

# MISSION CHRONICLES

Information for Locals

*Presented by*

*Mission San Juan Capistrano*

Projects Underway to Ensure the  
Preservation of Mission History

## 300 Years of Father Serra

Mission San Juan Capistrano will host a celebratory event on November 24th to honor the legacy and contribution of Father Junípero Serra on the 300th anniversary of his birth.

Father Serra (1713-1784), known by every fourth grader studying California's history, founded the first nine missions in California, including Mission San Juan Capistrano. His historical significance to California is even represented in the U.S. Capitol Building's statuary Hall. Father Serra represents California as one of the two most historically significant people to represent the state.

Serra was a man of uncompromised optimism. His personal motto was "Always look forward, never look back." Despite hardships, lack of supplies, squabbles with military and government leaders, Father Serra was able to establish nine missions and convert 5,000 Native Americans to Catholicism before his death in 1784.

His legacy and contribution can be experienced firsthand while visiting Mission San Juan Capistrano. The founding document monument and the Mission's sacramental registers bearing his signature, are on display for guests to view. Historically significant Serra Chapel, which was named in his honor, is the only remaining church in California in which Father Serra celebrated Mass and administered the Sacraments of Confirmation. Simply walking and exploring Mission San Juan Capistrano allows guests to follow the footsteps of Father Serra. During Father Serra's last visit to Mission San Juan Capistrano, October of 1783, he likely stayed in the South Wing building, and celebrated Mass in the newly built Serra Chapel.

Throughout 2013, Mission San Juan Capistrano has been celebrating the 300th anniversary of his birth with a new opening tradition, educational programming, and planning a celebratory event on his birthday November 24th. Each morning at opening, the Mission's largest bell is rung seven times at 9:00 a.m. in honor of Father Serra founding Mission San Juan Capistrano as the seventh of the nine missions he personally founded.

If you have any questions about Mission Chronicles, please contact Mission Executive Director, Mechelle Lawrence Adams at 949-234-1311.

