
Your Instructor



Maartje Skare is married and a mother of three. Initially she was trained as a lawyer and after studying Theology and Philosophy part-time with the Brothers of St. Jean Maartje found she wanted to deepen her knowledge of Spiritual Theology and how to grow in her spiritual life in a practical way. She has followed all of the School's available courses over the last few years, where she has become the Director in the UK. She started teaching Lectio Divina in 2019 and has taught on various topics for the School since, including the Solid Foundations Course.

The mission of the School of Mary is to form Christians in the spiritual life, enabling them to respond fruitfully to the universal call to holiness. Drawing on the living tradition of the Catholic Church, and especially on the teaching of the doctors of the spiritual life, the School seeks to foster an experiential knowledge of the stages of spiritual growth, so as to lead students towards union with Christ and a loving participation in His redemptive mission.



An invitation

There are moments in the spiritual life when one senses the need not simply to pray more, but to understand more deeply what God is doing within us.

We invite you to a life changing course in Spiritual Life.

In this course you'll discover how Lectio Divina and the Prayer of the Heart—the methods the Church Fathers gave us—actually prolong the two liturgies of the Mass.

If you've been seeking to grow beyond daily devotion into a living, coherent understanding of the spiritual journey itself, these eight days will help you recognise God's presence and cooperate with His grace in each stage.

Whether you're beginning your spiritual journey or deepening a practice already established, you'll leave with both a framework and the lived practices to move closer to union with Christ.



The School of Mary

Zurich | 2026/2027

Solid Foundations Course

8 Saturdays

13:15 - 17:45 pm



Solid Foundations 000

Initiation into Spiritual Life - 2026/27

Solid Foundations is an 8 days introductory course to the spiritual life.

Who might find the course useful?

The course is for those of us who have found our feet in starting to practise our faith (Sunday Mass, some prayer) but who now want to know "is there something more?" and "how can I start to draw closer to the Lord?"

The Solid Foundations course draws on the insight and practical advice of the great spiritual writers including St John of the Cross, St Teresa of Avila and St Therese of the Child Jesus to help us understand the basics we need to put in place and the part God invites us to play to deepen our relationship with Him.

What content is covered?

The course focuses on three key areas:

1. Praying with Scripture teaches us how to pray with the Bible by drawing on the tradition of the church called Lectio Divina. It also looks at what to expect when beginning to pray in this way and the impact on our spiritual life overall through exploring: what Lectio Divina is and how it supports the stages of our spiritual life; how to learn to listen to God through the daily Bible readings; practical advice on common problems; Our Lady and her place in our spiritual life.

2. How the spiritual life works looks at the guiding principles which we need to understand in order to facilitate co-operation with what God is inviting us to do including: the need for the Theological Acts of Faith, Hope, Love; how to handle both the 'ups and downs' of the spiritual life and temptations; how to co-operate with the Grace of God; how to understand the role of Christ and of the Holy Spirit in spiritual life.

3. Praying with the Heart helps us find our bearings with contemplative prayer and encourages us to draw closer to the Lord in a very real way through: practical advice on how to 'connect' with Jesus with the support of graphic illustrations; practice in praying 'heart to heart' with Jesus; learning how Mary, the Mother of God, is our closest and best ally to reach her Son; learning what deep contemplation is and the discernment linked to it; understanding passive distractions and learning how we can pray despite their presence.

As with all School of Mary courses, the Patroness of the Course is Our Lady, the Mother of Jesus. The content of the course has received the approval and blessing of H.E. Peter Smith, Archbishop of Southwark.



Where and when does the course take place?

The course will take place at Pfarrei St Joseph, Zurich. Röntgenstrasse 80, CH-8005

The dates are as follows:

Solid Foundations – Praying with Scripture will run on Sept. 19th, Oct. 24th and Nov. 14th 2026

Solid Foundations – How the spiritual life works takes place on Dec. 5th and Dec 12th, 2026



Solid Foundations – Praying with the Heart will happen on Jan 16th, Feb 27th and Mar. 20th, 2027

How much will the course cost?

The course fee is CHF 660. A discounted rate of CHF 330 is available for those who need it. The School of Mary is committed to making spiritual formation accessible, so please reach out if further financial concerns arise. As the venue has limited capacity and we expect demand to be very high, participants will need to register and pay a deposit of CHF 75 in advance with any remaining balance to be paid in September.

Coffee and tea will be provided.

How do I sign up for the course?

Participants will need to register to attend the course and pay a CHF 75 deposit. Please scan the QR code in order to register or email schoolofmarych@gmail.com with your name and contact details and we will be in touch with details of how to pay the deposit

If you have any questions, please do email us on schoolofmarych@gmail.com or WhatsApp +34690290298 and we will be happy to respond.

For more on the School of Mary, please see:

www.schoolofmary.org

