

HOLY GROUND

November 30th, 2014

A circle of people with a drive, a passion for what to them is the truth of the Christian church, the Catholic Church. The room Holy Ground uses for worship exists within the walls of Assisi Heights of the Sisters of Saint Francis. The oasis and retreat that Assisi Heights offers acts as a circling embrace for this commune of thirty to forty welcoming members.

A row of chairs encircles a center table that is covered in a crisp, white cloth. It is adorned with an Advent Wreath with one of four candles lit. This is the first week in Advent as Christians all over the world await the coming of the birth of Jesus.

A woman prepares the communion bread at a table lining the wall. This bread was made by her and waits to be consecrated by the members. This is the Christian tradition of the bread becoming, or representing, the body of Christ. It is a remembrance of the Last Supper.

The members of Holy Ground believe they are all in equal footing, of equal importance, in the celebration of the service and the Communion of bread and wine. The circle reinforces this notion and also strengthens the ties of their faith.

Holy Ground is of the catholic faith but not under the leadership of the Pope or any church hierarchy. One member states, "We are all priestly here."

As the service continues, the faithful speak words of living the life of Christ, of striving for justice, peace, and calling for an end to war.

A reading from the Gospel of Mark urges those of wisdom to be alert and aware of the Day. This is the Day all will be called to account for the actions of their lives. The Christian and Islamic faiths both believe in the Day of Judgment. The Gospel and the Holy Qur'an warn of those being too mindful of this earthly life and not careful of the life to come.

The members of Holy Ground then take turns reading positive news stories. This is a refreshing and calming celebration of the good in the world, despite so many images and actions of hate.

Each week the Gospel is read by a different member of Holy Ground and is followed by the homily. This further demonstrates their belief in their equality and responsibility of faith.

Honest and heartfelt prayers are shared. It is moving to witness those gathered experiencing the communion of bread and wine, a pivotal moment for many in

Christianity.

One is left with a sense of humility in the realization that we are all simply expressing our sense of truth.