



Mission San Juan Capistrano Announces St. Joseph's Day and Return of the Swallows Celebration on March 19

San Juan Capistrano, Calif., (February 21, 2023) - Mission San Juan Capistrano's historic St. Joseph's Day and Return of the Swallows celebration will be held on the Mission grounds on Sunday, March 19. The world-renowned return of the swallows is celebrated each year on St. Joseph Day (March 19), a liturgical feast day recognized in the Catholic Church.

St. Joseph's Day will feature live entertainment, ringing of the historic Mission bells, local food and craft vendors, activities for children and a virtual presentation by world famous swallow's expert Dr. Charles R. Brown.

"Traditions that bring us together help build a community. San Juan Capistrano is proof that traditions like the return of the swallows is how to build a fabric of a very unique and special place. We are happy to serve as the City's unofficial ambassador on the world-stage promoting and celebrating the 250-year tradition and unique identity of this community," says Mission San Juan Capistrano Executive Director Mechelle Lawrence Adams.

Other highlights include Station Tours with Mission Docents, Native American basket weaving demonstrations, the Legacy of Saint Serra Exhibit, an interpretive sign program with St. Joseph's Day traditions and St. Joseph's Table display honoring St. Joseph to feed those less fortunate.

St. Joseph's Day Celebration Schedule

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| 9:00 a.m. | Gates open; Historic bell ringing upon the Mission's opening (honoring Saint Junipero Serra) |
| 10:00 a.m. | Welcome by Mission Executive Director, Mechelle Lawrence Adams |
| 10:20 a.m. | Live mariachi music by Mariachi Tapatio |
| 11:00 a.m. | Live ancient folklore dance by Duende Flamenco |
| Noon | Historic bell ringing (honoring Saint Joseph and the Swallows return); "When the Swallows Come Back to Capistrano," song performed by Renée Bondi |
| 12:15 p.m. | Live mariachi music by Mariachi Tapatio |
| 1:15 p.m. | Performance by the a cappella group 6/7 Time |
| 2:00 p.m. | Complimentary live tour with Mechelle Lawrence Adams |
| 2:00 p.m. | Lecture: "The Day that Al Capone, Gangster of the 1930's, Came to Visit Mission San Juan Capistrano" |

For more details, tickets and advanced reservations, visit www.missionsjc.com/swallows. Mission San Juan Capistrano is located at 26801 Old Mission Road, San Juan Capistrano, CA 92675.

About St. Joseph's Day/Return of the Swallows and Mission San Juan Capistrano

St. Joseph's Day is a feast day marked by the Catholic Church which has been celebrated on March 19 since the 10th century. Mission San Juan Capistrano began celebrating the Return of the Swallows on Saint Joseph's Day in the 1920's when then Mission resident priest Father St. John O'Sullivan wrote the legendary swallows story on St. Joseph Day, which happened to be his birthday.

The Mission's swallows migrate 6,000 miles from Goya, Argentina to San Juan Capistrano in large groups. Some cliff swallow colonies number more than 3,500 nests found under the eaves of the Mission. The gourd-shaped nests are made of mud pellets consisting of sand, silt and clay while the nest chambers are lined with grass and feathers.

Known as the "Jewel of the Missions," Mission San Juan Capistrano is a historic landmark and museum that features exhibits, five-language audio tour, festivals and public programming. As Orange County's only mission, the site is home to Serra Chapel, the Ruins of The Great Stone Church (circa 1796) and original padres' quarters.

Founded on November 1, 1776, by Saint Junipero Serra as the seventh of 21 California missions established by Spain, Mission San Juan Capistrano is owned by the Diocese of Orange and receives no church or state funding. The Mission Preservation Foundation, comprised of business and community leaders, is its fundraising entity committed to ensuring education, preservation and its long-term historic and religious significance.

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