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Mission Preservation Foundation Nets Over \$210,000 at *Romance of the Mission* Benefit Gala

San Juan Capistrano, Calif. – The Mission Preservation Foundation presented its spectacular *Romance of the Mission* benefit gala on September 16 featuring over 400 guests and netting approximately \$210,000 in support of the Gate House Preservation Project and traveling exhibits. The elegant evening featured a concert in the ruins of the Great Stone Church with two time Grammy nominee, baritone and actor Rod Gilfry and honored The Reverend Monsignor Arthur A. Holquin.

Mission San Juan Capistrano executive director Mechelle Lawrence-Adams said, “The evening was truly magical and we are one giant step further towards realizing the Gate House Project which will preserve the historic Sala building and relocate the gift shop to the street. Monsignor Holquin was a most deserving honoree for his vast contributions and great love of Orange County’s only mission.”

A beautiful cocktail reception in the Mission’s Front Courtyard preceded the concert in the Great Stone Church where Gilfry performed a variety of standards and classical vocal selections including “Embraceable You,” “Besame Mucho” and an event tradition, “When the Swallows Return to Capistrano.”

The concert was followed by a candlelight dinner in the Central Courtyard featuring a plated four-course meal by Mission San Juan Capistrano’s long-time community partner The Ritz-Carlton, Laguna Niguel. Sandy Kelton Rogers of the Ritz Carlton, Laguna Niguel was later recognized for the resort’s steadfast support and first rate service at the Mission’s benefit gala over the years. Wine pairings from Ignatius Cellars, Clare Valley

South Australia were provided compliments of The Thomas and Erma Jean Tracy Family Foundation and each guest received a set of impressionist note cards with Mission San Juan renderings compliments of James and Madeline Swinden on behalf of Irvine Museum.

Traditional Jewelers donated a custom ring for the evening's opportunity drawing and Pacific Symphony Orchestra's president John Forsythe was on hand to provide a surprise second item which included four box seats with champagne reception and artists meet and greet for an upcoming performance at the Renée and Henry Segerstrom Concert Hall. The winning tickets were drawn and presented by Kilian Tracy and Natalie Halfacre, on behalf of Mission Preservation board member Lula Halfacre.

For more information about *The Romance of the Mission*, contact Barb Beier at 949.234.1323, bbeier@missionsjc.com, or visit www.missionsjc.com. The 2012 *Romance of the Mission* date is already set for Friday, September 14, 2012.

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 Mission is also Orange County's only Mission and is a site of ongoing faith, education, preservation, and cultural event programming. The site includes such original buildings as 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. Over 50,000 fourth grade students visit the Mission as part of their field trip learning about Early California history.

Mission San Juan Capistrano is owned by the Diocese of Orange. Its fundraising entity, the Mission Preservation Foundation, 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 must charge admission funds as a means of providing continued public access.

Mission San Juan Capistrano is located at 26801 Ortega Highway, San Juan Capistrano, CA 92675. Its official website is www.missionsjc.com.

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