



THE SEE OF OSWESTRY

The Bishop-Designate

My dear Friends,

A message to the People of the See of Oswestry

My name is Fr Paul Thomas and I am both humbled and exhilarated to have been appointed to serve you as the first Bishop of Oswestry. To *serve* you – I am not your master nor your manager - but your *servant* for Christ's sake: I will seek to fashion my life and my apostolic ministry after the one who came not to be served but to serve, who gave his life as a ransom for many: Our Lord and only Saviour Jesus Christ.

This is a high and a hard calling – I need your prayers. My family needs your prayers. Please, intercede for me as I will pray for you all, unceasingly. From this moment on, our lives are bound together in a special way in the Mystical Body of Christ, in the way of mutual love.

What can you expect from me? Well, my passions are strong and my priorities are clear: to be a **pastor** dedicated to the care of the priests and people of the new See of Oswestry; to be an **evangelist**, vigorously proclaiming with joy and urgency the Gospel of Life in all its catholic and converting fullness; to be a **sanctifier**, serving joyfully all those who look to me as their source of sacramental life in Christ; and to be a **missionary bishop** – a bishop on the move - giving strong forward impulse to a new and dynamic period of evangelization among us. Now is the time to awake out of sleep, now is the time for you to play your part and take your place in the evangelistic renewal of the Church;

A great adventure awaits us. It will be the privilege of my life to be your bishop. May the Lord make me a faithful shepherd of his sheep. And may St Oswald, St Chad, and above all Our Lady of Walsingham, pray for us.

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