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**ST. JOSEPH'S DAY AND RETURN OF THE SWALLOWS CELEBRATION
TO HONOR VETS WITH WORLD WAR II FLYOVER BY THE CONDOR SQUADRON**

SAN JUAN CAPISTRANO, Calif. (March 10, 2016) -- Mission San Juan Capistrano is excited to announce an exclusive new feature during St. Joseph's Day and the Return of the Swallows Celebration on Saturday, March 19.

For the first time ever, visitors to the Mission will enjoy a flyover as a tribute to America's veterans, past and present. St. Joseph's Day this year will also feature a World War II era concert, "Swingin' with the Swallows," by the Swing Cats Big Band from 2-4 p.m.

"Mission San Juan Capistrano has welcomed servicemen and women for generations," said Mechelle Lawrence Adams, Executive Director of the Mission. "Many marines in Oceanside visit the Chapel before being deployed or leaving for service. Their continued support of the Mission San Juan Capistrano has meant so much to all of us. As a result their service will be celebrated as part of our world renown tradition this year because the event falls on a Saturday, meaning more people will be able to attend and have a chance to join in our flyover tribute."

The flyover will be conducted by The Condor Squadron at noon during the official Bell Ringing ceremony. The ceremony will begin at 11:40 a.m. at the foot of the Mission's Saint Junipero Serra statue and historic Bell Wall.

The Condor Squadron Officer's and Airmen's Association is a non-profit organization founded in 1965 by a group of World War II fighter pilots to preserve a piece of aviation history that played an important part in securing the freedoms we cherish as a nation.

The Condor Squadron flies WWII North American AT-6 airplanes over parades, stadium events, memorial services and community occasions to commemorate veterans of the United States Armed Forces. The organization also maintains aviation museums in Van Nuys and Burbank.

The flyover will be part of a memorable St. Joseph's Day celebration, a tradition commemorating the annual return of the famous swallows to Capistrano, which was started by Father St. John O'Sullivan in the 1920s and is carried out each year on March 19th.

The day begins with St. Joseph's Day Mass at Mission Basilica beginning at 8:30 a.m. Mission doors open at 9 a.m. with the daily ringing of the historic bells in honor of Saint Junipero Serra.

St. Joseph's Day and Return of the Swallows festivities will take place all day from 10 a.m.-4 p.m. including ringing of the historic bells, live music and dance performances, Native American presentations, guided tours, activities for kids and more. Dr. Charles Brown, Ornithologist from the University of Tulsa, will give two presentations on the swallows at 1:00 and 1:30 p.m. Local food vendors will serve onsite all day including Las Golondrinas, Sundried Tomato and 3:16 Bakery Shop.

Mission San Juan Capistrano recognizes Major Sponsor, Mission Inn San Juan Capistrano, for their generous underwriting support to help make St. Joseph's Day possible.

Admission tickets are \$15 for adults and seniors and \$6 for children ages 4-11. Mission Preservation Society Members receive free admission. Tickets, information and the full event schedule may be found at www.missionsjc.com/swallows.

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 18th 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.