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**MISSION SAN JUAN CAPISTRANO TO HONOR FATHER SERRA  
CANONIZATION WITH WEEKLONG CELEBRATION**

SAN JUAN CAPISTRANO, Calif. (Sept. 3, 2015) -- Mission San Juan Capistrano will honor the upcoming canonization of its founder -- Father Junipero Serra -- with a week of celebratory events, including a live streaming presentation of Pope Francis recognizing Father Serra as Saint Serra.

The celebration begins on Sunday, Sept. 20 with a ceremonial bell-ringing at 9 a.m., followed by a special Father Serra and Chapel tour at 2 p.m.

The bell-ringing and tour will commence each day through Sept. 27 (There will be no tour on Sept. 23, the day of the canonization ceremony). Also each day during the week, a limited number of collectible coins will be given away to those in attendance.

On Monday, Sept. 21, the Mission's "Legacy of Saint Serra" exhibit will open. The exhibit will feature Father Serra's road to sainthood, noting his founding of nine of California's 21 missions, including Mission San Juan Capistrano on Nov. 1, 1776.

Monsignor Arthur Holquin will give a lecture "Legacy of Father Serra" on Tuesday, Sept. 22 beginning at 10 a.m.

On Wednesday, Sept. 23, followed by the bell-ringing at 9 a.m. and a moment of silence, the Mission will present live streaming in the central courtyard from 1-5 p.m. of the official canonization of Father Serra,

conducted by Pope Francis, and a papal mass. There also will be a Grand Ceremonial Bell Ringing at noon.

"Pope Francis' visit to the United States and Blessed Father Serra's canonization is a powerful and historic moment in the history of Mission San Juan Capistrano," said Mechelle Lawrence Adams, Executive Director of Mission San Juan Capistrano. "As stewards of one of Father Serra's original California missions, the Mission Preservation Foundation, staff, and volunteers stand ready to greet visitors from all over the world who will want to walk the grounds that a saint once walked and visit his chapel, the most historically significant chapel in California."

The celebratory week will continue from Thursday, Sept. 24 through Sunday, Sept. 27 will a daily bell-ringing at 9 a.m., the Saint Serra and Chapel tour at 2 p.m. and the continued opening of the "Legacy of Saint Serra" exhibit.

"We are honored to ensure the continued sustainability of a most revered religious and historic landmark and look forward to this new chapter in our Mission's local and worldwide history," Lawrence Adams said. "With this new chapter we will work even harder to ensure the continued care, access and meaning of this special place founded in faith and steeped in history."

***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).*