

# St. Michael the Archangel's Social Justice Ministry

## “Care for the Environment” Projects

- Garden Clean up and Plantings at the Troy Nursing and Rehabilitation Center from 2015 to present day
- Restoring the grave stones of the Sisters of St Joseph at St Joseph Cemetery from 2017 to present day





- Care for the Environment is one of the 7 Catholic Social Justice Principles, established initially by Pope Leo, XIII and continually emphasized by Pope Francis.
- Back in 2012, members of our Social Justice ministry determined to act on one of those principles, “Caring for the Environment”. with two local projects, that also connect to and support the Catholic Works of Mercy, specifically, visiting the sick and burying the dead.
- The core team started with Jeannie Aurelia, Liz Smith, Anele Dzekciorius and Donna Vaughn. After Jeannie moved out of the area, Carline Davenport joined the team. Parishioners and Women’s Guild help with funding and volunteers.



## Spring and Fall Garden Cleanup and Planting at Troy Nursing and Rehabilitation Center

The team began work on clean up and planting gardens at the local nursing home, originally named “The Springs”, but now named Troy Nursing Home and Rehabilitation Center. The facility was unable to prioritize investments in grounds beautification, due to staffing and funding shortages; management could not consistently commit to maintaining or watering the gardens. Undeterred, the team, plus other volunteers, lugged cans and jugs of water themselves! They even ‘planted’ artificial flowers, when the facility couldn’t keep up with watering; and the curb appeal was quite nice! The beautiful flowers, shrubs, vegetables contribute to “Caring for the Environment”, and this project brings great joy and comfort to the elderly residents and rehab patients.

The team is truly grateful to the Women’s Guild for their annual financial support, and to the volunteers who answered the call to help out each Spring or Fall.





## Restoration of the gravestones of the Sisters of St Joseph at St Joseph Cemetery in Troy

The second “*Care for the Environment*” ongoing project is restoring the gravestones of the Sisters of St Joseph of Carondelet at St Joseph’s Cemetery in Troy. In 2017, the team committed to learning how to properly restore these gravestones, with correct tools and the environmentally sanctioned cleaning solution, “D2”.

Jeannie, Anele, Liz, and Donna attended training given by the Troy Irish Genealogy Society, and through 2023, they have restored over 70 Sister’s grave stones ‘back to life’. The difference in appearance after cleaning is amazing!. Once again, the Women’s Guild provided funds to purchase the cleaning solution, and recently, the Troy Irish Genealogy Society has donated the solution. The Sisters of St. Joseph are so grateful, many of the stones were not readable at all, and the Sisters love reading the names and dates of their ‘foremothers’ from many decades ago. This team, supported by the Troy Irish Genealogy Society and St Michael’s women’s guild have saved the Sisters considerable expense. Prayers are offered for the Sisters, as they restore the grave stones, as asked of us by the Corporal Works of Mercy.

