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PHASE I OF MISSION SAN JUAN CAPISTRANO GATE HOUSE PROJECT COMPLETE

SAN JUAN CAPISTRANO, CA. (March 27, 2012) – Mission San Juan Capistrano's Preservation Foundation celebrated the completion of Phase I of the Gate House Preservation Project with a ribbon-cutting ceremony in front of the Mission entrance on Monday, March 26.

Monsignor Arthur Holquin performed the honors of cutting the ribbon, as Mission Executive Director Mechelle Lawrence-Adams was joined by dignitaries such as President of the Mission Preservation Foundation Board George O'Connell, San Juan Capistrano Mayor Larry Kramer, and San Juan Capistrano City Council members to mark the occasion.

Phase I of the project included the construction of the Mission's new group entry, plaza and wall along Camino Capistrano.

"The Foundation is proud to deliver this first phase and looks forward to the public enjoying the new improvements," Lawrence-Adams said. "We are hopeful to raise the funds necessary to carry out phase II."

The Gate House Preservation Project will ultimately safely accommodate the operational use of the Gate House and eventually relocate the current gift shop out of the rich and historic 18th Century Sala Building as part of Phase II.

The project enhances and protects the most historic elements of the existing Gate House while improving access, safety, and staging of thousands of school children who queue on sidewalks.

The project also will lengthen the hours of the downtown's busy period and reinforce its identity by providing a museum store on the street-front after hours.

The plan has been carefully developed over the last year using visual simulations and on-site modeling to help create its overall scale, details and massing.

"The overall Gate House Preservation Project will, at its completion, elevate the architectural meaning and experience of the Mission's entry for our visitors and for the community of San Juan Capistrano," Lawrence-Adams said.

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.