



## MISSION SAN JUAN CAPISTRANO TO EXPAND INCLUSIVITY EFFORT WITH PRESTIGIOUS ADVISORY COMMITTEE AND NEW CULTURAL EVENTS

*The Mission Will Expand Programming to Explore the Mission's Rich Cultural History of California's Indigenous People with Lectures and Events.*



**SAN JUAN CAPISTRANO, Calif. (April 10, 2018)**---Mission San Juan Capistrano has announced it will expand its programming to celebrate the mission's diverse past. As part of the Mission's commitment to empower all perspectives, Executive Director Mechelle Lawrence-Adams has also formed an Advisory Committee on Hispanic Interpretation comprising prestigious historical academics Dr. Rose Marie Beebe, Dr. Robert Senkewicz, Dr. Ruben G. Mendoza, and Jacque Tahuka Nunez.

"We are thrilled to expand our programming at the mission to be even more inclusive of all perspectives," said the Mission's executive director, Mechelle Lawrence Adams. "We want to highlight all types of historic stories of the at the mission as well as recognize the diversity and complex past here in Southern California."

A new lecture series and new cultural programs are being rolled out to widen its 360-degree historical perspective of the mission. Dr Rose Marie Beebe and Dr. Robert Senkewicz will host a joint history lecture called *Junipero Serra: The Man Behind the Myth* on Wednesday, May 30. Additionally, the Santa Clara University professors will host a lecture called *Lands of Promise and Despair: Spanish and Mexican California* on Thursday, May 31.

Dr. Ruben G. Mendoza, an archaeologist, writer, photographer and founding faculty member of the California State University of Monterey Bay, will host two lectures in July. *Saint Junipero Serra and the Dream of California* lecture will be hosted on Wednesday, July 25 and *O'What a Tangled Web We Weave: The Archaeology of Objects and Materials in the California Missions* lecture will take place the following day, Thursday, July 26.

One of the new cultural programs being rolled out is Journeys to the Past, an ongoing event featuring storytelling and interactive experiences that immerse visitors in the cultural traditions and heritage of the area's indigenous people. These events will be lead by Jacque Tahuka Nunez, an award-winning indigenous educator and master storyteller and Acjachemen descendant. Nunez is known in artistic and academic communities as a Master Storyteller who shares her ancestral Acjachemen culture through the Native American tradition of oral storytelling. The program will be held onsite the second Saturday of each month, starting in April and additionally on the first Sunday of each month starting in May. Adults and children alike are invited to take participate in storytelling, games, songs, and dances.

The Journeys to the Past programming is free with admission to the mission. The lectures are free with RSVP confirmation. Space is extremely limited and is reserved on a first come first serve basis. To RSVP to any of the lectures, those interested may email Brenda Mumma at [bmumma@missionsjc.com](mailto:bmumma@missionsjc.com).

The mission is a critically important California and Orange County landmark. The undertaking of numerous educational and interpretive efforts to create an inclusive dialog serves as groundbreaking thought leadership within the California Missions family. For more information about the mission, lectures, and programming, visit [www.missionsjc.com](http://www.missionsjc.com).

### **ABOUT MISSION SAN JUAN CAPISTRANO**

Located in San Juan Capistrano's Historic Downtown just four miles from the stunning coastal cliffs of Dana Point, Mission San Juan Capistrano is a remarkable historic landmark and museum that is unique both in its picturesque beauty and its role in connecting visitors with California's cultural past, present and future. The Mission's stunning grounds and impressive architecture are a compelling setting in which visitors can learn about the region's cultural roots, take inspiration from its spiritual significance, engage with local traditions, or explore both permanent and traveling exhibits of original artifacts that bring its history into the present.

Founded on November 1, 1776 by Padre Junípero Serra, who was canonized as a saint in 2015, Mission San Juan Capistrano is known as the "Jewel of the Missions" because of its Great Stone Church, which was completed in 1806 after nine years of construction and was considered an architectural gem that no other church compared with in size or beauty on the West Coast of California. The seventh of nine missions founded by Serra (of a total 21 California missions established by Spain), it is Orange County's only mission and is considered the birthplace of the region.

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