



The miracle of the “Swallows” of Capistrano takes place each year at Mission San Juan Capistrano, on March 19th, St. Joseph’s Day.



As the little birds wing their way back to the Mission, the town of San Juan Capistrano welcomes visitors from all parts of the world, to witness the return of the swallows.

The Legend of the Cliff Swallows of Capistrano

In his book, *Capistrano Nights*, Father St. John O’Sullivan, Pastor of Mission San Juan Capistrano (1910-1933) tells the story of how the swallows came to call the Mission home.

One day, while walking through town, Father O’Sullivan saw a shopkeeper, broomstick in hand, knocking down the conically shaped mud swallow nests that were under the eaves of his shop. The birds were darting back and forth through the air squealing over the destruction of their homes.

“What in the world are you doing?” O’Sullivan asked.

“Why, these dirty birds are a nuisance and I am getting rid of them!” the shopkeeper responded.

“But where can they go?”

“I don’t know and I don’t care,” he replied, slashing away with his pole. “But they’ve no business here, destroying my property.”

Father O’Sullivan then said, “Come on swallows, I’ll give you shelter. Come to the Mission. There’s room enough there for all.”

The very next morning, Father O’Sullivan discovered the swallows busy building their nests outside Father Junípero Serra’s Church.

Join us for St. Joseph’s Day and Return of the Swallows Celebration annually on March 19th



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