

## **The Papal Visit- Hyde Park 2010**

The day started in St Kentigerns car park at 1:30am were we boarded the coach. 6hrs later we had arrived in London. The group we were in was the procession group. We waited outside Westminster with the general public for the arrival of the Pope. Many people stopped to speak to us and wish us well for the day ahead. We received a lot of media attention including being interviewed by Sky news.

We then began our journey to Hyde Park we arrived there at around 2 o'clock. We were surrounded by other groups of young people preparing for the procession. The procession included banners and flags. We had to walk past the crowd onto the stage where over 30 bishops were waiting to shake our hands. Each one of them had a question or kind word to say to each and every person in the procession.

We were then taken to exclusive seating, we were ten rows from the front, with hundreds of people behind us! While waiting for the Pope to arrive we heard many stories about how having faith has helped certain people through tragedies in their lives. The Pope arrived at 8 o'clock everyone was on their feet cheering and hoping to catch a glimpse of him Then we were seated and addressed by the Pope. We left Hyde Park at around 9 o'clock with crowds of people around us beginning their journey home.

The papal visit helped us to experience the church in a new way. As there was hundreds of people praying together in the presence of the Pope it enabled you to feel closer to God and strengthened your faith. It was amazing to see how many young people share the same faith and it also made us realise how important having a strong faith is. Faith makes you able to deal with the stresses of every day. The visit made you feel part of something special, it made us realise that you are not alone and how wide the catholic community actually is.

The Pope spoke specifically to the youth. He said, "Only Jesus knows the definite service he has in mind for you. Be open to his voice resounding in the depths of your heart : even now he is speaking to your heart". This made us realise how honest you are with our Lord. During mass we speak intimately with the Lord. Mass brings us closer to God. We confess our sins to him he knows our deepest thoughts and he guides us on the right path towards the mission he has for each one of us.

The visit made us realise that all of us have the potential to make a change for the better through our faith. The Pope said, " Our light must shine in the sight of all, so that seeing our good works, they may give praise to our heavenly father". This for us meant that putting faith into practice enables others to see you through their hearts and also turn to God for forgiveness. We think that Jesus wanted us to understand that we are to love like he loves through sacrificial acts.

Ryan & Stephanie Wynne.