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See it, say it, act on it – Pope John Paul II awardees from Cardinal Hume School, Gateshead. Turn to page 3 to read the full story.



All were welcomed on a 'night of light'

A LIGHT display projected on the wall outside the Newcastle church said: "Welcome. We've got a place for you", writes Alison Rebello. It was the evening before the Carabao Cup final at Wembley, and the first mission outreach project of its kind at St Teresa's Church, Heaton. Aptly titled A night of light, passers-by were invited to come inside from 7.30pm-10.30pm and light a candle, say a prayer or sit in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament.

Parish council member Gemma Coward went out on Heaton Road with a lit candle, along with The Sisters of Missionaries of Charity, who went out in groups of two.

At the end of the night, the organisers counted a breathtaking 92 candles: one lit by a couple who had experienced a miscarriage; another by a young person who had left the Church a couple of years ago but came in and prayed, went to confession and felt glad to be back in church, and one by a NUFC fan.

Many people felt at peace thanks to the beautiful hymns and chants being played in the background.

Radiant pictures of the candlelit church taken that night also tell an inspiring tale – one showed a heart-shaped light forming behind the tabernacle.

Gemma Coward said: "The focus was on evangelising the local community and inviting people in to meet the Blessed Sacrament for the first time. It was breathtaking to see."

Parish priest Fr Jonathon Bowes said: "It was an incredible experience to host such an evening... I have had the opportunity to engage in some very deep faith conversations and get to know how God is working in people's lives. Inspired by this I hope to repeat this event during summer."

In neighbouring church St Aidan's, Benton, the newsletter contained a surprise entry on St Luigi Scorsoppi – patron saint of footballers – asking parishioners to seek his intercession. Lo and behold the next day a trophy came home after a wait of 70 years!

New hymn is a hit at St Patrick's



Smiles from the clergy at the end of Mass: Fr David Russell, Fr Mark Millward, Deacon Jeff Parkes, Canon John Cooper, Deacon Mick Wood, Fr Nick Jennings, MC Michael Toole and Fr Frank McCullagh.

STOCKTON's 'glorious' St Patrick has had a new hit hymn written and sung for him! It enjoyed its premier performance at the anniversary Mass to celebrate the half-century since the Fairfield church opened in 1975, writes John Bailey.

The Mass was concelebrated on St Patrick's Day, March 17, with former parish priests Fr Frank McCullagh, Fr David Russell and Fr Nick Jennings returning to join parish priest Canon John Cooper, who presided, and new Vicar General (south) Fr Mark Millward.

The new hymn started life as a poem by parishioner Mrs Deborah Edwards – inspiration came to her in a flash in the middle of the night.

"Yes, I did get up straight away and write it all out," Deb told Northern Cross.

Musician Des Murray stepped in, the pair became co-authors and All Our Days made its debut as the second communion hymn at the 7 o'clock Thanksgiving Mass.

It got an immediate welcome from the congregation, who joined in with organist Anne-Marie Wilson's first public rendition of it. She was accompanied by her daughter Victoria on flute and Des Murray on guitar. A 14-strong committee had organised the anniversary festivities.

Canon John welcomed brother priests and permanent deacons the Rev Michael Wood and the Rev Jeff Parkes along with MC Michael Toole, who doubled as crossbearer to lead the clergy procession to and from the altar.

Parishioner Terry Egerton read from the Book of Jeremiah and led Psalm 117 on a

St Patrick's theme – Go into all the world and proclaim the good news.

Deacon Jeff Parke carried the missal high above his head to the ambo to read St Luke's gospel story about the instructions for the 72 disciples who went forth to spread the word, and Deacon Mick Wood read the bidding prayers on seven themes, the first thanking God for the 'wonderful spirit' of St Patrick's.

Canon Cooper captured the history and colour of the parish in his homily. He'd consulted the booklet produced for the church opening and concluded that it must have been "a very Irish occasion".

Faith of our Fathers and Hail Glorious St Patrick were the concluding hymns.

First parish priest Fr Michael Hussey was an Irishman, said the canon, and so were seven of the priests supporting him – Frs Tom Cass, Clem Haverly, George and Ben Carey, Hugh McCann, Tommy Dollard and Canon O'Callaghan: "Who, while born in the North East, was as Irish as the rest of them!" he said.

Canon John let go a little thought of his own: "As this Celtic choir belted out Hail Glorious St Patrick I can see now the smile on Bishop Hugh Lindsay's face."

The parish was founded eight years before the church was built.

Mass was celebrated in the school and, as parishioners, the Men's Club and the Catholic Women's League rallied in support, plans were formed to build a church.

"I know some of you were here 50 years ago when Bishop Lindsay opened this church dedicated to St Patrick on the feast

of St Patrick," said the canon. "A sense of community developed with many deep friendships among parishioners to this day."

"This evening we thank God for the many graces and blessings he has given to this parish over the years. We remember those who have died, and we thank them for their contribution to parish life."

The canon asked the church – well filled with 140-plus parishioners – to remember Fr Hussey in their prayers. "He always seemed to be smiling," he said.

He especially thanked Fr Frank, Fr David and Fr Nick, all of whom helped parishioners to grow spiritually and fulfil work for parish groups like the SVP and the Society for the Protection of the Unborn Child.

Canon John quoted a lengthy passage from historian Simon Shama's History of Britain, embracing Patrick.

The lesson we learn from St Patrick is a lesson for all time: We can't achieve things on our own. We need the help and the power of God.

The parish party in the hall was a splendid social, a buffet table the width of the hall loaded with food, a kitchen team working full throttle to pour tea and coffee and wash up, displays of photographs recalling half a century of parish events loaned by members, and a cake cutting ceremony by Canon John and 92-year-old parishioner Alfred McAndrew.

Topping the cake – of course – was a statue of St Patrick.

Turn to page 4 to see more photos.