A step through Mission San Juan Capistrano’s Gate House entry doors is a welcoming journey to the past. One is greeted with the energizing spirit of a caring staff, the beauty of gardens and a unique setting steeped in history.

This year the Mission celebrates the 300th birthday of its founder, Father Serra, and the significant impact on the California mission system is still seen today in the Serra Church, California Missions Heritage Park, and other significant church and a beauty to behold. Father Serra is recognized as a major force in what led to the founding of the State of California and is indeed becoming a significant role in the Catholic Church. Serra’s dual significance as a person in church and state history reflects the larger than life iconic importance of One of California’s missions as both a place of learning and continued spirituality after 217 years.

Recognized as the “Birthplace of Orange County,” Mission San Juan Capistrano serves as an indoor and outdoor museum, a designated California landmark and a site where mass continues to take place daily after 230 years. Within the landmarked building of the mission, the legacy of the padres and Native Americans, the traditions of the past and the evolving mission continues to be a place for self-reflection and faith in one to one that serves as an educational facility for over 67,000 fourth graders, teachers, and chaplains annually.

When school is not in session or during weekend days, children and their families can engage in a variety of activities like Adobe brick making, panting for gold, laza making, hide branding and more. There are special tours aimed at student groups as well as the mission; the period activities like adobe brick making, panting for gold, laza making, hide branding and more are popular. The sites and walks tour takes teams of parents to explore the mission with arrows in the past. The mission is located in the heart of a historic neighborhood, the Treasures Collects unique items and is worth repeat visits.

The Mission offers an award winning audio tour in six languages for parents and kids, as well as a shorter kids audio tour in two languages. Additionally, there are private special tours offered daily without a reservation. A combo ticket for students (ages 13-17) and adult tour groups are available by advance booking and include a discounted admission fee.

As a destination of faith, culture, history and continued learning, the Mission welcomes the international, national and California visitor. In doing so it hosts a series of signature annual events such as the St. Joseph’s Day and Return of the Don Juan each March. The Mission hosts a summer concert series that features vintage music of the 20th century and a well-loved Mexican festival featuring the competitive spirit of mariachi bands from all over southern California. Finally, at Christma’s Day’s end experience the Christmas spirit by hosting local musical groups from churches, schools, and nonprofit organizations to capture the spirit of the season. The Mission boasts a five-year calendar of event which is featured on its website so that guests can plan in advance. All events are generally free to members in the Mission Preservation Board.

Mission: Juan Capistrano receives no church or state funding, and to stay open must charge an admission fee or grow its membership in the Mission Preservation Board. This helps to keep the Mission open, help to maintain the site, and are directed to special preservation projects, thereby ensuring that California’s legacy continues to shine bright as well as the service of historic and educational for all who visit today and far into the future. In the 21st Century the Mission is continually evolving with the international visitor and the local who seeks a connection with the past and the opportunity to reflect, celebrate and come to better understand the missions mission.