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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NEW HOME FOR OCEANSIDE'S 9th DIA DE LOS MUERTOS CELEBRATION Mission San Luis Rey has agreed to assume responsibility for the annual festivities

OCEANSIDE, CA - June 8, 2009 - Dia de los Muertos, the popular street festival usually staged downtown Oceanside and bringing in crowds of 40,000+, has found itself a new home at Mission San Luis Rey. The 9th Annual Dia De Los Muertos will take place Sunday, November 1st, 2009, 10am – 4pm. MainStreet Oceanside, the downtown business support group that previously produced the event, is providing assistance to the Mission to bring the event to Mission grounds. Many of the traditions of the festival will continue including; the altars (ofrendas) to departed loved ones, the chalk cemetery and the educational component provided by Professor Carlos von Son of Palomar College. In addition, long time supporters such as the Oaxacan community leaders and Mellano & Company have again decided to participate. Mellano & Company generously agreed to continue providing the tens of thousands of marigolds used for the altars and to decorate the event venue. The Mission has also promised to provide festival attendees with great music, an international food court and a bazaar featuring goods from around the world.

Rick Wright, Interim Executive Director for MainStreet Oceanside said, "We are excited to be working with the Mission staff to preserve this incredible event for the community. Budget cutbacks prevented us from staging Dia de los Muertos this year so we are thrilled that another group has come forward to continue the tradition. Over the past eight years, we have assembled an incredible team to produce this event and I'm pleased that most of the team will stay intact as the Mission assumes the lead role in producing Dia de los Muertos."

"Mission San Luis Rey is excited to continue their community partnership by accepting this role. One of our goals is to bring the community together and the Dia de los Muertos celebration is one of unity and cultural importance. Since the Mission welcomes people of all faiths, this festival is a good fit. We look forward to working closely with MainStreet Oceanside to create a successful event," said Friar James Lockman, ofm, Executive Director of Mission San Luis Rey.

Because of the cost associated with the event, Mission San Luis Rey is looking for the corporate community to also step forward to continue this valuable and highly visible tradition by assisting with sponsorships and donations. For information regarding sponsorship, please contact the Mission c/o Marie Daniels of CAELUM Communication & Marketing, 858.736.9140.

About Mission San Luis Rey de Francia

Founded in 1798, Mission San Luis Rey de Francia, known as the "King of the Missions," is a National Historic Landmark. The largest of all the 21 California missions, it is home to a community of Franciscan Friars and is open daily to the public in the Franciscan tradition of heritage and hospitality. Facilities include a Retreat Center with day and overnight programs for spiritual renewal, multi-function meeting spaces, a Cemetery open to all people, Mission Gift Shop, Historic Church and interpretive Museum.

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