

## People, Politics, and Peace: Reflections from a Holy Land Pilgrimage

Written by Sister Sallyann McCarthy  
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“Our visit to the Holy Land has changed everything,” said Carrie Delcourt, Rock Island, Ill., commenting on her recent trip to Israel-Palestine with a group led by Most Rev. Martin Amos, Bishop of Davenport, Ia.

On Thursday evening, December 8, Delcourt and one of her pilgrimage companions, Judith Herold SSND, Davenport, will present a program about their experiences in the Holy Land and the impact the trip has made on their lives and their deeper commitment to peace.

Sister Judy Herold is the Pastoral Associate at St. Anthony Church, Davenport, and Carrie Delcourt, wife and mother of two adult children, is an educator at Black Hawk College, Moline, Ill.

Shortly after returning from the Holy Land, Delcourt attended the Iowa Institute for Social Action in Iowa City, and met with Helene Paharik, Director of Development at the Beit Benedict Peace Academy at Dormition Abbey in Jerusalem. Later in October, she participated in the Iowa workshop on “US Policy in Palestine-Israel: Engaging the Faith Communities in Pursuit of a Just Peace” in Ankeny.

“The two programs confirmed my desire to do all I can to aid in bringing peace to the Holy Land,” said Delcourt. “Listening to members of Muslim, Christian, and Jewish communities including Phyllis Bennis of the Institute for Policy Studies, Rev. David Wildman of the Board of Global Ministries UMC, Lynne Pollack of Jewish Voices for Peace, Miryam Rashid of American Friends Service Committee, and Josh Ruebner of the US Campaign to End the Occupation enabled me to gain some understanding of the complex situation that now exists in this volatile region,” she said.

“Sister Judy and I hope that by sharing the fruit of our experiences we can help others to understand the situation in the land where Christ was born,” said Delcourt.

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Both women emphasized how their visit has deepened their appreciation and understanding of the role of Mary, mother of Jesus. "Advent seems the perfect time to reflect on our pilgrimage," added Herold.

Sponsored by Prince of Peace Pax Christi and the Clinton Franciscan Center for Active Nonviolence and peacemaking, the program is free and open to the public. Details available at [www.clintonfranciscans.com](http://www.clintonfranciscans.com) or at <http://jcpop.org/> or by calling Sisters of St. Francis, 563-242-7611.

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