



"Our mission is to bring the good news of Jesus Christ's love to our entire community through traditional Anglo-Catholic worship, fellowship, outreach, and Christian formation."

Our Vision: *"We strive to be a haven of healing, reconciliation, joy and peace in service to our wider community and beyond, so that our example in prayer and practice may reflect Christ's love for us all."*

THIS SUNDAY – JANUARY 25TH, 2026

KNOW THAT GOD IS AT WORK

Too Much Leaves Too Little—Busyness Keeps Us from Faith

This text comes from an article originally written by Marcia Hotchkiss for The Living Church's journal, The Covenant.

Being in a rush and trying to do too many things at once seems to be a common complaint in contemporary culture. Recent Pew Research surveys indicate that 52 percent of Americans report trying to do more than one thing at a time and 60 percent say they are too busy to enjoy life. And when parents of children age 18 and under are surveyed, 74 percent report that their busyness keeps them from enjoying life. In 2016 the World Health Organization and the International Labour Organization estimated that because of working 55 hours a week or more, 398,000 people died from strokes and 347,000 died from heart disease each year.



In a 2024 article in *The Atlantic*, Arthur Brooks points out that in America busyness confers social status and importance. Furthermore, work performance and busyness are positively correlated. Think of a simple social interaction when someone asks another, "How are you?" If the response is "I'm very busy," we assume the person is also productive, which is not necessarily true. In 2021 the University of Pennsylvania and UCLA researchers found that the optimal free time in a working day is 9.5 hours, which amounts to almost half of one's waking hours. Granted, most modern people neither have that much free time nor aspire to have that much. Still, this statistic at least hints at the need our body and mind have for rest.

Over 50 years ago the American Trappist monk Thomas Merton wrote, "There is a pervasive form of contemporary violence to which the idealist most easily succumbs: activism and overwork. The rush and pressure of modern life are a form of violence, perhaps the most common form of its innate violence. To allow oneself to be carried away by a multitude of conflicting concerns, to surrender to too many demands, to commit oneself to too many projects, to want to help everyone in everything, is to succumb to violence." Most would agree that Merton's words are even more poignant now than when he originally wrote them.

Perhaps most tragic of all is how the modern American church has bought into this worldly notion that busyness connotes productivity. In an article about church busyness, consultant Tony Morgan says the message often given by these churches is that they value participation over relationships, both with fellow churchgoers and with the God they say they want to worship.

Staying busy is often a way one can avoid clearly looking at oneself—who I am, what I value, what I fear, and to whom I ascribe worth. Morgan adds that pastors and other ministry leaders often stay busy because it gives them cover for exposure of their shortcomings.

One of the early leaders and founders of the contemplative ministry Renovare, Dallas Willard, was asked by a young minister for advice at the beginning of a new ministry. Willard told the young man three times to ruthlessly eliminate hurry. Dallas added that hurry is the great enemy of the spiritual life.

The Great Commission given by the Lord himself in Matthew 18 is to “Go and make disciples.” Many churches do not have time to focus on discipleship, which is transformation that takes place slowly and is difficult to enumerate. Instead, these churches concentrate on worldly metrics like attendance, buildings, and cash, which do not necessarily indicate changed lives.

Four years ago, when we launched the Abbey on Lovers Lane, Bishop Michael G. Smith blessed our space. I remember joking at the time that I was so busy setting up a contemplative ministry that I was no longer a contemplative. I fear that my priorities at that time were dangerously imperiled.

After we began our urban abbey in Dallas, one of my husband’s college friends contacted Tom for help. The friend, a recently retired pastor of a large church on the West Coast, said he would like to speak with Tom about the contemplative’s goal of intimacy with God. He added that this type of union with God was always something he was interested in, but he had been too busy all these years at his church to “look up.” How tragic!

An ADHD mentality also happens in parachurch ministries. Several years ago, we were considering joining a missionary group on a trip overseas. We were frustrated with the group’s lack of communication with us and other volunteers. They had only two U.S. staff members and were planning 17 overseas mission trips in that calendar year. When we suggested that the group had overcommitted, the senior staff told us, “No, God is at work.”

I believe that God is always present, even when human efforts muck up the effort. The Holy Spirit still moves, despite our flaws and weaknesses. Isn’t the message of the cross that even when our efforts fail, God is sufficiency himself? Christ’s offering is a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice.

It seems to me that God is far more interested in being with us, as opposed to our doing things for him. “Abide in me and I in you,” Jesus says in John 15:4. The definition of “abiding” is to “endure, to last a long time.” Popular author John Mark Comer makes the point that “love” and “hurry” never go together. The ministry at our urban abbey has indeed shown us a loving God who never seems to be in much of a hurry. Carolyn Arends, Renovare’s director of education, wrote in a song, “We need to slow down to catch up to God’s speed.” Psalm 46:10 says it simply: “Be still, and know that I am God.”

These great truths remind us that God often works more slowly than we would like. Lord, teach us to ruthlessly eliminate hurry so that our spiritual lives may catch up to your speed.

READINGS FOR THE THIRD SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY

Isaiah 9:1–4 + Psalm 27:5–13 + 1 Corinthians 1:10–18 + Matthew 4:12–23

CALENDAR

Note: We worship in our historic church. The service will also be on Zoom. The service time is 10:00 AM. Tuesday Noon Mass is held in All Saints' St. Mary Chapel.

SUNDAY January 25th, 2026 The Third Sunday after the Epiphany
10:00 AM Mass in All Saints' Church
Join Zoom Meeting from our web site at www.allsaintschurch.org
Recording of Mass available before noon at www.allsaintschurch.org

Christian Formation and First Communion Instruction for Children
Ages 5 - 12 in the Parish Hall from 10:00 AM - 10:45 AM

Christian Formation for Adults (the 2nd and 4th Sundays)
Youth and adults around Noon after the Mass in the Library
Recording of Mass available before noon at www.allsaintschurch.org

OUR CORE VALUES:

- Welcoming strangers like old friends
- Embracing the Anglo-Catholic tradition
- Being dependable members of a caring community
- Respecting each other's differences
- Being faithful stewards of God's gift
- Remembering that God loves everyone unconditionally