



The future's bright for EMS students

by Ian Lamming

YEAR 11 students at The English Martyrs Catholic School and Sixth Form College, part of the Bishop Hogarth Catholic Education Trust, were praised for their resilience by their head teacher and congratulated on their GCSE results after another difficult year.

Head teacher Stephen Hammond said: "We are extremely proud of all of our students. I want to take this opportunity to thank the students and staff for their hard work

throughout their time at our school and wish them good luck in the future.

"As we reflect on their time with us, we are filled with immense pride. The strength, resilience and fortitude demonstrated by these young people is something to behold. It is qualities such as these which will take them far. We have no doubt that our students are moving on to bright futures."

Twins Ellen and Sophie Bradley managed to secure six grade 9s, eight grade 8s and six grade 7s between them.

tween them.

Other top achievers included Leona Slaughter with eight grade 9s and two grade 8s and Freya Howe with seven grade 9s and three grade 8s.

Many of the students will return to the school's Sixth Form in September to start their A-Levels. Among them will be Sam Duong who achieved five grade 9s, two grade 8s, one grade 7 and one grade 6. Sam is looking forward to studying maths and further maths this autumn.



□ Twins Ellen and Sophie Bradley.



□ Sam Duong, above, and a group of happy students at EMS on results day, top.



□ Year 11 students Josie Wallace, Lucy Howe, Sienna Sturdy and Elissa Smith.

2021 is a golden year for St Michael's

INDUSTRIOUS St Michael's Catholic Academy students achieved 72 grade 9s at GCSE across their year group – and were welcomed by overjoyed teachers at the school on results day.

Head teacher Mrs Helen Keough said that the young people who had studied at the Billingham school had been courageous in the way they had met the changes to learning imposed after COVID-19 restrictions were introduced.

"We are all so proud of the wonderful students – the pupils have been so courageous and the results they have received today are a testament to that courage," she said.

"They are a testimony to their hard work and determination in overcoming the challenges of the lockdowns, the isolations and the remote learning.

"They are a generation of students that have shown incredible resilience and strength of character and they thoroughly deserve the success they have achieved."

Mrs Keough said the students had initially been fearful ahead of their



□ Oscar Simpson collects his results.

GCSEs after missing out on exams at the end of Year 10, then their mock exams this year – but staff had worked with them to explain the process and allay any concerns.

The head teacher said the school decided that exams would still take place in the school hall.

She added: "We wanted the students to be prepared for the future when they would have to meet the challenge of exams again.

"We wanted the process to be rigorous but fair."



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HORROR AND HUMOUR IN THE BIBLE

Rev. John Bell To the casual reader, humour in the Bible can be totally lost, mostly because we have a habit, when reading privately, of hearing the dullest lector or priest reading the verses in a monotone. But the humour is there, in the Old Testament and in the New for those who have ears to hear.

This retreat will start on Friday 19 November at 7 pm and end on Sunday 21 November at 2 pm Suggested donation: £175

EMBODIED CONTEMPLATIVE WITH TERRY DOYLE

This retreat will explore how the practice of meditation can be encountered through the language of the body. Using breathing exercises, gentle stretching and slow Tai Chi movements along with seated meditation periods, the weekend will be nourishing for mind, body and spirit.

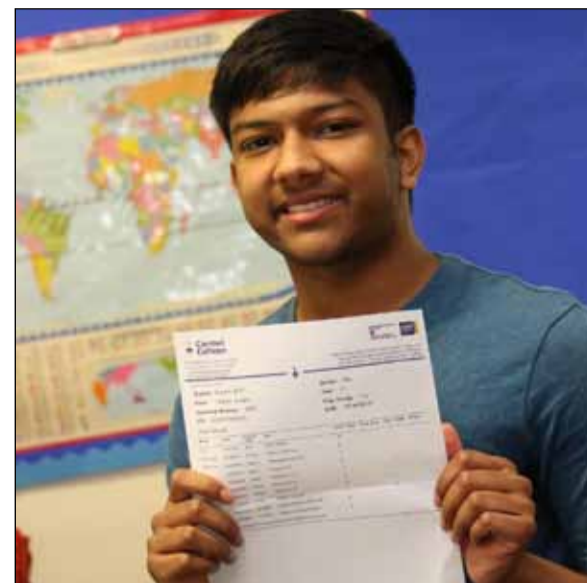
This retreat starts on Friday 22 October at 7:00pm and ends on Sunday 24 October at 2:00pm. This retreat is led by Terry Doyle.

For information and bookings visit

www.minsteracres.org

Minsteracres Retreat Centre, nr. Consett, County Durham, DH8 9RT

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□ From left: Rugby hopeful Joe Bradley, dancer Emily Petty who battled PTSD after being involved in the Manchester Arena bombing, and Joshua Joseph who missed lots of school after snapping both arms in a gym accident, right.

Students turn adversity into triumph on GCSE results day

While thousands of students all around the country had reason to celebrate on both GCSE and A-Level results day this year, Darlington's Carmel College had six GCSE students who were especially pleased. Ian Lamming shares their stories...

EMILY'S A SURVIVOR

Dancer and Manchester Arena bombing survivor Emily Petty was one of a number of students who gave thanks to her school Carmel College, Darlington, for its care and support as she collected her GCSE results last month.

The 16-year-old student will now continue her studies at The Works Academy dance college, Sunderland, and hopes to become a dancer on Broadway.

Emily had just started in Year 7 when she travelled with her mum, Joanne, to the fateful Ariana Grande concert.

"We heard a loud bang and just thought it was a balloon, but then people started to panic and we could see smoke coming from the foyer," Emily said.

She was diagnosed with PTSD and had counselling with the Children and Adolescent Mental Health Service.

"Dance really helps me as it makes me feel like I am in another world and I can forget about it," Emily added. "Carmel has been brilliant too and so supportive throughout."

JOSHUA'S UNLUCKY BREAK

Teenager Joshua Joseph, 16, had more than a stroke of bad luck when he slipped in the gym he attends in Northallerton, snapping

both his arms.

He explained: "It was horrible and very painful. I ended up missing most of Year 10. My arms were broken and dislocated so my mum had to write for me and the teachers had to print out the material I needed. Other students were great too."

His reaction on seeing his results? "I got great grades. I wasn't expecting to do this well."

Joshua will study A-Levels in biology, chemistry and maths then hopes to go to university.

TEN GCSE'S FOR DARCEY

Heptathlete Darcey Garbutt, 16, from Darlington, is on a fast track to the next step of her life after earning ten GCSEs.

Darcey, who was placed fifth in the England 100m finals and seventh in the English Schools championships will now study A-Levels in English, RE and history, then hopes to go on to York, Durham or Loughborough university.

MAJED'S ONE STEP CLOSER TO BEING A DOCTOR

When refugee Majed Zaiter, 16, fled war-torn Syria aged six he couldn't speak English. After arriving in Darlington he picked up the language in his first year and secured a successful brace of GCSE results.

Majed, who fled his Damascus

home with his family because of the al-Assad regime, has flourished at Carmel.

"When the war started it was too dangerous to stay with bombs going off everywhere and the fear of arrest," he said. "We managed to get a bus to Lebanon then the UN helped us come to Darlington."

Preparing to start the next stage of his education by taking A-Levels in biology, chemistry and physics, Majed plans to study medicine with a view to being a doctor.

"I love England and would be happy to work here as a doctor but I would return to my home if al-Assad was to leave," he said.

JOE MAKES THE MOST OF HIS OPPORTUNITIES

A scholarship with rugby league side Newcastle Thunder led to a lightning move for a budding rugby player.

Joe Bradley switched from his home town of Widnes in Cheshire to Carmel College, Darlington, in the middle of his GCSE years.

The full back, who is also part of the Newcastle Falcons development player programme, headed to the North East because he believed there were greater opportunities in the region.

He starts his scholarship with Newcastle Thunder this month and will study an extended diploma in

sporting excellence at TyneMet College, which has close links with Northumbria University, where he hopes to read a degree.

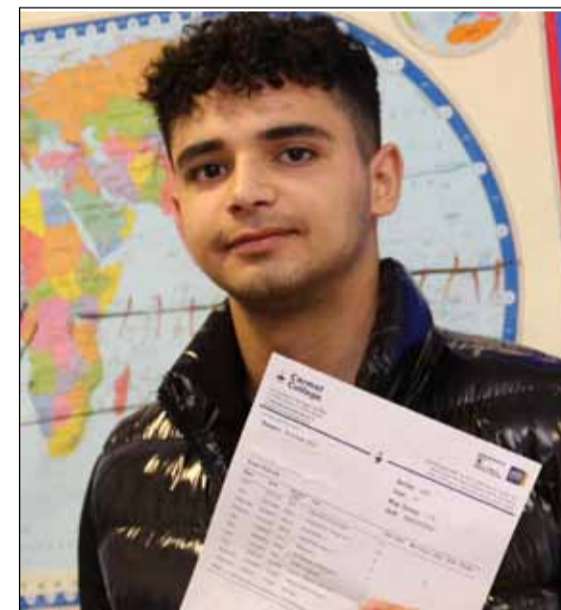
Joe said: "We were looking for an outstanding school and found Carmel. The school has been brilliant, really welcoming and supportive with my rugby."

FROM INDIA TO DARLINGTON FOR AISWARYA

Student Aiswarya Jose, 16, came to Darlington from India when her parents sought refuge in the North East, and was overjoyed at being embraced by Carmel's school community – and passing her exams.

Collecting her results with her mum, Lovely, she said: "My dad became ill and we were homeless and we had to live in a convent for three years. Deportation was a worry so I am very pleased to pass my GCSEs."

Mike Shorten, principal at Carmel College, part of the Bishop Hogarth Catholic Education Trust, said: "We are all so proud of the students. It is always a privilege to be able to celebrate their success with their families. It has been a tough year and the students and staff have worked so hard, showed resilience. They can now rest knowing it has all been worthwhile."



□ Majed Zaiter who found himself in Darlington after escaping war-torn country Syria.



□ Aiswarya Jose and her proud mother Lovely, left, and heptathlete Darcey Garbutt, right.



Minsteracres Themed Retreat 2021

THE GOD WHO SPEAKS

Delivered by the Minsteracres team

'The Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales decided that 2020 should be a year of focus on the Bible and the theme 'The God Who Speaks.' We will be developing and exploring new ways of responding to the God who speaks to us through the Scriptures. We will explore new ways of celebrating, living and shar-ing God's word in our own lives, within our parishes and partnerships, and with all whom we encounter.

We invite you to join us for a weekend of prayer, reflection and fellowship.

For individuals or groups from parishes and partnerships.
Suggested donation: £150

This retreat will start on Friday 10 September at 7pm and ends on Sunday 12 September at 2pm.

For information and bookings visit www.minsteracres.org.uk
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