

Do you need a bag over your head?

Exodus 34^{29-end}; Psalm 99; 2 Corinthians 3^{12-4²}; Luke 9²⁸⁻³⁶

And all of us, with unveiled faces, seeing the glory of the Lord as though reflected in a mirror, are being transformed into the same image for one degree of glory to another. [2 Corinthians 3¹⁸]

When I preached on these readings three years ago, I did note that we don't put a bag over our heads when we leave Church to save the eyesight of those around us! Three years on, is that still the case? Paul says that we **are being transformed into the same image for one degree of glory to another**, so it would be natural to expect that there was more need for the bag now than then - that we had a greater experience of and therefore radiated more clearly that **degree of glory!**

There are two things that give that greater degree of glory (and it really is very simple):

- ✦ Spending time with God: that's what Moses did, the Psalmist, the Apostle Paul and also Jesus (with Moses and Elijah to show the completion of the Law and the Prophets in Jesus). Peter, as a privileged witness of the Transfiguration, simply says **Master, it is good for us to be here** (before going on to spoil it by thinking what God does in a moment should be fossilised in stone and saying **let us make three dwellings**).

People will be able to tell when you spend time with God - the peace, joy and purpose cannot help but rub off. (Do you remember what it was like when people could smoke in pubs and restaurants - it clung to clothes and hair and skin: so it is with spending time with God - it clings so that people notice).

- ✦ Paul interestingly says that this time in God's presence leads us to **renounce the shameful things that one hides**. If we do things that are against God's law or against God's love we will never succeed in stopping if we treat it like a New year resolution. What does make a difference is when we know that all our life is lived in God's immediate presence.

As we approach the beginning of Lent why not resolve to spend time in God's presence - that will change us enough that what we do soon comes into line. Will you commit to spending 15 minutes a day for 40 days to be quiet in God's presence. I am not asking that you read your Bible - you could do that as well. I am not asking that you pray - you could do that as well. I ask that you clear your head, your social media, your 'phone - perhaps light a candle as a symbol of God's presence and then be still and invite God to be present.