



# Santa Ysabel Indian Mission

200th Anniversary

September 16th, 2018 Outdoor Mass

October 20th, Harvest Festival

# Commemorative Committee Members who contributed to this presentation

The San Diego History Center  
Iris Engstrand, Editor of the *Journal of San Diego History*,  
Winter 2018 Issue Article on Santa Ysabel

Tom Workman, Serra Museum, Presidio Park  
Photographs for Journal of San Diego History

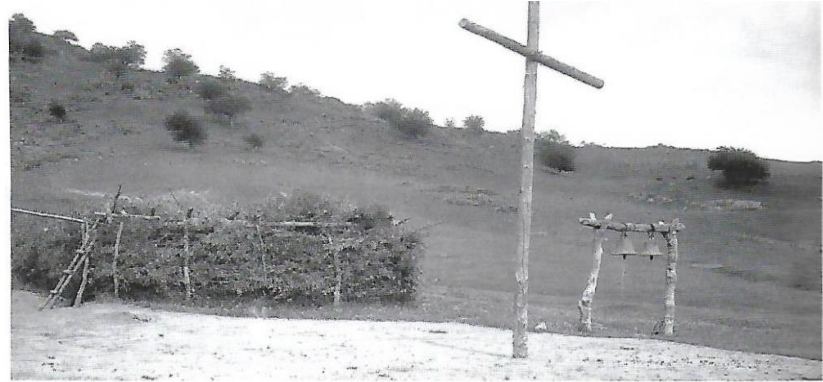
Bob and Cindy McGrath  
Robert Beer, Julian Historical Society

Kathryn Fletcher, Save Our Heritage Organisation and the  
Warner Springs Historical Society

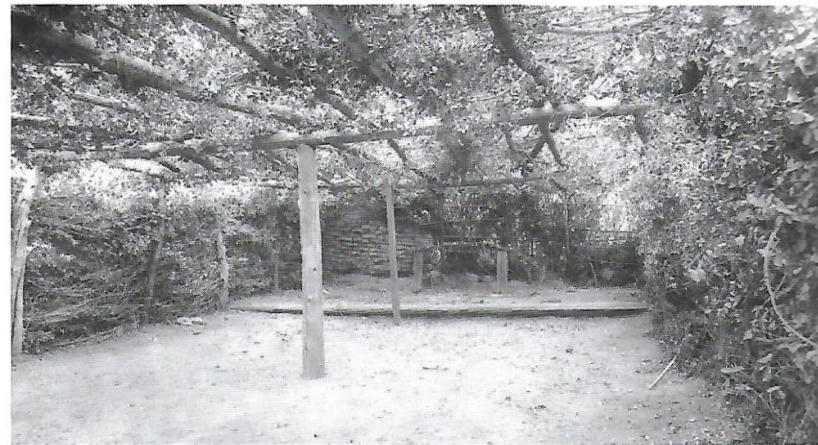
# September 20th, 1818

- **On this date a Asistencia was founded in Santa Ysabel for 250 natives who were unable to attend mass at Mission San Luis Rey, founded in 1795, or the Pala Mission founded in 1816 because of the distance.**
- **Father Juan Mariner made contact with the natives in 1795 and petitioned Governor de Sola in Monterey for a sub mission, but he did not take action.**
- **The natives built a brush structure or Enramada and Father Fernando Martin said the inaugural mass. Five hundred Indians, both Luiseno and Kumeyaay received Baptism.**
- **Plans made for the founding of an inland chain of missions equal to importance to those on the coast were ended by the revolt of Mexico against Spain and the Mexican Secularization Act of 1833.**
- **This divide the mission lands into land grants which became the ranchos of California.**

**By 1821 there were 450 natives living in Santa Ysabel both Luiseno and Kumeyaay. There was a chapel, granary, cemetery and several homes including a priest's house. After 1836 padres became fewer in number and their work was restricted. They ceased making regular visits to Santa Ysabel and the adobe chapel fell into ruins.**



*Exterior view of the bells and cross at the Mission Santa Ysabel Asistencia, San Diego, 1902. Photo by C.C. Pierce. CHS-734, University of Southern California Archives.*

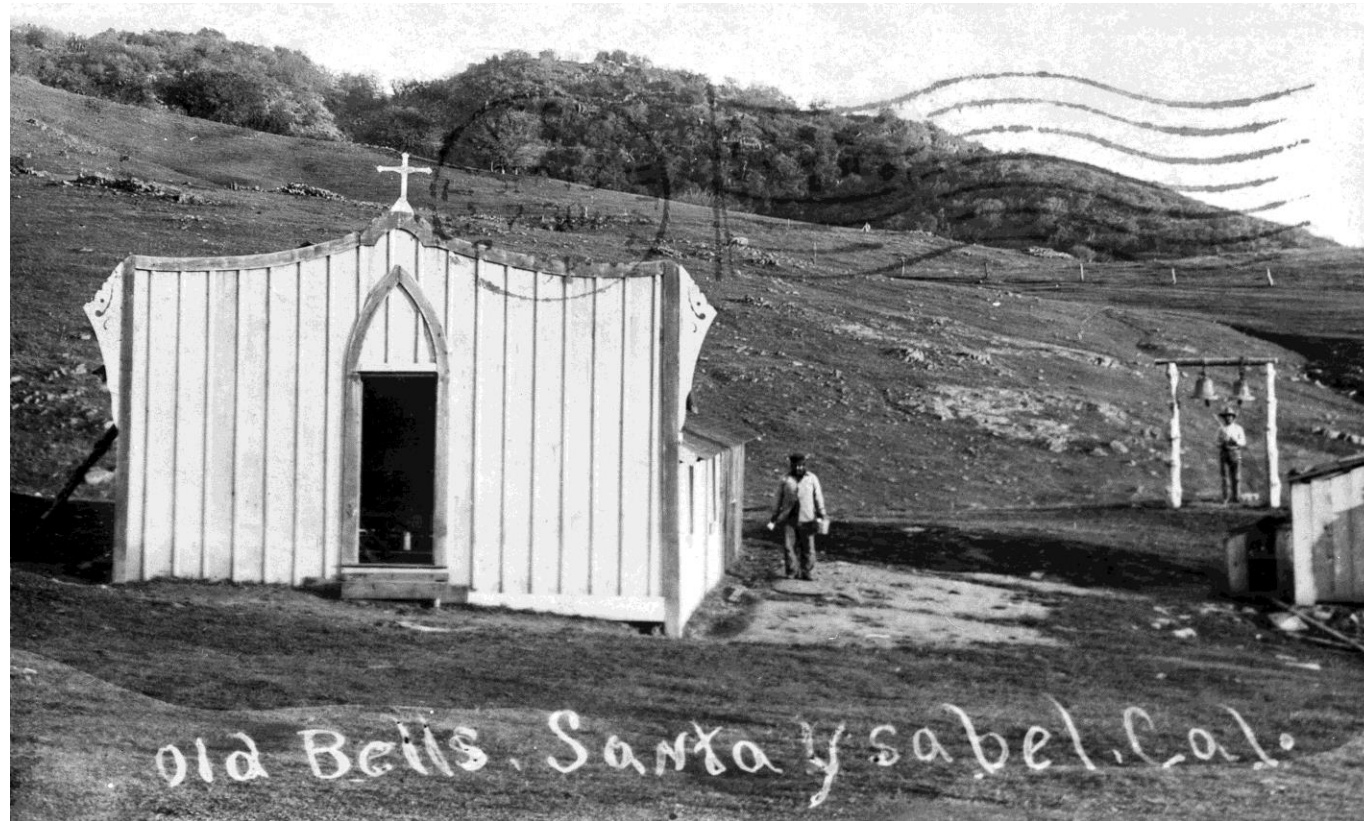


*A fragment of the adobe chapel at Mission Santa Ysabel Asistencia, San Diego, 1902. The Indians enclosed the remains before Easter Sunday, 1901. Photo by C.C. Pierce. CHS-735, University of Southern California Archives.*

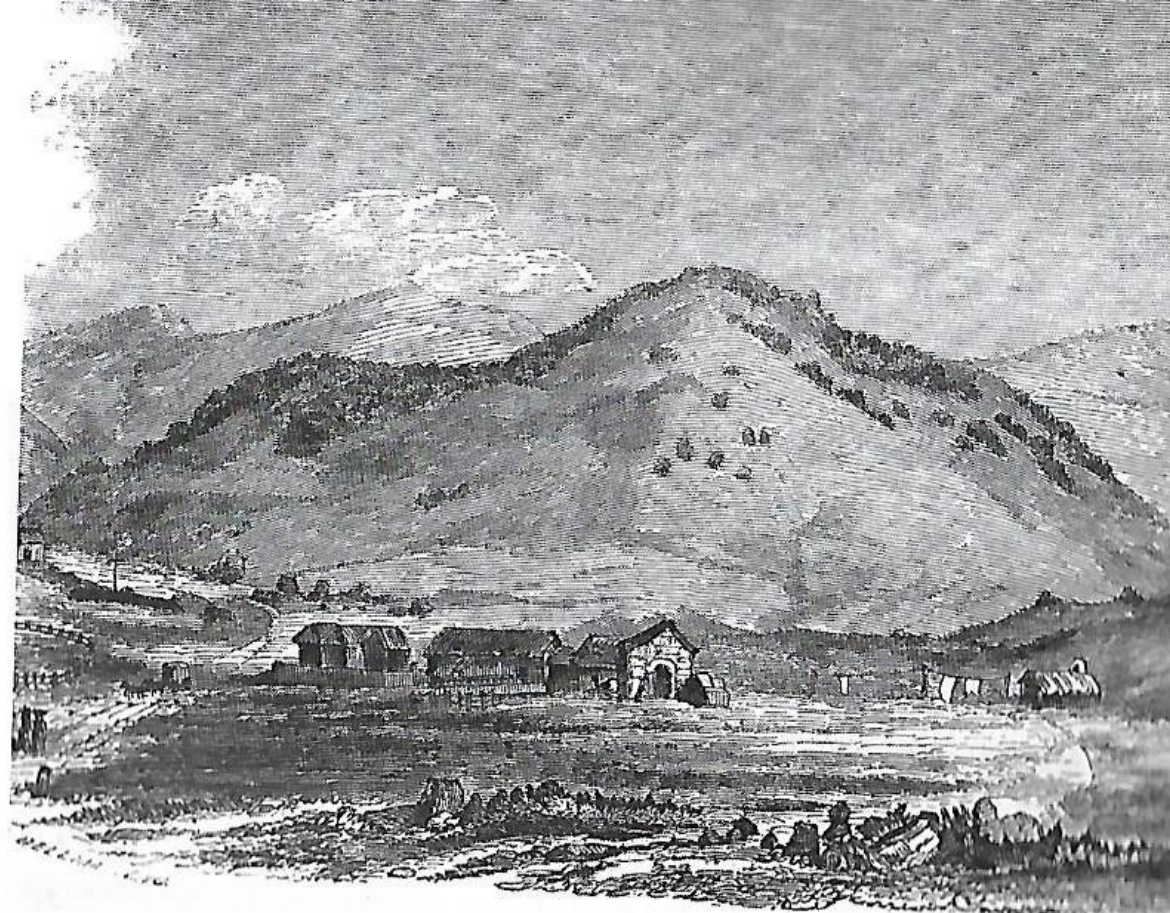
**As the Americans took over after the Mexican war the Chapel continued to survive. It was somewhat rebuilt in 1875. This photo shows the chapel in 1886. Eventually the roof caved in.**



**During the period of Mexican Rule 1821-1846 neighboring landowners plundered the Asistencia and its land. The Chapel Disintegrated into ruins. In 1844, despite protests by local Indians Rancho Santa Ysabel consisting of 17,719 acres was granted to Jose Joaquin Ortega and Edward Stokes. This photo was not dated.**



**This is an illustration of the mission by artist Charles Koppel in 1853. He was with a surveying party investigating a possible railroad route to the Pacific. He describes the chapel "in ruins".**



**Among the crops raised by the Indians were wheat, barley, corn and beans. Santa Ysabel was a stopping place on the road from Sonora to San Diego. The Asistencia possessed two fine sweet toned bells. When the adobe chapel crumbled the bells were hung on a simple framework next to the Asistencia.**

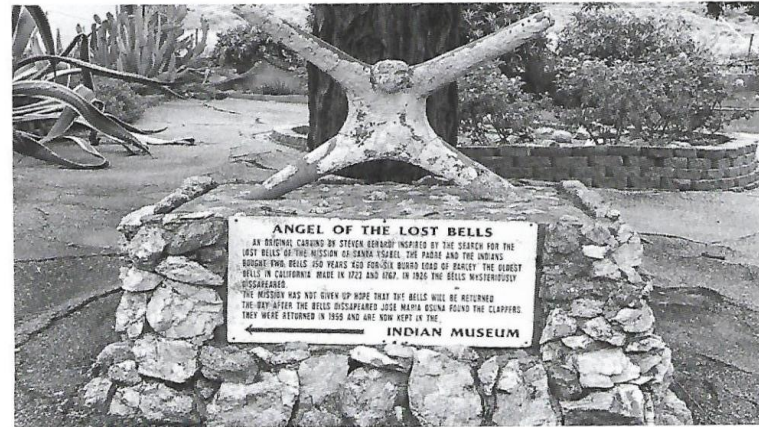




# **The History of the Bells**

- **Both of the bells were brought from Baja California and were the oldest in California. One inscribed "Nuestra Senora de Loreto" dated 1723 and the other "San Pedro" dated 1767.**
- **According to legend the Padre and Indians bought the bells for six burro loads of barley.**
- **Unfortunately in 1926 they were stolen and never recovered.**
- **The clappers and the top of one bell are in the museum shop.**
- **There is a statue of the Angel of the Lost Bells on the site.**
- **In 1993 metal craftsman Ed Schwaesdall and his son John of Ramona cast two new bells and donated them to the church on its 175th anniversary.**

**The plaque reads "an original carving by Steven Beradi who was inspired by the search for the lost bells. The clappers were not taken with the bells and placed besides the framework, The morning of the disappearance they were found by Jose Maria Osuna, who took the clappers home for safety. After his death they were passed to others until they were returned in 1959. Below is the grave of Concepcion Osuna in the Cemetery at Santa Ysabel.**



*Santa Ysabel Angel of the Lost Bells. Photo by Tom Workman.*



*The grave marker of Concepcion Osuna. Santa Ysabel Cemetery. Photo by Tom Workman.*

**This sign marks the place where the original 1818 tiles were uncovered. This is where the outdoor mass will be held on September 16th, 2018.**



*The sign marking the place where the original Asistencia tiles of 1818 can be seen. Photo by Tom Workman.*

# Historical Events

- After 1844 a wagon road went past the Asistencia to Warner Springs. This was the year the 44,000 acre Valle de San Jose was granted by Mexico to John Turnball (Juan Jose) Warner.
- California Statehood was in 1850 after the Gold Rush of 1849. Warner became a state senator.
- The General Mercantile Store was built in 1888. It and the Hoover Barn have been restored by SOHO.
- The Mesa Grande Reservation was set out in 1883 and Santa Ysabel reservation of 9, 679 acres in 1893.
- By this time the town had a population of 249 people.



DESCRIPTION OF BEARER.

Age 45 Profession Catholic Priest

Place & date of birth St. James, Montreal, Canada

Married name of bearer or married maiden (including maiden name) Ab. 26 - 1875

Height 5 feet 8 inches

Forehead Medium Eyes Grey

Nose Long Mouth Large

Chin Square Colour of Hair Brown

Complexion Fair Hair Dark

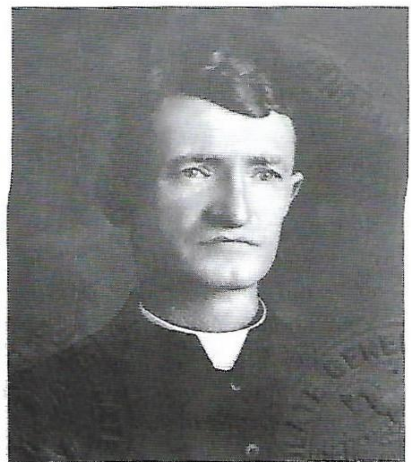
Any special peculiarities

National Status British born

Street

PARTICULAR Name

Passport of Father LaPointe. San Diego Mission Archives.



Father LaPointe, c. 1905. San Diego Mission Archives.



Enrique La Chusa, Bell ringer at Santa Ysabel. E.H. Davis photo. ©SDHC #86: 15900-1057.



Father LaPointe. San Diego Mission Archives.

**Eventually three acres of the original Asistencia were returned to the San Diego Diocese of the Roman Catholic Church. In 1903 Father Joseph Exalaphant LaPointe, a French Canadian Missionary came to work with the Indians.**

**With funds from the personal legacy of Father La Pointe and help from the Indians  
the present California mission-style boarded concrete structure was built.  
The cornerstone was laid on September 14, 1924 and the church was christened  
St. John the Baptist.  
Recently the land behind the Mission has been included in the Santa Ysabel Preserve.**



**These are photos of the 1914 Santa Ysabel Festival and Father La Pointe. The ramadas for the modern day Harvest Festivals are made in the same way.**



*Santa Ysabel Chapel bells. Confirmation by Father LaPointe, c. 1918. ©SDHC #4423.*



*Maria Diego and Baby Bernardino at Santa Ysabel.*



*Antonio Cuecos stripping leaves from Agave trunk.*



*Santa Ysabel Festival c. 1914. ©SDHC #4484-1.*

**This photo shows altar and the interior of the church. On either side of the altar are mural paintings by artist Paul Matthews. Mass is celebrated each Saturday and Sunday and the church remains under the diocese of San Diego and is administered by the St. Elizabeth of Hungary parish in Julian.**



*Interior of Mission Santa Ysabel Asistencia. St. John the Baptist Catholic Church, 2018. Photo by Tom Workman.*



**Charlie and Mary Botti were parishioners who lived in Lake Henshaw and owned the Steakhouse *Charlie and Mary's Tavern*, now known as *The Hideout*. They befriended Paul Matthews, a worker at Warner Hot Springs, and in 1948 commissioned him to paint the murals which they dedicated to their parents. The murals are recreations of paintings by Hungarian artist Miha'ly Munka'csy. Matthews signature and small bronze dedication plaques can be at the bottom of the murals. The Botti's daughter married Chet Taylor, grandson of Sam Taylor and Mary Helm. Chet still lives nearby in Lake Henshaw and his son Wayne lives in the original Botti home today. Mrs. Taylor is buried in the Botti Private Cemetery on the property as are most of the Botti family.**

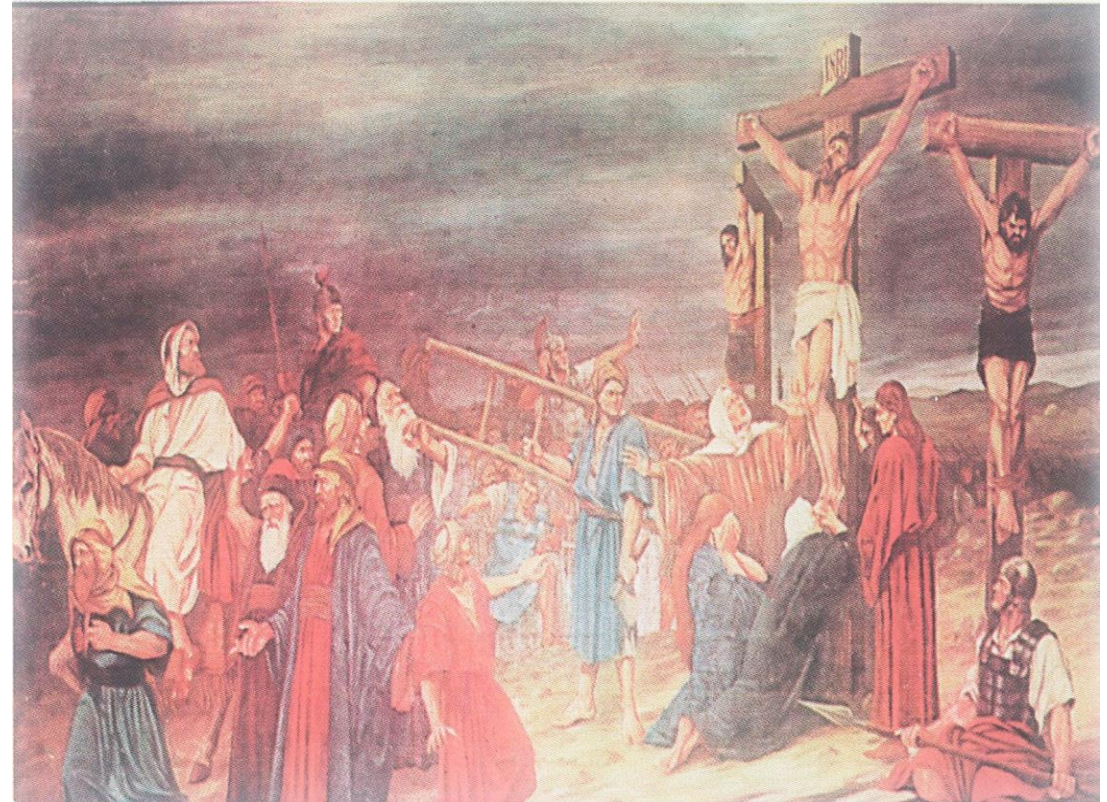
“I HAVE COME TO BEAR WITNESS TO THE TRUTH”

—JOHN XVIII: 37



“TRULY THIS MAN WAS THE SON OF GOD”

—MARC XV: 40



**Even though today's church is yet to be 100 years old it is in need of repair. Fortunately some donors have made commitments to replace the Grotto and front window which was installed in the 1950's and made of plexiglass. It is hoped that funds raise by the 200th Anniversary Celebration can help with other repairs.**



**The roof of the Church needs to be replaced as seen by the leak in the ceiling. Swallows return not only to Capistrano but to Santa Ysabel and nest under the eaves making a mess on the building and windows.**



**The Stained glass windows look lovely inside but the wood frames are rotted. To keep the windows from falling out plexiglass panels were installed but the debris from the swallows has stained and darkened the panels. All the frames need replacing and the windows reset. There are also plans to remove the faux wood siding on the interior of the church.**



**Father La Ponte died in 1932 and at the request of the Indians he served was buried next to the church. This is his grave with the museum beyond. Inside the museum and church hall there are many wonderful photographs and artifacts but they may need preserving and the displays updating.**

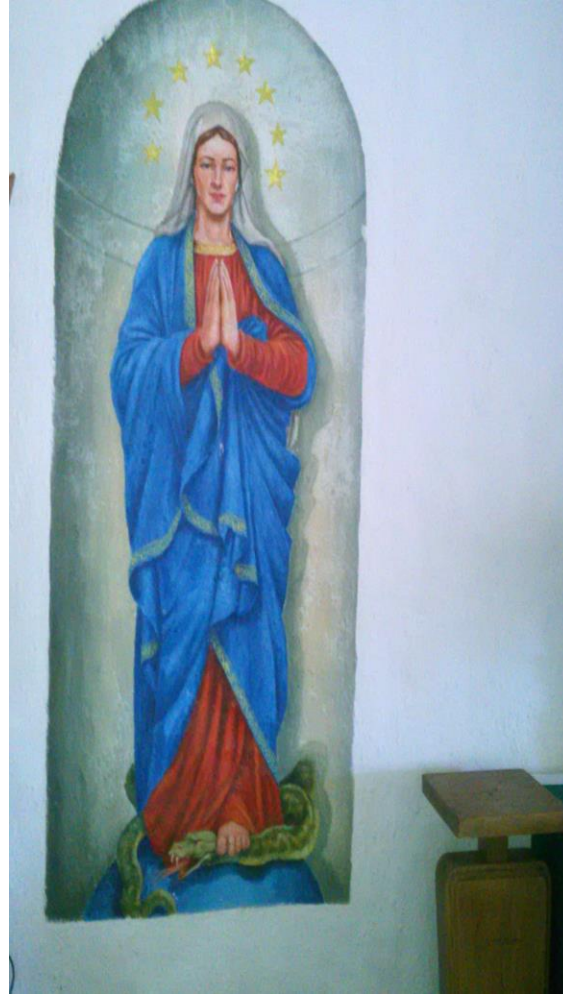
**Great strides have been made by volunteers to clean up the landscaping soon a 100 foot dead Eucalyptus tree will be removed from the site of the original chapel for safety. Then the area can be prepared for the outdoor mass on September 16th.**



**The St. Francis Chapel in Warner Springs was established in 1830 and also has murals by Paul Matthews. Other murals include the Butterfield Cantina at Warner Springs Ranch, The Hideout and Henshaw Grill and numerous homes in Coronado. Not much is known about Matthews but it is told he was discovered by Walt Disney when he was visiting Warner Hot Springs Resort, and went to work for Disney Studios.**



**These are the other murals at St. Francis including The Visit of the Magi, The Virgin Mary and St. Francis.**



**The Santa Ysabel Indian Mission has not changed much over the years and been the subject of artists. Local Indians still make pottery, lacework and baskets. Local with artists have been asked to display their art at the Harvest Festival on October 20th along with vendors.**





**We invite you to the  
Bicentennial  
Celebration Events**

**Outdoor Anniversary  
Mass and Brunch with the  
Bishop September 16th**

**10 a.m.**

**2018 Harvest Festival  
October 20th 10 a.m. to 6  
p.m. Vendors, Games,  
Deep Pit BBQ**

**Funds will go to the much  
needed restoration of the  
Mission**

