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**MISSION SAN JUAN CAPISTRANO OFFERS FREE ADMISSION ON
SMITHSONIAN MAGAZINE'S 5TH ANNUAL MUSEUM DAY**

--Museum Day 2009 Poised to be Largest to Date--

San Juan Capistrano, CA -- August 31, 2009 --- Mission San Juan Capistrano will participate in the fifth annual Museum Day, presented by Smithsonian magazine, on Saturday, Sept. 26. A celebration of culture, learning and the dissemination of knowledge, Smithsonian's Museum Day reflects the spirit of the magazine, and emulates the free admission policy of the Smithsonian Institution's Washington, DC-based properties.

Doors will be open free of charge to Smithsonian magazine readers and Smithsonian.com visitors at museums and cultural institutions nationwide.

Last year, upwards of 200,000 people attended Museum Day, with all 50 states plus Puerto Rico represented by over 900 participating museums, including 84 Smithsonian affiliate museums. This year, the magazine expects to attract more than a thousand museums.

"Our participation in Smithsonian Magazine's Museum Day allows us to both showcase recent significant museum improvements and also promote our upcoming exhibit featuring "Gold Fever! The Untold Stories of California's Gold Rush," said Mechelle Lawrence-Adams, Executive Director at the Mission. "We believe museum lovers will have a memorable experience in an unparalleled indoor and outdoor museum setting, hopefully renewing their appreciation of Mission San Juan Capistrano as a historic landmark and museum."

The Mission itself is a living museum, with such wonders as the Sacred Garden and Bell Wall, archeological

discoveries on site, and the ruins of the Great Stone Church. In addition, a new exhibit, the South Wing of the Mission, has been elaborately restored to portray the lives of the padres who once lived there.

To download your Museum Day Admission Card visit www.smithsonian.com/museumday.

Attendees must present the Museum Day Admission Card to gain free entry to participating institutions. Each card provides museum access for two people, and one admission card is permitted per household. Listings and links to participating museums can also be found at www.smithsonian.com/museumday.

About Smithsonian Media

Founded in 1970 with the launch of Smithsonian magazine, Smithsonian Media—comprising Smithsonian magazine, Air & Space, goSmithsonian, Smithsonian Publishing Digital Network, Smithsonian Books and advertising for Smithsonian Channel—allows the intellectually curious to indulge and engage their passions for history, the arts, science, the natural world, culture and travel. Smithsonian Media's flagship publication, Smithsonian magazine, has a circulation of more than two million. This multimedia network is also affiliated with the world's most visited museum and research complexes at the Smithsonian Institution. For more information, visit www.smithsonian.com, www.airspacemag.com, and www.gosmithsonian.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 site itself serves as a living outdoor museum with original buildings constructed by Native Americans in the 18th century including the Serra Chapel, Great Stone Church, and the original padres' quarters of the South Wing.

The Mission was founded on November 1, 1776 by Padre Junipero Serra as the seventh in the chain of the twenty-one California missions established by Spain, and is Orange County's only mission. Every year, over 50,000 students visit the Mission and engage in an inspirational learning experience via the Mission Matters programming, as part of their State required California history studies.

Mission San Juan Capistrano is owned by the Diocese of Orange and is supported by the Mission Preservation Foundation, which is comprised of business and community leaders committed to ensuring the long term

preservation and viability of Orange County's only Mission. The Mission receives no funding from either the Church or the State of California and charges admission funds as a means of providing public access.

Mission San Juan Capistrano is located at 26801 Ortega Highway, San Juan Capistrano, CA 92675. Open Daily 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Closed Thanksgiving, Christmas, and Good Friday afternoon. Admission is \$9 adults; \$8 seniors (60 years or over); \$5 children (ages 4 to 11); and children ages 3 and under are admitted free. Free audio guide with senior and adult admission. For more information, call (949) 234-1300 or visit www.missionsjc.com.

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