



**MILLION MINUTES**

# TOWARDS HOPE

**A Journey of Inclusion,  
Accompaniment and Renewal**

## STRATEGY 2023-25

## Foreword

We are excited to share this strategy which places accompaniment at the heart of our work. As the Catholic community in England and Wales continues on its synodal journey, we as the Church have been called again to have a deeper understanding of humanity and all creation through a process of listening. At Million Minutes we will use the next three years to really focus on listening to and amplifying the voices of young people and placing them at the forefront of change in our communities.

We believe that young people have the capability to be responsive agents of change amongst the crises we face today: cost of living, mental health and wellbeing, climate change and anxiety, culture wars, global conflict and more. From the gospels and the history of our Church we know that we can find hope in times of crises. We draw examples from the lives of the saints, many of whom stood witness to their faith in difficult times, and the religious orders who, throughout history, grew and thrived in times of conflict, political turmoil, instability and uncertainty. Young people today are no strangers to these crises, they already know the changes they want to see and the future that they hope for. That hope is our starting point.

Building on the successes of our parish youth outreach and engagement work, research-led youth ministry resources, our Celebrating Young People awards scheme and small grants programme we will grow our reach by working collaboratively with structures within and beyond the Church. Through this we aim to ensure that we represent the voice of real diversity of young people in our communities. Our engagement work has enabled us to work in a bespoke way with parish youth workers and diocesan youth teams. We will continue to build on this and grow our engagement network so that lessons learned may be shared across parish communities.

Our youth-centred advocacy work will strive to bring together young people, partner organisations and decision-makers in meaningful encounters. By working in partnership with those who directly work with young people, we will provide training, resources and opportunities that meet community needs.

We cannot deliver any of this on our own and we are very grateful to all our supporters who have been with us on the journey over the last 11 years, through participating in our activities, working with us, funding us and through prayer. We know there is more to do as we journey towards the Jubilee year 2025 as 'Pilgrims of Hope'. We are excited to work with you and invite you to walk alongside us to accompany young people as growing leaders of change.

**Anita Motha, CEO Million Minutes**





**Million Minutes is a Catholic youth agency.  
We promote a broad vision of youth ministry  
where the voices of young people are centred.**

## **OUR VISION**

A world where young people take transformative social action,  
rooted in the principles of Catholic Social Teaching

## **OUR MISSION**

To equip the Catholic Church to more effectively  
accompany all young people

## **OUR MODEL**

We work with young people, youth leaders, youth ministers, parishes, schools and the wider Church to listen to, understand and respond to the evolving needs of young people.

Catholic Social Teaching underpins our work: for us, faith and social action are intertwined. We strive to put the voices of young people at the heart of all our work. We see this as fundamental for the Church to have a broad vision of youth ministry.

Across our work, we utilise and promote accompaniment.

This means journeying alongside people with a 'Spirit-led' openness and willingness to listen. An accompaniment approach meets people where they are at, whatever situation or state they find themselves in, and walks with them to wherever their path may take.

Accompaniment is relational in nature and takes inspiration from how Jesus developed relationships with people, particularly those who were marginalised. He not only taught and prayed with them: He lived among them and experienced their lives as His own.

Accompaniment empowers young people to know they are valued and integral members of their community and the Church. With this knowledge, young people can take transformative social action and realise their potential.



**Our four strategic aims are:**

**LISTEN**

to the voices of  
young people

**RESPOND**

to the needs of  
young people

**EMPOWER**

young people

**CELEBRATE**

the actions and achievements  
of young people



## **STRATEGIC AIM ONE:** **LISTEN** **to the voices of young people**

**Listening is the starting point of accompaniment.  
We recognise the need to actively reach out to young people,  
especially those on the peripheries, and create inclusive spaces  
for their voices to be heard.**

We will do this by:

- Collaborating with gatekeepers (Catholic youth ministry networks, parish communities, schools, Higher Education and Further Education institutions) to create inclusive spaces for young people to be heard.
- Raising awareness and amplifying voices of young people through our digital platforms and networks.
- Creating spaces for young people on the 'peripheries' to express their needs and priorities, with a focus on young women and young LGBT+ people.

## **STRATEGIC AIM TWO:** **RESPOND** **to the needs of young people**

**The second step in our understanding of accompaniment  
is responding to what we've heard.**

**We participate in advocacy, influencing and disseminating best practice  
so the Church can better respond to the needs and priorities of young people.**

We will do this by:

- Championing best practice in accompaniment by participating in, conducting and disseminating action-research.
- Promoting models of youth-centred advocacy by working in partnership with youth ministry and social justice organisations.
- Influencing and supporting local, national and global (Church) networks to respond to the needs and priorities of young people.





## **STRATEGIC AIM THREE:** **EMPOWER** **young people**

**Alongside our own response,  
we empower young people themselves.**

**We identify the barriers that prevent this and support  
young people and communities to overcome them.**


We will do this by:

- Designing and delivering community-based programmes (such as our flagship Beacon Parish Scheme) which empower young people to take transformative social action.
- Delivering workshops, assemblies, presentations, training and webinars on the principles of Catholic Social Teaching and 'Accompaniment'.
- Financially resourcing youth-led social action projects through our small grants scheme.
- Creating high quality, youth-centred learning resources.

## **STRATEGIC AIM FOUR:** **CELEBRATE** **the actions and achievements of young people taking transformative social action**

**To encourage people on their journey, and to inspire others, we affirm young  
people and share good news of their actions.**

We will do this by:

- Organising our Celebrating Young People Awards
  - Organising an annual formation event for young leaders/volunteers
  - Finding and sharing inspiring examples of young people and gatekeepers through our communication channels.
- 

# STRATEGIC AIM FIVE: Good governance and management

**We have identified three particular areas of focus we will invest in to improve governance over the next three years.**

We will do this by:

- Developing plans and mechanisms to improve financial and environmental sustainability
- Accountability and transparency: regularly reporting on operational activities to all stakeholders and proactively incorporate their feedback and challenges.
- Learning and development: committing to promoting organisational learning and the development of our staff and volunteers,

## OUR VALUES

**Our values are rooted in the principles of Catholic Social Teaching. These underpin our aims and guide our work as an expression of putting our faith into action.**

### DIGNITY

Across our work we recognise and see to promote the dignity of every human, regardless of age, gender, race, ethnicity, religion, belief, sex and sexual orientation.

### SOLIDARITY

We walk alongside young people, and invite others to do the same, so that we may listen to the needs, amplify the voices and inspire social action with and for young people.

### COMMUNITY

We create physical and digital environments that encourage, include, support and nurture human flourishing. We seek to collaborate wherever possible to promote shared ownership and sustainability.

### EMPOWERMENT

We believe that young people are changemakers and future builders. We seek to create opportunities and remove barriers to promote leadership and transformative action.