

The First Level Basic Course **"INITIATION INTO SPIRITUAL LIFE"**

Description: The 21 Lectures of the "Initiation to Spiritual life" are the "First Level" course of the 3 levels education system of the School of Mary. A person who follows the First level is not at all obligated to continue. The Course is one unit in itself. Attending the Course doesn't require any former theological training.

This first level Course is an Explanation of the **necessary basis** for spiritual life. It gives the basic **practical** knowledge on Spiritual life and it explains mainly 2 kinds of prayer techniques:

- 1- how to listen to God through the Holy Scriptures, and how to put into practice his word, daily; that is the "**Lectio divina**".
 - 2- how to pray and connect with God with our heart (how to immerse ourselves in Him in order to be nourished by him); that is the "**Prayer of the heart**".
- These are the two Tables of the Mass.

The Course is very substantial and practical. Attending the course will help to have the necessary food for spiritual life! Knowing first what is spiritual life, what is the Gift of God, will help us to digest it and put it into practice!

A minimum of spiritual knowledge and culture is necessary for adult Christians in order to live their life in fullness and this is the task of the Course. The teaching is very practical, and clear! Concentration is required because we will learn many things.

The Patroness of the whole Course Is Our Lady, the mother of Jesus. Her presence is essential. An Icon of her, lit by a Candle will be present during the whole course. A climate of Prayer: Silence and recollection are absolutely a must for people who attend. A climate of Prayer is necessary to understand the topics. Questions are allowed obviously, but many answers will be given during the Course.

At the end of the Course, a Certificate is delivered mentioning that one had followed this Course with the condition that the person had attended the whole Course.

The Course has received the approval and blessing of His Excellency Peter Smith, Archbishop of Southwark.

Syllabus of the first level Course : initiation into spiritual life

Part I: 7 lectures

- 1- Introduction and description of Spiritual life, its goal and its stages.
- 2- Our Lady and her place in our Spiritual life.
- 3- The Roots of our prayer.
- 4- The prayer of the heart: summary (see Part III).
- 5- How to listen to God daily through the Bible: the Lectio divina.

Part II: 7 lectures

- 6- General Laws of Spiritual life
 - a- the spirit/heart. Theological virtues (Faith, Hope, Love).
 - b- The Transfiguration of the Lord and its place in our spiritual life.
 - c- The “Ups and downs”. Mechanism of Temptation. The Synergy of our action.
 - d- Christ in our spiritual life.
 - e- The Holy Spirit in our spiritual life.
 - f- The saints - the Doctors - the gift of ourselves - martyrdom.

Part III: 7 lectures

- 7- Practising the prayer of the heart
 - a- Introduction: history
 - b- The prayer of the heart I: the recollection movement.
 - c- The prayer of the heart II: The action of God.
- 8- Practical aspects and Conclusion