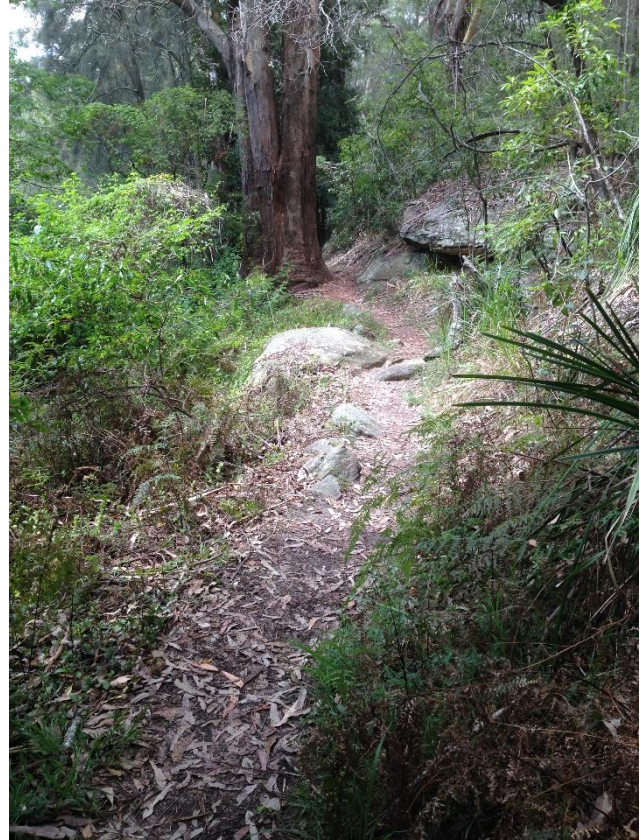


## A time for reflection

There is a time in every life when the very act of looking back and taking stock becomes essential to going forward.

Without the light that shines out of the darkness of the past, we cannot chart a new path to the future.

Spirituality is built around a life of reflection. In every heart there must be regular times set aside to go down into these inner recesses of the soul once more, alone and centred, to take another look, a new kind of look, at ourselves.



Retreat, reflection, Sabbath, and soul-space are of the essence of the reflective spirit—not for our sake alone but for the sake of those who depend on us to make the promise of creation new again.

First, painfully aware of our own lack of steeled spirit, and full of compunction — what the ancients called the regret of the soul— we must forgive ourselves for being less than we know we can be.

Second, we must turn the compass point of the heart back again to where God waits for us, arms open, full of mercy, made of love, to be our own best selves — not for our own sake alone but for the sake of the rest of the world.

Spirituality, after all, is life lived to the fullest.  
It is a life of concentration on life's ordinary dimensions.  
It is an attempt to do the ordinary things of life extraordinarily well.

*The Monastery of the Heart: An Introduction to a Meaningful Life*  
by Joan Chittister (BlueBridge)