



# POPE BENEDICT XVI

## Archbishop Smith's Hyde Park Welcome

Hyde Park, Saturday, 18 September 2010

**Most Holy Father,**

**We welcome you this evening: from the heart of London, from the hearts of all of us here in Hyde Park, and from the hearts of all those united with us in prayer on television, radio and the internet.**

This afternoon, Holy Father, as we were preparing for your arrival, we reflected prayerfully on how the Catholic Church plays its part in harnessing the spirit of humble and loving service through the work of its agencies and charities at home and abroad. As a Catholic community we know that authentic Christian life must be grounded in a daily spiritual encounter with the living God, and in fulfilling the command of Jesus Christ, Love one another as I have loved you.

We have come from all over Britain to share this historic moment with you, and to celebrate and rejoice in the truth that God loves every human being unconditionally, irrespective of race, colour or creed. With you this evening we witness to the joy of being a follower of Jesus Christ, the light of the world, who stands at the door of every heart patiently waiting to be let in.

Holy Father, where we stand has a profound historical significance. Over 400 years ago Catholic and Anglican martyrs witnessed to their faith in Jesus Christ when they were put to death at Tyburn, a short distance from here. We give thanks to God that in more recent times, the Christian Churches in our land work together in the light of the Gospel for the common good of all in this country.

There is so much that unites us and we are committed to continuing the search for that visible unity for which Christ prayed.

During our liturgy this evening, on the eve of the beatification of Cardinal John Henry Newman, we will spend time in Christ's presence, meditating on the scriptures and on Cardinal Newman's life and words. We pray that our hearts will be ever more open to the presence and power of the Holy Spirit so that our lives may radiate the Light of Christ to those around us.

Finally, Holy Father, we assure you of our love, our support and our prayers; for your ministry as Chief Shepherd of the Church; for coming to confirm us in the faith; and especially for teaching us by your own example what it means to be steadfast in our fidelity to the person and teaching of Jesus Christ. Thank you, Holy Father, for being with us this evening and for leading us now in this Vigil of Prayer.