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### **ST. JOSEPH'S DAY AND RETURN OF THE SWALLOWS CELEBRATION MARCH 19**

SAN JUAN CAPISTRANO, Calif. (March 4, 2015) -- Mission San Juan Capistrano's internationally renowned St. Joseph's Day and Return of the Swallows celebration will take place on Thursday, March 19.

The day's events will begin at 8:30 a.m. with St. Joseph's Day Mass in Mission Basilica and finishes after 3 p.m.

Some of the highlights of the day include:

The debut of a new tour -- Father Serra's Legacy: History Tour of the Mission Church Sites. The tour will take place at 3 p.m. on St. Joseph's Day, and will regularly commence on Saturdays at 2 p.m.

Newly acquired items from the Bowers Museum are now displayed in the Mission Treasures exhibit.

A Historic Bell Ringing ceremony at 11:40 a.m., which will include an announcement of the "Hope for the Pope" campaign.

Guest lectures by swallows expert Dr. Charles Brown and author Gregory Orfalea. Dr. Brown, a professor of biological sciences at the University of Tulsa, is the Mission's consulting expert on the Swallows Vocalization Experiment, in progress at Mission San Juan Capistrano for the fourth year. Orfalea is the author of *Journey to the Sun: Junipero Serra's Dream and the Founding of California*. His lecture will address Pope Francis' recent decision to canonize Father Serra, the founder of nine California missions,

including Mission San Juan Capistrano. Orfalea will sign copies of his book in the Mission Store Outpost (in the Historic Sala) following his lecture.

The Mission Store Outpost, a special extension of the Mission Store in the Historic Sala -- a building that recently underwent the Sala Preservation Project and is now reopened to the public for St. Joseph's Day -- will feature unique items and gifts especially for St. Joseph's Day.

Visitors are encouraged to pick up a San Juan Capistrano Historic Downtown Map and Guide to discover destinations to shop, eat, stay and play in San Juan Capistrano before and after visiting the Mission, featuring members of the San Juan Capistrano Heritage Tourism Association.

There will be food vendors serving Mexican food, burgers, and more, Native American basketweavers, and activities for kids including adobe brick making, panning for gold and arrowhead necklace making.

St. Joseph's Day and the Return of the Swallows celebration recognizes the annual return of the famous swallows to Capistrano. This tradition was started by Father St. John O'Sullivan in the 1920's at Mission San Juan Capistrano, and is held each year on March 19th.

The complete schedule of the day's events:

#### Mission Basilica

8:30-9:15 a.m.: St. Joseph's Day mass

#### Bell Wall

9 a.m.: Daily ringing of the Historic Bells upon opening of the Mission

9:15-9:45 a.m.: Mariachi music

10:15 a.m., noon, 3:15 p.m.: Ringing of Historic Bells

11:40 a.m.-noon: Official Bell Ringing ceremony, welcome by Mission San Juan Capistrano Executive Director Mechelle Lawrence Adams, performance by Native American Tushmal singers, National Anthem performed by JSerra Catholic High School

#### Central Courtyard

9:55-10 a.m.: Official welcome by Mission San Juan Capistrano Executive Director Mechelle Lawrence Adams

10-10:05 a.m.: Renee Bondi will sing "When the Swallows come back to Capistrano," the famous song written by Leon Rene

10:05-10:15 a.m.: Ringing of the school bell and Mission Basilica School procession

10:15-11:15 a.m.: Performance of traditional songs and dances by students of Mission Basilica School

11:25-11:55 a.m.: Mariachi music

12:05-12:10 p.m.: Renee Bondi will sing "When the Swallows come back to Capistrano," the famous song written by Leon Rene

12:15-12:35 p.m.: Performance by San Juan Elementary School kindergarteners

12:45-1:30: Journeys to the Past: California Native American stories and dances

1:30-2 p.m.: Performance by Duende Flamenco

Soldiers Barracks Gallery

12:30-1 p.m.: Lecture on Father Junipero Serra by Gregory Orfalea

2-3 p.m.: Lecture on the swallows by Dr. Charles Brown

***About Mission San Juan Capistrano:***

*Known as the "Jewel of the Missions," Mission San Juan Capistrano is a historic landmark and museum that boasts of quality permanent exhibits featuring original artifacts as well as traveling and temporary exhibits on a wide variety of topics.*

*The site itself serves as a living outdoor museum with original buildings constructed by Native Americans in the 18<sup>th</sup> century including the Serra Chapel, Great Stone Church, and the original padres' quarters of the South Wing.*

*The Mission was founded on November 1, 1776 by Padre Junipero Serra as the seventh in the chain of the twenty-one California missions established by Spain, and is Orange County's only mission. Every year, over 50,000 students visit the Mission and engage in an inspirational learning experience via the Mission Matters programming, as part of their State required California history studies.*

*Mission San Juan Capistrano is owned by the Diocese of Orange and is supported by the Mission Preservation Foundation, which is comprised of business and community leaders committed to ensuring the long term preservation and viability of Orange County's only Mission. The Mission receives no funding from either the Church or the State of California and charges admission funds as a means of providing public access.*

*Mission San Juan Capistrano is located at 26801 Ortega Highway, San Juan Capistrano, CA 92675. Open Daily 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Closed Thanksgiving, Christmas, and Good Friday afternoon. Admission is \$9 adults; \$8 seniors (60 years or over); \$6 children (ages 4 to 11); and children ages 3 and under are admitted free. Free audio guide with senior and adult admission. For more information, call (949) 234-1300 or visit [www.missionsjc.com](http://www.missionsjc.com).*