San Juan Capistrano, Calif. (September 24, 2019) – The stunning Romance of the Mission benefit gala drew 475 guests to the historic grounds of Mission San Juan Capistrano on September 20. Net proceeds of an estimated $285K will support the Mission Preservation Foundation ensuring the historic and religious significance of Orange County's only mission which leads all California Mission's in fourth grade field trips and education.

After an elegant cocktail reception in the Mission's Front Courtyard Gardens, attendees were led to The Ruins of The Great Stone Church. Mission San Juan Capistrano Executive Director Mechelle Lawrence Adams welcomed guests to the black-tie affair saying, “Tonight, provides us with a chance to come together. To celebrate the positive impact, you have made possible. A chance to say thank you to a vibrant collection of uplifting people, making a difference.”

Carol and Don Dorkowski were then introduced by Mission Board Preservation President George O’Connell who recognized the couple for their extensive support and commitment to Mission San Juan Capistrano’s preservation efforts.

Upon receiving the honor, Don Dorkowski said, “This recognition is beyond the realm of my thinking…I received many honors and awards during my 21 years in the NFL, but this is by far the best.”

Grammy Award-winning singer and producer Steve Tyrell and his band then presented a superb performance of modern pop standards including The Look of Love, Raindrops Keep Falling on My Head, The Way you Look Tonight and When the Swallows Come Back to Capistrano.

Mission San Juan’s traditional bells were rung as guests made their way into the Central Courtyard. Reverend Monsignor J. Michael McKiernan gave the blessing prior to the four-
course plated dinner generously hosted and served by long-time community partner, The Ritz-Carlton, Laguna Niguel. San Juan Capistrano-based Rancho Capistrano Winery underwrote the wine pairings for the reception and dinner courses.

Kerry and Gavin Herbert of Roger’s Gardens, Newport Beach designed and donated floral design services and table décor which included exquisite arrangements of red and orange poppies for the candlelit dining tables.

Opportunity drawing items were drawn by board members Wylie Aitken, Bill Cvengros and Paul Mikos and included a two-night stay at The Ritz-Carlton, Laguna Niguel, Ladies and Gentlemen’s Baume & Mercier watches by Jean-Jacques Mamie, a cultured fresh water pearl necklace and an 18 KT white gold bracelet by Roberto Coin. Each guest was given an elegant tin of California poppy seeds as a take-a-way gift.

For more information about Mission San Juan Capistrano, visit www.missionsjc.com.

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 Mission is also Orange County’s only Mission and is a site of ongoing faith, education, preservation, and cultural event programming. The site includes such original buildings as the Serra Chapel, Great Stone Church, and the original padres’ quarters of the South Wing.

The Mission was founded on November 1, 1776 by Saint Junipero Serra as the seventh in the chain of the twenty-one California missions established by Spain. Over 70,000 fourth grade students visit the Mission as part of their field trip learning about Early California history.

Mission San Juan Capistrano is owned by the Diocese of Orange and receives no church or state funding. Its fundraising entity, the Mission Preservation Foundation, is comprised of business and community leaders committed to ensuring the long term preservation and viability of Orange County’s only Mission.

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