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FATHER JUNIPERO SERRA'S VESTMENT SET ON DISPLAY

SAN JUAN CAPISTRANO, CA. – June 1, 2011 – Father Junipero Serra led the founding of the California Missions in 1769, and Mission San Juan Capistrano is one of the first nine missions that he founded. He celebrated mass in the building now known as the "Serra Chapel" in 1778 and 1784. Father Serra died in 1784 and is now being considered for sainthood.

Father Serra's Vestment Set, a collection of several garments priests must wear when celebrating mass, is now on display as part of Mission San Juan Capistrano's exhibit, "Mission Treasures: Historical Collection Revealed."

Fabricated in the late 1700s, the chasuble, stole and maniple displayed in the exhibit are believed to be used by Father Serra, the first President of the California Missions.

"While the exact provenance of this liturgical vestment remains uncertain, stylistically it reflects the period of Blessed Junipero Serra and has traditionally been referred to as the 'Serra Chasuble,'" said Monsignor Art Holquin. "A Chasuble is the principle vestment worn for the celebration of the Eucharist. It comes from the Latin word 'casula,' which means 'little house,' since its older form completely enveloped the body. In time,

the vestment was shortened to accommodate the weight of the precious material as well as silver and gold appliques that were often employed to enrich the vestment."

Mission Treasures: Historical Collection Revealed, the Mission's new exhibit will be on display throughout the summer until September 5. The exhibit features rare paintings, precious religious and historic artifacts, and documents related to the Mission's history. They are treasures because of their connections with the people and place of Mission San Juan Capistrano and unique representations of the past.

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.