



10
years

SiLENT
FROM
MILLION MINUTES

**PRIMARY SCHOOL
RESOURCE PACK**



WHAT IS SILENT BY MILLION MINUTES ALL ABOUT?

Million Minutes is a simple idea! If 695 people stay silent for the equivalent of 24 hours, we'd have a million minutes of silence. If each person gets sponsored a pound a minute, we'd have a million pounds to help support young people through our grants scheme, our awards, our networks and more. We think Lent is a great time for schools to come together in action and join our silence.

Rather than give up chocolate or sweets, we're asking participants to give up noise and to stay silent in solidarity with young people, who are facing unprecedented challenges. Young people are losing out on education and opportunities during the COVID-19 pandemic. They are having their hopes for the future crushed. Yet as society plans beyond the pandemic, adults at the helm are going back to their old ways of working and not taking the time to listen to young people.

Young people's voices are needed now

more than ever. The world needs to hear young people's vision for the future. And they deserve support to make their vision a reality.

This Lent we are creating a million minutes of collective silence:

- creating a deafening 'noise' as an act of solidarity with young people, and raising awareness of the ways in which they are silenced
 - reflecting on and praying for young people
 - raising money to help young people be the change they want to see in our world
- Will you help raise a million minutes? Why not prioritise silence, reflection, and prayer with your young people this Lent? For instance, you can share the full day's silence with an entire class or school and spread the 24 hours of silence over all of Lent. Just half an hour a day during Lent (and an hour on Good Friday and Holy Saturday) adds up to a whole day.

YOUR SILENCE MAKES A DIFFERENCE

Each year, our sponsored silence raises money for young people so they can be the change they want to see in the world. It's needed now more than ever.

Your silence in 2021 will support young people like 13-year-old Carl, from the Archdiocese of Southwark. Like many, Carl spent lockdown without access to a garden or a balcony. For Carl, the only chance to spend time outside was with his school's community garden project. With the help of Million Minutes' grants scheme, what was once an ignored patch

of the playground is now a haven for plants and wildlife. And this was made possible because of the care and motivation that Carl and his friends put into the project. For Carl, the club is a safe space, giving him and his peers access to green space they would not otherwise enjoy.

A teacher who oversees the group said "...these aren't the kids who will sign themselves up for football or sports club afterschool. The club is a space where they are respected and can be themselves. The transformation of these kids when they first arrived to now has been massive, and the [Million Minutes' supported] community gardening club has been instrumental in that."

In the new year, the club will be supported by Million Minutes with new resources to continue their amazing efforts.

We believe Million Minutes can support young people to be the change they want to see in the world, and with your generous support this Lent, Million Minutes will be able to continue our grant-giving, awards and networks, which all support young people.



THE IMPORTANCE OF SILENCE

We think Lent 2021 is a great time to come together in action and do something different: participate in silence. Silence is an important part of our Christian tradition. It allows us time and space to pray, reflect and listen. When we listen rather than speak, we allow for space for the voices we don't usually hear.

Our champion Fr Christopher Jamison OSB reminds us of this. He says: "Staying silent may seem a strange way of giving voice to an opinion but we are drawing attention to the fact that there are many young people who are effectively voiceless. Some have been abandoned, others overlooked, and they find themselves without any sense of purpose in life. Million Minutes wants to help them in two ways. First, we will draw attention to them by being a powerful expression of their

voicelessness. By remaining silent together, we find that we are giving voice to young people's silence. Secondly, we will raise money for initiatives and projects that help young people to find a voice."

Explore this pack to see how easily you can implement silence into your schools this Lent. You will find icebreaker games, activities, videos and more.

**"You
have created
us for yourself, Lord,
and our hearts are
restless until they find
their rest in you"**
Pope Francis,
Christus Vivit
#138



EXPLORING SILENCE

Use these icebreaker games with your class or group to introduce the idea of silence, without explicitly saying what the theme is. (Games suitable for Year 6s.)

What a laugh!

Ask for a volunteer - someone who thinks that they will be able to keep a straight face. Ask other volunteers to see if they can make them laugh. How easy is it to keep the silence and not break into a smile? You could keep a league table and time individual students.

Count to 30

This activity requires good listening skills. Everyone sits on a chair in silence. Invite the group to count to 30 - this happens by one person at a time counting in sequence. If two or more people attempt to count at the same time, you must start again at 1. Students can only count one number at a time and must take turns (so the same student cannot count from 1-30 on their own), and you can't simply go around in a circle. Do you get to 30? How long does it take?

Charades

The classic silent game! Divide everyone into two teams. The players from the opposing teams pick the ideas that the other team will have to act out. The ideas can be anything from movies to books to songs to bands. Use your imagination. If you have decided to write them out, place them in a container and pass it to the opposing team. One person must stand up in front of the group and act out the idea they have in their hand. Remember: All acting has to be done in complete silence.

Birthday line

Ask students to line up in birthday order - but they must form the line without communicating verbally. How easy is it to do this silently? Test their success by asking students to reveal their birthdates once the line is complete.

siLENT Activities

THE BALLOON GAME

The pandemic has had a significant impact on young people and their mental health. A way of dealing with the challenges that COVID-19 has impacted on our young people is through making them more aware of their breath and slowing down. When we are anxious, our body goes into a fight or flight mode. We all store stress differently, but it is important to support young people during this time and give them strategies to help them recognise their feelings and help them feel calmer. This exercise serves a dual function, as meditation is an important part of the Christian tradition.

Guide your young people through the simple instructions below. We suggest using a quiet music track in the background to help your young people begin to get focused.

1. Relax your body and begin to take deep inhales and slow exhales through the nose.
2. Start to take a slow, deep breath to fill your belly up with air, as if you're trying to blow up a big balloon. Expand your belly as much as you can.
3. Slowly let the air out of the balloon (through the nose) as you release the breath from the belly.
4. Encourage the young people to feel their entire body relax each time they exhale; each time air is slowly being released from the balloon. You can even make a "hissing" noise to encourage them to slow down the exhale even more, "Like letting air out of the balloon."

Continue for several minutes.

If the children you are teaching are younger, you can add a little more detail and fun to the exercise to keep them engaged. Young children, especially under the age of 6, love the extra movement when they are learning to bring awareness to their breath. Encourage them to stand up in a relaxed way and follow these steps:

1. Ask them to think of their favourite colour and picture a giant balloon of that colour in their mind.
2. Then have them take a slow, deep inhale through the nose, filling up their tummies with air as if trying to blow up a giant [their favourite colour] balloon. As an option, you can also have them stretch their arms open and overhead to represent expansion and the big balloon.
3. When their balloon is totally full, have them hold their breath at the top, and then you can "pop the balloon" for them (gesture finger to belly) and they can fall down as they exhale.

This technique is from: <https://chopra.com/articles/3-kid-friendly-meditations-your-children-will-love>



STATIONS OF THE CROSS

- Get yourselves into groups of 4/5.
- Each group will be given a card which will have one Station of the Cross on it, and a small explanation about what is happening at this station.
- As a group you need to put together a siLENT performance of this Station of the Cross. This could be a mime (silent drama) or a freeze frame.
- You have 10 minutes to put it together before we perform them for the class.

OTHER SILENCE RESOURCES TO USE

- Silence is Your Friend - Isolation Poem: www.alonetogether.org.uk/post/the-silence-is-your-friend
- How to Find Silence (10:47 minutes) Father Christopher Jamison OSB offers advice on how to find a time of deeper silence: www.alonetogether.org.uk/post/how-to-find-silence
- Finding silence in times of social distancing: millionminutes.org/silence/socialdistancing



TAKING PART

THE 1 MINUTER

One way for primary students to get involved is by completing 24 hours of silence as a whole class throughout Lent. If each member of the class stays still, silent, and attentive for 1 minute every day from Ash Wednesday (in school and at home) then by Easter Sunday you will have completed about 24 hours of silence together! One minute can easily be built into the school day, perhaps at a set time (such as before lunch) or as part of an experience of meditative prayer to begin each day. We've even got a tick chart (at the end of this resource) and sponsorship forms available so everyone can keep up with their silence. If your pupils do want to do more, challenge them to think about how much time they watch TV or browse the internet, and if they would go with less of that in their day to allow more space for quiet thought and reflection.

AS A SCHOOL

Why not build silence into the whole of Lent by having sponsored silent lunches, silent meditations, or technology-free lessons? Other ideas include replacing all, or part, of regular prayer times with silence Use our prayer and meditation resource to assist you (millionminutes.org/resources-for-silent).

SPONSOR A TEACHER

Another way to get involved is to have one or more staff take on the silence on behalf of the whole school - maybe even the Headteacher! Whether it's a large or small group of staff taking on the silence, you can get the whole community involved! You could even invite parents to participate. Giving regular updates in assemblies will help everyone to be included.

Why do not try siLENT in solidarity between young people and parents, guardians, or grandparents? See our intergenerational resources to find out more (millionminutes.org/resources-for-silent).

GETTING STARTED

Now you have a few ideas as to how you can implement siLENT in your school, the next step is to SIGN UP. Just follow these simple steps:



1. Sign up online and pledge your support to young people today: millionminutes.org/silent
2. Setup your online fundraising page. Follow the link at sign up millionminutes.org/silent
3. You can also download the siLENT sponsor forms from the website

4. Spread the word. Shout it out! Once you've registered, you can start asking everyone you know to help you raise money. Make sure all the staff and students know what's happening, as well as their families! Encourage the adults taking part to use Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn, or email (before they give it up!) to ask for support. Share your fundraising page. Tag us and use the hashtag #siLENT so we can see your posts!

Contact us via email info@millionminutes.org to let us know what you're doing, so that we can shout about your efforts!

We can't wait to see what your school gets up to over the 40 days of Lent, we will be following along and sharing your story along the way.

Our Primary school resources are designed to support you over Lent. Check out what other resources are available to you at: millionminutes.org/silent



 [millionminutes](https://www.facebook.com/millionminutes)

 [@Million_Minutes](https://twitter.com/Million_Minutes)

 [@millionminutes11](https://www.instagram.com/millionminutes11)

 [millionminutes](https://www.linkedin.com/company/millionminutes)

Contact:
INFO@MILLIONMINUTES.ORG
55 Westminster Bridge Road
London
SE1 7JB