment as Bishop of the Diocese and I'm now in my 74th year. That is the background to a decision I took well over a year ago when I approached the Apostolic Nuncio with a view to having a Coadjutor Bishop appointed for the Diocese. I write to you today with the news – which many of you may already have heard – namely that the Holy Father accepted my request, and I'm happy to tell you that he has appointed Monsignor Mark Davies, until now Vicar General of the Diocese of Salford, to be Coadjutor Bishop of Shrewsbury.

I offer him my hearty congratulations and, on your behalf, the congratulations, prayers and best wishes of the Diocese. Reflecting on my own experience, I know he will receive the warmest of welcomes. He comes to us with a wealth of experience – both pastoral and administrative – and I know his parish and Diocese will be very sad to see him leave them.

As Coadjutor Bishop he will, initially, assist me in carrying out Episcopal duties and then, at a later date, automatically become the Diocesan Bishop. It is, then, as our future Bishop that we welcome him. His Ordination will take place at St Anthony's in Wythenshawe on 22 February – the Feast of the Chair of St Peter. Meanwhile I commend him, myself and the Diocese to your prayers.

With every good wish,

Sincerely in Christ

Bishop of Shrewsbury