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BATTLE OF MARIACHIS FESTIVAL SETS ATTENDANCE RECORD

SAN JUAN CAPISTRANO, CA. (May 15, 2012) – Mission San Juan Capistrano held its eighth annual Battle of the Mariachis Festival on Saturday, May 12, as a record number of visitors attended the popular event.

More than 4,000 enjoyed the Festival, which featured talented mariachi bands from throughout California that competed for cash prizes before a panel of judges.

The Festival was made possible thanks to the generous support from the Thomas J. and Erma Jean Tracy Family Foundation.

Battle of the Mariachis Festival winners included:

First place: Plaza de la Raza Youth Mariachi, Los Angeles

Second place: Mariachi Juvenil Azteca, San Diego

Third place: Mariachi Chula Vista, San Diego

Honorable Mention: Mariachi Juvenil Mestizo, Delano, CA

Thomas J Tracy Shining Star: Soloist Matthew Real, Mariachi Juvenil Azteca, San Diego

Held in the Mission's Central Courtyard, festivities began with a welcoming by Mission Executive Director Mechelle Lawrence-Adams and the National Anthem by vocalist Genesis Codina. The historic Mission Bells were rung in revelry to mark the start of the Festival.

The event was emceed Laura Sobrino, who was first dubbed the "Mariachi Queen" in 1995 by the Los Angeles Times. In 1996, an NBC national morning show featured a segment on her as a pioneer female mariachi and as a positive role model for the new generation of mariachi musicians. This year marked her third appearance as the Festival's emcee.

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.

