



☐ YMT gap year team members (back row, from left) Sarah Kime, Chloe Gallagher and Hannah Bartlett with EMS students (front row, from left) Leon Bates, Finley McGeorge, William Anderson, Violet Parkinson, Gabby Boagey and Izzy Atkinson.

DITCH your uniform for the day was the message to staff and students of The English Martyrs Catholic School and Sixth Form College, Hartlepool, as they invited everyone to pay £1 to don their own clothes on Friday, May 7, to fundraise for the Youth Ministry Team writes Steve Hope.

The response? They raised more than £1,250! Since 1993 the YMT has helped the young people of our diocese discover their unique value and reach their full potential by communicating the gospel using various creative methods.

Anne Marie McKenna, EMS chaplain, said: "We have a long-standing tradition of working with and supporting our diocesan Youth Ministry Team. We very much look forward to being able to take students back up to the Youth Village soon and to welcoming YMT back into our school community."

Tony Lawless, director of Youth Ministry for the diocese, welcomed the donation, saying: "On behalf of all at YMT, we would like to thank English Martyrs for its fantastic fundraising efforts."

Alongside YMT staff, gap year team members join annually and volunteer to give up a year of their time in service to the Church and young people.

Gap year team member Hannah Bartlett added: "YMT provides so many amazing opportunities to young people throughout the diocese. It is a privilege to work alongside such supportive school communities."

● If you would like to make a donation to the YMT using your mobile phone, please text YOUTH plus the amount you wish to donate – for example YOUTH + £5 – to 70500.

Raising funds in memory of Captain Tom

SCHOOLCHILDREN at Holy Rosary Academy, Billingham, recently honoured the memory of Captain Sir Tom Moore by taking part in the 100 Minutes of Dance challenge, raising more than £1,800 for the Captain Tom Foundation, supporting NHS Charities Together, writes Mrs Lowe.

His family invited people to take part in the Captain Tom 100 to celebrate his achievements, so our children learnt dance routines in their class bubbles. They also talked about the difference he made to others and the lessons to be learnt from his actions.

He always said: "Tomorrow will be a good day". We think that these words are poignant in our challenging times. We hope our school family has made a difference – just like Captain Sir Tom did.

We thank our families for their generosity.



Even hail fails to halt St Joseph's service!

☐ Ground force – from left, Tony Magnay, Norman Gregory, Veronica Gregory and John Stewart.



Major renovation at St Edward's

by Gerry Latimer

THE cherry-picker pictured right was used to access the arched stained glass windows of the apse behind the main altar at St Edward's Church, Whitley Bay, one of the three churches which make up the parish of Our Lady Star of the Sea.

Major external renovation was carried out in May under the supervision of the diocese's property department because the 93-year-old grade II listed building needed extensive care and attention.

Its listing comes thanks to its "striking Romanesque design that blends German and Italian Romanesque elements to successful effect"...its brickwork is, indeed, striking.

Work began on the church in 1926 and it was opened by Bishop Thorman in April 1928. One of its most notewor-



thy internal features is the painting of the Descent from the Cross which was added to the west face of the organ case in 1945 to commemorate parishioners who had died in both world wars.

The church was re-ordered, blessed and re-dedicated by Bishop Hugh

Lindsey in 1988.

The new stained glass windows designed by local artist Paul Gannon and installed between 1988 and 2007 greatly enhance the interior.

The parish looks forward to welcoming full congregations again this month.

by Catherine Tumelty

DESPITE COVID-19 restrictions, Birtley St Joseph's has gone all out to celebrate the Year of St Joseph, their patron saint.

A group of ladies in the parish laminated bookmarks with a picture and prayer to the saint, which they presented to the parish's 320 primary school children and were available for parishioners prior to the live-streamed Mass on the Feast of St Joseph, when Fr Mark Milward led a prayer of re-dedication to St Joseph.

A novena to St Joseph was live-streamed from April 22-30, prior to the Feast of St Joseph the Worker on May 1, when 100 parishioners attended an open-air Mass in the newly-revamped church grounds in front of the grotto.

As they were outside singing was allowed – and not even a hailstorm mid-service could spoil the special occasion.

This spring the church grounds have been levelled, re-turfed and new paths laid. A new garden of remembrance with flower beds and rockery has been cre-

ated, and 12 new memorial benches provided by parishioners in memory of loved ones.

Thanks must be given to the many volunteers who have helped to create this beautiful, peaceful area – especially Veronica and Norman Gregory who tirelessly planted and tended the wonderful flowers and shrubs, and John Stewart and Tony Magnay for the lawn and garden care and maintenance.

Our school children have used the grounds for outdoor services and have suggested future projects on St Joseph the worker, husband, father – 'the best step-dad in the world' – and the lineage linking Joseph to the Tree of Jesse.

Other projects under consideration include a procession, a flower festival, Songs of Praise, celebration of the seven sorrows and seven joys of St Joseph, visits to other churches dedicated to St Joseph, a partnership pilgrimage, a partnership celebration in the church grounds with liturgy and picnic, and a Jesse Tree celebration at the beginning of advent.