

**Our Lady of Calvary Retreat Center, Farmington, CT**  
**Sample Talk (to be given at Mass or other Church gatherings)**

*This is a sample talk (about four minutes long) that can be used to invite women of your parish to your weekend retreat at OLC. You can read it exactly as is – or feel free to adapt to your style and audience, as you weave in your own personal stories of your retreat experience.*

My name is \_\_\_\_, and I feel privileged to speak to the women of our parish about a wonderful weekend retreat opportunity coming up on \_\_\_\_\_. Our Lady of Calvary Retreat Center, located in Farmington, CT, is a center of spirituality for women, by women. It is owned and operated by the Sisters of the Cross and Passion and has been a ministry of the sisters for over 60 years. I invite you to prayerfully consider sharing in a weekend retreat with the women of our parish.

At different times, women everywhere, and of all ages, feel the need for rest, relaxation, reflection and renewal. I have been attending weekend retreats at OLC for \_\_\_\_ years, and I can tell you that there are a number of reasons why more and more women are taking advantage of this wonderful opportunity:

- Many of us come to get away from our hectic and busy days – to find some quiet time to reflect on what’s really important.
- Some of us are seeking God’s help and wisdom in dealing with difficult challenges in our lives.
- Some of us come because we’re feeling pretty happy and content, and we simply want to thank God for our many blessings.
- Ultimately, I think we ALL come to this retreat to strengthen our relationship with God, and I can *promise* you that will happen, and you will leave the weekend feeling truly blessed and changed from the experience.

In my opinion, the retreat weekend is a perfect balance of four things:

- Quiet time alone to read, reflect, take a walk, or take a nap
- Time spent listening to the inspiring words and uncommon wisdom of OLC’s amazing retreat leaders
- Time spent attending the moving and carefully planned spiritual activities, such as morning prayer, Mass, Reconciliation, and community prayer
- Time spent with friends and peers- chatting, laughing, sharing stories, enjoying a movie, and eating three meals a day that you do NOT have to cook or clean up after.

The most inviting element at OLC is the philosophy that you are free to participate in everything or nothing. This is *your* weekend to spend as *you* are called – no guilt, no demands – just pure, wonderful affirmation of your needs.

When I attended my first retreat years ago, I was very reluctant to leave my family, where I felt I was truly needed. For those of you wives and moms who may be feeling that way, I would like to read you the following, from the OLC invitation:

*“Maybe you’re saying I can’t afford to give up an entire weekend! But you need to trust that when you step away from your family, they really can and will manage without you. Friday at 7 pm to Sunday at 12:30 pm is only 40 hours... long enough for them to miss you and perhaps deepen their appreciation for all you do; plenty of time for you to re-focus your energy and come back to them refreshed. Besides, you may find that they experience blessings of their own during your time away.”*

The theme for our OLC’s 2019-2020 retreat season is inspired by an old American hymn: *How Can I Keep from Singing?* This hymn and the retreat are all about perspective. In spite of all the troubles of this life and our world, the song proclaims,

*No storm can shake my inmost calm  
while to that Rock I’m clinging.  
Since Christ is Lord of heaven and earth,  
how can I keep from singing?*

I hope that you will give yourself the gift of time to join me – and other women from our parish – for this powerful and grace-filled weekend. I promise you will experience the unique warmth and sense of belonging that is the hallmark of Our Lady of Calvary Retreat Center.

*End with information about registration or how to contact you for more information.*