

August 2022

The Connection

A Publication from Mission San Luis Rey



Discover. Embrace. Connect.

Connections

As I reflected on my message for this newsletter I kept coming back to the idea of connections. (I guess I was inspired by the name of our newsletter.) We are all connected to each other and our environment as reflections of God's abundant love. Visitors to the Mission experience the connection to the long history of the Mission; starting with the native Luiseño people, to the Franciscan Friars who founded the Mission, to the beautiful architecture. Visitors to the Mission connect with their faith, whether they're attending Mass, a retreat, or just spending quiet time in this sacred space. Visitors in the cemetery strive to keep the connection and memories of their loved ones alive in their hearts.

This connection with everything and everyone around us comes with responsibility. The responsibility to be ever mindful of the needs of others. The

responsibility to be ever mindful of how our actions effect others and Mother Earth. Being mindful of these things feeds our faith and our soul.

We would love to hear about your connection with the Mission. I know many of you have been a part of the Mission's history for many, many years. I invite you to share your story through photos or your written story. If you are interested in sharing your connection please reply back to this email (if you receive this electronically) or the Mission mailing address (below) if you receive a copy in the mail.

My connection to the Mission has deepened my faith and compassion in so many ways. I look forward to learning about your connection!

Peace and all good,
Gwyn Grimes
Executive Director



Mission EVENTS

- **August 26, 2022**
Feast of San Luis Rey
A festive evening starts with Mass at 5:30pm on the front steps of the Historic Church followed by a procession, food and multi-cultural entertainment. (There will be **NO** fireworks this year.)
- **October 1, 2022**
10 am- 2 pm
Blessing of the Animals
- **October 29, 2022**
6 pm - 8:30 pm
Outdoor Concert
featuring The Straytones
General Admission and Table seating are available.
- **December 2 | 7 pm**
December 3 | 2 pm
Annual Christmas Concert with the San Luis Rey Chorale in the Historic Church
Dessert reception in the Sacred Garden immediately following the Friday night performance.
- **Every Weekend**
Behind-the-Scenes Tours
Saturdays at 11am and Sundays at 1pm. Visit our website for times and availability. **Reservations are highly recommended.**

www.sanluisrey.org

Art Conservation at the Museum

At Mission San Luis Rey, we have one of the largest collections of artifacts, historical objects, and art of any mission in California. Some pieces date back to the 1500's with artwork that decorated, not just our Historic Church, but churches in Los Angeles and the San Diego Mission. With thousands of objects in our collection, conservation can be an expensive and difficult challenge. We'd like to share some of those efforts with you.

In the summer of 2021, after reopening the Historic Church to the public, we noticed some damage to the image of our *Lady of Guadalupe* in the Madonna Chapel. This painting was painted in 1924 by Federico Rivera, with a note in Spanish pointing out that it was done according to the original, in the Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe in Mexico City. The damage to the painting was from a drink that was thrown on the painting by a visitor to the Historic Church. When staff noticed what happened, we called a team of conservators from Balboa Art Conservation Center (BACC) who took the painting along with two others from our collection, to their studio. After cleaning the superficial grime, and studying it carefully for a year, they determined that the image could not be restored. Despite this, we will hang it in its usual spot inside the Madonna Chapel, and explain what happened, in hopes of making people aware of the difficult and challenging task that conservation can be.

The second Madonna painting, an image of our *Lady of Refuge*, also from the Madonna Chapel, had a better fate. This large painting of unknown origin, has basic figures and shapes that might indicate it was painted by an inexperienced painter, possibly of native Mexican origin. Cleaning the superficial grime, highlighted the original colors of the image, which were hiding for decades behind a layer of old, rusted varnish and candle smoke. The painting will be hung back in the Madonna Chapel in its usual spot, on the left side of the small altar, at the end of August 2022.

The third Madonna is a success story when it comes to conservation efforts at Mission San Luis Rey. Found also in the summer of 2021, hiding in a corner inside a storage room, it caught my eye right away. It is a beautiful copy done in the 1800s of a baroque masterpiece, *The Madonna of the Veil*, by Carlo Dolci. Registered in the collection inventories at San Luis Rey since the 1940s, and always in storage, the canvas was ripped, the oil was cracking, and there was some overpaint and several layers of dark varnish. The team of painting conservationists at BACC was able to stabilize it, clean it and highlight the sweetness of the image. They brought it back to life. It will be on display at the end of August in the Mission San Luis Rey Museum, where everyone who walks by will be able to appreciate its beauty.

~Helena Hazleton,
Museum Director

OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE



CLOSE-UP
OF DAMAGE

OUR LADY OF REFUGE



MADONNA OF THE VEIL



Cem

Franciscan CORNER

Meet Br. Salvador Mejia



I am Salvador Mejia, 52 years old. I was born in a small town in Guanajuato, Mexico that was founded

by the Franciscans in 1526, and ever since we have only had the presence of the Franciscans. I grew up already immersed in Franciscan spirituality with the love, care, and family values that were provided by my loving family. As a poor family, we experienced many challenges, but we are also witnesses of God's love and care. I joined the Franciscan Minor Seminary when I was 14 years old, after four years of studies, I had to leave the Seminary and work so I could help my family. This is the time when I decided to come to the USA.

I came to this country as an immigrant and worked hard in all kinds of jobs, especially in the restaurant and hotel business. In this country, I had the opportunity to meet wonderful people who helped me and advised me that education

was the door to success.

I started by taking ESL classes at a community college and continued my education but unfortunately, I could not graduate.

In 2003 I started to work in a Franciscan parish in Oakland, CA. Around this time, I also had the opportunity to become a US resident. I went back to school and finished my MDiv at the Franciscan School of Theology in Berkeley, CA. In 2017, I was officially admitted to join the formation program in the Order of Friars Minor of the St. Barbara Province.

Today, I am a joyful man who responded to God's call to serve Him as a religious vowed man. I am thankful to God, my family, and all of you beautiful friends for your love, prayers, and support.

~ Br. Salvador

225 Years of Mission History

Next year Mission San Luis Rey will be turning 225 years old. We've developed the outline of our planned celebrations throughout the year. As part of our year-long celebration we'd like to capture memories from all of you who have so much history at the Mission; whether you were baptized, married, attended the Fiesta or the Heritage Ball, attended the Little Flowers Academy, or are a frequent retreat guest. If you'd like to share your memories,



please reply back to this email if you received our newsletter electronically, or send to the Mission address if you receive our newsletter in the mail.

We'll keep you updated on the schedule of events on our website, emails, newsletter, Facebook and Instagram pages. We should have a full schedule in our next newsletter. We hope you'll join us in celebrating 225 years of Mission San Luis Rey!

The Hacienda Mission San Luis Rey

It's been amazing to see the progress of The Hacienda senior living community at the Mission. Each month we receive aerial photos from the builder W.E. O'Neill, like the photo shown. As you can see, tile is going on the roof, and the outside walls are almost ready for stucco. On the inside, the many amenities and resident's rooms are starting to take shape. At the end of July, we held an informational meeting for folks who are interested in living at The Hacienda. If you would like information about living at The Hacienda, please contact Watermark Retirement Communities at 760-826-2900. Watermark Retirement Communities will operate The Hacienda.



Retreats & EVENTS

- **August 31, 2022**
2:00 pm - 4:00 pm
Pre-Planning Workshop
Presenters: Gwyn Grimes and Danielle Napoli
- **September 15-18, 2022**
Reconnect with Your Art: Artists' Retreat
- **October 15, 2022**
9:30am - 3:00pm
Connect with Gratitude
Presenter: Glenda Campos
- **November 18 - 20, 2022**
Grief and Loss Retreat
Presenter: Tom Ringgold, MT-BC
- **December 3, 2022**
9:30 am - 3:30 pm
Advent Retreat: A Season for Peace, Light & Wonder
Presenters: Br. Mark Schroeder and Mercedes Matthews

- **Quiet Days**
Spend a day away from it all at the Mission.
- **Private Retreats**
Spend time in solitude and personal spiritual reflection without participation in a formal program.

Visit our website for more information and to make reservations.

www.sanluisrey.org

Volunteer Spotlight

Joan Culver and Linda Wass are two of our rose garden volunteers. Both of these wonderful women are dedicated to caring for our beautiful rose garden. They spend many hours feeding, dead heading, pruning and weeding. They also spend time visiting other public rose gardens in the area learning from other gardens on how to best care for our roses.

Joan and Linda love the serenity of working in the rose garden – they feel God's presence as they care for the beautiful flowers. We are so appreciative for their hard work, dedication, and love for the gardens of the Mission.



Ecology Corner

Here are three great ideas to repurpose some of that clutter around your house. Rather than throwing these items in trash, consider these alternatives. Martha Stewart would be so proud of your crafting prowess.

Shirt Produce Bag

You've seen those great produce bags that are a wonderful alternative to plastic bags? Your old t-shirts may be a solution to your quandary. These simple produce bags can be made with any t-shirt! With a few cuts and optional sewing, you can make a pile of colorful storage bags to keep your produce fresh and organized. Simply cut off the sleeves of your old t-shirt, cut rows of one-inch slits, about two inches apart, three quarters of the way down your shirt. Now, you can either sew the bottom of your t-shirt, or cut fringe across the bottom and tie them to close off your produce bag.



Old Tea Set Bird Feeders

Lastly, one the kids can help with! This simple bird feeder is a great activity for your kids to do. Plus, your kids can learn about native birds in your area during the process! Just use a super adhesive glue to affix an old teacup to the saucer and hang wherever and however you like. I prefer twine for a more natural look. You can hang them directly onto a tree branch or here is fancier look.



Repurposed Candle Jars

We all have a few burnt-out candles lying around, but they're too beautiful to throw out — right? Instead, you can repurpose them into jars, pen holders, makeup brush holders, cotton ball holders, or anything else you can think of. Give it a try! You may be saying to yourself – how do I get the wax out of the bottom of that beautiful candle jar. Simply put the jar in your freezer for an hour or so, then carefully use a butter knife or spoon to pop out the remaining layer of wax.

