

# MILLION MINUTES

I have very little space so it's a huge challenge! What I am hoping to do is persuade you to spend some time each day in complete silence and stillness. Why? Because after many years of experience I have learned that this is the way to short circuit access to the deepest part of our human existence. We each have within us an interior resource, a reflective capacity that can be stifled by noise and activity, but if we allow ourselves some time and space on a regular daily basis the contemplative inner part of who we are begins to expand and grow.

This is not special or otherworldly. It's deeply human. But as we progress in one area of our development another can be neglected. So just as say transport, lifts, remotes, and other push button living makes us more sedentary than we were, we need to counteract that by taking more exercise. Likewise life in the fast lane and a communications overload can drown out that very important reflective part of our human makeup.

One American psychologist once said he could cure seventy percent of mental illness in the U.S. if he could get every-one to spend 30 minutes a day being quiet and still! If the above is true, then add on Christian belief and it takes on even more significance. We have in the church a rich inheritance of contemplative tradition and it's in the still silent moments of life that we reach not only the heart of ourselves and who we are but the heart of God, who alone can satisfy our deepest desires.



Don't be afraid of silence. It's OK to not feel like it, to be bored, distracted, and feel it's a waste of time. Be content to feel nothing, to be nothing. But please, please make up your mind. Give it a go. Start with 10 minutes, then move on to 15 you will know when to add more. Stillness and silence is a natural part of living that far from withdrawing us from the world and the rest of human endeavor draws us more deeply into it. Nothing of the above is new so I will leave you with the words of a famous 17<sup>th</sup> century Catholic mathematician, and philosopher, who said "All the troubles of life come upon us because we refuse to sit quietly each day in our rooms" Blaise Pascal.

**Delia Smith**

