



Thank you, Jack – the man behind the matches

AFTER this year's Bishop's Cup deciding match in July, representatives from the four schools presented cup secretary and former St Joseph's, Sunderland, head teacher Jack Foster with a special pennant in recognition of his services to Hexham and Newcastle diocese over the last 30 years, writes St Matthew's football coach Madeleine Wiblin.

Jack told Northern Cross: "I was shocked as I wasn't expecting anything. I am thrilled to bits." Jack is pictured here with Madeleine, who made the wonderful surprise presentation pitch side at St Stephen's school, Longbenton.

● Turn to pages 8-9 to read more about the 2024 tournaments, plus more on their history, courtesy of Jack.

Called to transform: Fr Joseph, Hexham and Newcastle's new priest

IN AN uplifting ceremony witnessed by fellow clergy, family and friends, Joseph O'Brien was ordained a priest by Bishop Stephen Wright in St Mary's Cathedral, Newcastle, on July 20.

Fr Joseph – who completed his preparation at the Venerable English College, Rome – grew up in Whitley Bay with mother Maria, father Michael and brother Liam, and attended St Thomas More Academy, North Shields.

Visitors from Rome, including Venerable English College rector Fr Stephen Wang and vice rector Fr Christopher Warren, joined others from across England, Scotland, Finland and the US as Joseph took the final step in his path to priesthood.

In his homily, Bishop Stephen said: "At this Mass we witness the audacity of God as you, Joseph, are ordained a priest. Not simply an office holder but a sacrament, called to transform people's lives in forgiveness and absolution; called to transform earthly elements into heavenly realities in the eucharist."

"All sacraments change people and reality all the time. Today, Joseph, the Lord changes you to be His priest. Our first reading describes the prophet Isaiah's mission. At His home town synagogue in Nazareth Jesus chooses this text as an initial mission statement, if you will."

"My brother Joseph, the Lord now anoints you with the oil of chrism to bring the good news to the poor, to bind up the broken hearted, to proclaim liberty to captives, to proclaim a year of favour for the Lord and to comfort those who mourn, so that ashes become a garland, the mourning robes become the oil of gladness, despondency becomes praise."

"Many, many joys await you in your ministry. You will be the Lord's anointed to make these graces and joys present."

"Joseph, continue to pray for the people, the many, many unknown people you will minister with and to. The Lord awaits you."

Fr Joseph's mother Maria said: "The ordination ceremony was very uplifting – we all thoroughly enjoyed it. There were a lot of people from all walks of life who said they found it very moving. Hopefully their faith has been renewed."

The next day Fr Joseph returned to his family's parish of Our Lady Star of the Sea when he celebrated his first Mass at St Edward's Church, Whitley Bay.

● Turn to page 3 to read more.



□ Newly-ordained Fr Joseph with Bishop Stephen.



Cardinal Hume School is simply OUTSTANDING! says Ofsted

CARDINAL Hume Catholic School in Wrekenton, Gateshead, is celebrating an exceptional achievement following its recent Ofsted inspection and 'Outstanding' rating in all areas, writes David Bontle.

Head teacher Brendan Robson, pictured left with students and Bishop Wilkinson Catholic Education Trust CEO Nick Hurn, said: "I am delighted that the inspection team was able to capture the exemplary work that goes on here day in, day out... Excellent schools are founded on partnership and I am pleased that the contributions of our students, staff and families have been recognised. They are a credit to the school and our wider community."

Football double makes history

FOR the first time since the tournaments began, one primary school has won both the Bishop's and Northern Cross cups – St Matthew's from Jarrow.

Congratulations to their players and coaches!