

A Mini Retreat for Yourself or in a Group  
35-40 minutes • Designed for CCW Members

## The Spirituality of Springtime

**Leader:** As the earth awakens from the hush of winter and the first green shoots break through the thawed soil, Catholic women worldwide, especially those in the Council of Catholic Women (CCW), are invited into that same rhythm of renewal within our souls. “Spring Cleaning Your Spirit” is a gentle call for CCW members to retreat from the noise of ordinary life, creating a sacred space for reflection, repentance, and rejoicing,

just as nature herself is transformed by the season.

Spring, in its very essence, is a metaphor for the Christian life. The cold gives way to warmth, the barren branches are crowned with blossoms, and what seemed lifeless pulses once more with hope. For centuries, women of faith have found this season an invitation to interior renewal—to sweep away the cobwebs of spiritual complacency, to open the windows of the soul, and to let the Holy Spirit breathe new life within.

This mini retreat draws on the wisdom of the Church, Sacred Scripture, and practical exercises to help CCW members embrace the renewal only Christ can offer. May this retreat lead us closer to God.

**All:** Gracious and ever-living God, as the first light of spring softens the earth and invites new life to awaken, we come before You with hearts ready for renewal. In this sacred pause, we ask You to till the soil of our souls. Cast out the remnants of coldness, doubt, and fatigue that linger from seasons past in our CCW ministry and personal lives. Plant within us seeds of hope, humility, and courage, that in Your light we may blossom anew.

Holy Spirit, sweep through the chambers of our hearts, clearing away what is lifeless and making space for Your grace to grow. May Your love refresh us, Your wisdom guide us, and Your mercy restore us. Help us to recognize and release all that holds us back from the fullness of joy You promise.

Lord Jesus, walk beside us as we open our lives to Your healing presence. Cleanse us, renew us, and breathe into us the breath of new beginnings. May this time of retreat draw us closer to You, so that, renewed and transformed, we may bear witness to Your resurrection in all we do. We ask this in Your holy name. Amen.

## Preparing for Renewal

**Reader 1:** To begin, let’s acknowledge our hearts yearning for change. The Catechism reminds us, “Conversion is first of all a work of the grace of God who makes our hearts return to him” (CCC 1432).

Find a quiet place. Light a candle, symbolizing Christ as the Light of the World. In the silence of your heart, ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to you the areas of our life that need spring cleaning, those habits, attitudes, or burdens that keep you from joy.

### Read, Meditate and Pray:

- Read: Psalm 51 (“Create in me a clean heart, O God”)
- Meditate: Where am I holding on to old resentments, fears, or sins?
- Pray: *(Each person prays the prayer on the next page silently.)*



Holy and loving God, You who created all things new and call forth life from what once was dust, I come before You with a heart yearning for renewal. Sweep through the corners of my spirit with Your gentle, healing presence.

Where there is weariness, breathe in Your strength. Where there is darkness, kindle the light of Christ. Where old wounds and burdens linger, pour the soothing oil of Your mercy. Lord, make me new. Free me from clinging to what no longer gives life: from resentments that shadow my joy, from fears that keep me small, from habits and sins that bind me to the past.

Open my eyes to Your grace at work within me. Help me to recognize Your loving voice calling me to greater wholeness. Cleanse me with Your forgiveness, refresh me with Your Spirit, shape me by Your Word.

As I surrender in trust, fill every empty space with Your peace— peace that restores, peace that overflows. Guide my thoughts, my words, my actions, so that my life may reflect Your resurrection light in the world.

Lord Jesus, by Your cross and rising, You offer me the promise of new beginnings. Hold me close as I let go and step forward, renewed and transformed by Your unfailing love. I ask this in Your holy name. Amen.

**Meditate and Journal:** Like a diligent housekeeper, take an honest inventory. The Ignatian Examen is a beloved Catholic practice for daily reflection. Take time in silence and ask yourself:

- Where have I seen God's presence today?
- Where have I turned away from grace?
- What do I need to release or surrender?

Write down your thoughts on the lined paper at the end of this retreat, letting the Spirit guide you without judgment or haste.

## The Cleaning—Confession and Forgiveness

**Reader 2:** No spiritual spring cleaning is complete without the healing balm of confession. As members of the CCW, let us embrace the Sacrament of Reconciliation as “a resurrection from spiritual death” (St. John Chrysostom). Reconciliation is not simply about listing faults; it's about letting God's mercy restore the beauty of our soul. Prepare to go to confession at the earliest possible time to receive your spiritual resurrection. Remember to keep the following as your plan:

- Prepare: Examine your conscience using the Beatitudes or Ten Commandments.
- Confess: Approach the sacrament with humility and hope.
- Rejoice: Receive absolution and the freedom Christ offers.

**Meditate on:** Forgiving others and oneself is an important part of spring cleaning. It isn't just about letting go of what clutters our hearts, but also about mending what is broken.

- Is there someone you need to forgive? Or do you hold yourself captive to past mistakes?
- Reflect on Jesus' words from the cross: “Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do” (Luke 23:34).
- Write a letter (even if you never send it) expressing forgiveness or speak words of mercy aloud. Let go and let God heal. Remember, spring cleaning is deep cleaning.

## Cultivating New Growth

**Reader 3:** Planting Seeds of Virtue — After clearing out the old, make room for the new. Like a garden tilled and ready, your soul is prepared for the gifts of the Spirit—love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control (Galatians 5:22-23).

- Choose one virtue, noted above, to focus on this season and ask God for the grace to grow in that area.

