

An Overview of the School of Carmelite Prayer

The **mission** of the school of prayer is precisely to help Christians develop through the practice of silent prayer a taste for a more concrete spiritual life that overflows into their relationships with others.

If the entire program is being offered, there are **six meetings**, seven with a testimony. The number of meetings is **flexible**. There can be as few as **four meetings** if time is a concern.

The **topics** most often addressed in a six-week program are: What is Carmelite (Silent) Prayer? The Structure of the Person; The Prayer of Recollection; Difficulties in Prayer; The Fruits of Prayer, Contemplation and, a month or so out a 'Booster Shot' Session. The Prayer of Recollection (presented in What is Carmelite Prayer?) and Contemplation can be eliminated if a four-week program is decided upon.

Each meeting has **three parts**: small group discussion; a teaching on an aspect of silent prayer; a silent **prayer** workshop together as a group, a new way of being together. Experience has shown that starting the session with the group discussion, rather than the presentation, puts participants more quickly at ease and fosters group cohesion, important for the participants to want to share their **personal prayer testimonies** with each other in group.

Participants are called to experience a **progression** in their journey. Initially, a daily period of ten minutes of silent prayer is encouraged. This time is gradually increased each week to arrive at 20-25 minutes daily by the end of the five or six-week class.

