The Holy Father, Pope Francis, has appointed Most Reverend Richard G. Henning, S.T.D. as Coadjutor Bishop of Providence with right of succession and has accepted the resignation of Most Reverend Robert C. Evans, J.C.L as Auxiliary Bishop of Providence. The changes were publicized in Washington, D.C. by Archbishop Christophe Pierre, apostolic nuncio to the United States.

"I am most grateful to our Holy Father, Pope Francis, for approving my request to have a coadjutor bishop appointed for the Diocese of Providence… And, on behalf of our entire diocesan family, we are grateful to the Diocese of Rockville Centre for sharing with us such a good, talented and faithful bishop like Bishop Henning," said Bishop Thomas J. Tobin, Bishop of Providence, in a statement at a press conference this morning at the Cathedral of Saints Peter and Paul.

Bishop Henning, 58, is currently serving as auxiliary bishop for the Diocese of Rockville Centre in New York. As coadjutor, he will assist Bishop Thomas J. Tobin much like an auxiliary bishop but will automatically succeed Bishop Tobin as the next Bishop of Providence whenever the latter's resignation is accepted by the Holy Father.

"I am grateful to His Holiness, Pope Francis, for the call to serve as coadjutor bishop in the Diocese of Providence," said Bishop Henning at the press conference, "I give thanks for the opportunity to learn from Bishop Thomas Tobin of Providence, and I give thanks for the priestly and episcopal witness of Bishop Robert Evans who retires today."

Bishop Evans, 75, was appointed auxiliary bishop for the Diocese of Providence by Pope Benedict XVI in 2009. As required by the Code of Canon Law, Bishop Evans offered his resignation to the Holy Father on his 75th birthday in September. Bishop Tobin added, "…for almost 50 years now Bishop Evans has served the Diocese of Providence as a priest and, in the last 13 years, as a bishop. No one knows or loves the Diocese of Providence more than Bishop Evans and we are all deeply grateful for his ministry."