

For these last two weeks of the liturgical year, the Church directs her prayers and attention to the Last Things. This is emphasised by the Sunday readings drawing from the Prophet Daniel and the weekday readings drawing from St. John's Revelation. These two books are notable as the major apocalyptic texts of the Holy Bible.

Modern culture seems to be obsessed with 'preparing for the end of the world', but sadly, only in an earthly way. The Gospels tell us that storing up earthly treasure means we leave our heart with earthly things; things consumed by "moth and rust" (Mt. 6:19). But to the rich man who stores up his riches with new, larger barns, God says "You fool! This very night your life is being demanded of you. And the things you have prepared, whose will they be?" (Lk. 12:20).

The end of the world started the day Jesus Christ rose from the tomb. The best way to 'prepare for the end' is to store up heavenly treasures that moths and rust cannot take from you: works of mercy. It is the same thing the church has called for from age to age: prayer, fasting, almsgiving.