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CONTACT: Joe Haakenson
JUVE Creative, Inc.
(714) 841 9600
joe@juvecreative.com

18TH CENTURY PAINTING OF MARY MAGDALENE RESTORED

SAN JUAN CAPISTRANO, CA. (Feb. 24, 2012) – Mission San Juan Capistrano is pleased to announce that an 18th Century painting of Mary Magdalene has undergone treatment to restore its vibrancy and will be unveiled to the public in the Mission Treasures exhibit starting Thursday, March 1.

Paintings conservator Aneta Zebala, who has treated several of the Mission's paintings over the years, completed the restoration in about four months. The restoration was made possible thanks to the generous private donation given by a couple that was visiting the Mission to celebrate a special occasion.

"It looks amazing," said Jennifer Ring, Mission San Juan Capistrano's Museum Registrar. "She was able to clean off the layers of dust and dirt accumulation to reveal brighter colors and a ray of light and halo that had been nearly invisible before."

The painting is believed to have been created in the 1700s, but its artist is a mystery. The painting is signed "C.E. Sheldon," but no one has been able to find a record of that artist.

Mission Treasures: Historical Collection Revealed is now a permanent exhibit at Mission San Juan Capistrano. 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.