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REMEMBERING THE PAST: ORIGINAL BAPTISM, MARRIAGE AND BURIAL RECORDS

SAN JUAN CAPISTRANO, CA. – June 22, 2011 – Every California mission has three books dated from the day of their founding, featuring dedications written by the founding priest. For Mission San Juan Capistrano, these books include the elegant writing on the first page of each of these records from the first Father President of the California Missions, Father Junipero Serra.

On loan from the Diocese of Orange Archives, these three books include the original baptism records, original marriage records and original burial records of Mission San Juan Capistrano, and are on display as part of the Mission's temporary summer exhibit, Mission Treasures: Historical Collection Revealed.

Known as registers, the three leather-bound books in this case date to the founding period of this Mission. Each mission was responsible for maintaining its own sacramental records and the entries were handwritten in either Spanish or Latin. These accounts documented every baptism, marriage, or burial performed by a resident priest. When reviewing the registers, Mission stewards discovered notes within the margins, which served to record interesting moments including:

- The Mission's first baptism on Dec. 19, 1776.
- The secret wedding of silent film star Mary Pickford to actor Owen Moore.

- The final farewell Father O'Sullivan wrote next to the burial record of his dear friend, Acu, the Native American bell ringer.

Mission Treasures: Historical Collection Revealed, the Mission's new exhibit is 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.