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CONTACT: Patricia Margosian Terrell
JUVE Creative, Inc.
(714) 841 9600
patricia@juvecreative.com

**MISSION SAN JUAN CAPISTRANO HOSTS
“THE LEGEND OF ZORRO: MYTH OR HISTORY” LECTURE**

San Juan Capistrano, CA—June 14, 2010—Sandra Curtis, Ph.D. author of *Zorro Unmasked, The Official History*, will discuss highlights of the 90-year history of Zorro, the beloved 19th Century Spanish California champion of the oppressed, whose story is intimately tied to Mission San Juan Capistrano. The lecture “The Legend of Zorro: Myth or History” will be held Saturday, July 31st at 11 a.m. in the Soldiers Barracks Gallery at the Mission.

“The Legend of Zorro: Myth or History” lecture is being held in conjunction with the Mission’s summer exhibit, “Zorro Unmasked”(© 2010 Zorro Productions, Inc., All Rights Reserved), which opened June 1st and is due to close August 31st (open from 10 a.m.-5 p.m.).

Amazon.com hailed Curtis’ book as “A must-read for Zorro aficionados,” noting that her “thorough compendium offers a rich historical cross section of one of pop culture’s most influential icons. Beginning with his debut in 1919 in a pulp magazine to Antonio Banderas’ high-profile impersonation in *The Mask of Zorro*, every factoid and trivial tidbit about the masked muchacho is included.”

In her role as Senior Vice President for Zorro Productions, Inc. for 20 years, Curtis spearheaded creative development. Curtis has produced Zorro projects across the media spectrum, including *Zorro the Musical*, with an original score by the Gypsy Kings, and a Spanish language telenovela, *Zorro, the Sword and the Rose*, as well as other major ventures in film, licensing, toys, and electronic games. She also has penned seven Zorro novels.

She conceived and then convinced Isabel Allende to write *Zorro, a Novel*, the backstory for the Zorro legend on Diego de la Vega’s early life and his development into the renowned folk hero.

The Mission's Foundation hopes to draw visitors and members of all ages to enjoy a summer visit to the birthplace of Orange County, Mission San Juan Capistrano, and learn about this famed masked hero.

All who are interested in the topic are invited to attend (space is limited to 100 people) and RSVP at (949) 234-1375. The lecture is free to members, and free with paid admission.

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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