

THE REBUILDING OF ST. ANTHONY'S IN SCHENECTADY

Schenectady is a small city with no shortage of economic hardship, and like much of America, waning Church attendance. When a fire ravaged St. Anthony's Church in 2014, there was a real possibility the church would not re-open. The dedicated parishioners wouldn't hear of it. The physical presence of St. Anthony's on Seward Place, and the community created by those who worshiped there, was integral to the fabric of Schenectady. Fortuitously, the church's kitchen was not damaged by the fire, and volunteers converged upon that untouched space and got to work baking traditional cookies for the annual Festa fundraiser. As they baked undeterred, clean up from the fire began in the rest of the church. Proceeds from the cookie sales didn't cover the full cost of rebuilding, but the parishioners' tenacity was a clear indication to local and diocesan leadership that the church building matters very much in the spiritual life of a community.



Before

Catholic Prudential asked EverGreene Architectural Arts ("EverGreene") to prepare budgets for the conservation and restoration of salvageable artwork and decoration and to replicate murals lost in the fire. Together with parishioners and community partners, EverGreene was able to create smart implementation strategies that maximized the church's budget while still honoring the beauty of the former space with the highest quality craftsmanship and beautiful aesthetics. New murals of Saints Anthony and Juan Diego were created to honor the church's Italian roots, as well as, the predominantly Hispanic community it now serves. At the dedication of the new space—a service that was multilingual (English, Spanish, and Italian)—parishioners were able to admire a restored space that supported the architecture, liturgy, and the diverse community of parishioners.

Along with design, restoration, conservation, and new artwork, EverGreene provides disaster response and insurance evaluation services. After emergencies and natural disasters, we can provide immediate actions to help minimize loss. We work closely with clients to ensure losses are documented and that appropriate estimates are provided for necessary stabilization and repair, and assist in the development of funding applications and provide the necessary support documentation for the repair, or replacement of cultural property or works of art.

Founded in 1978, EverGreene Architectural Arts Inc., the nation's largest specialty contractor of architectural arts, serves as the industry leader in historic preservation, restoration and conservation solutions, through its pre-construction, construction and new design services. EverGreene is headquartered in Brooklyn with offices in Chicago, Washington DC, and Los Angeles.

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Or contact CCFM Member, Paul Ehmann, of the Diocese of Albany, at: paul.ehmann@rcda.org for more information.



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