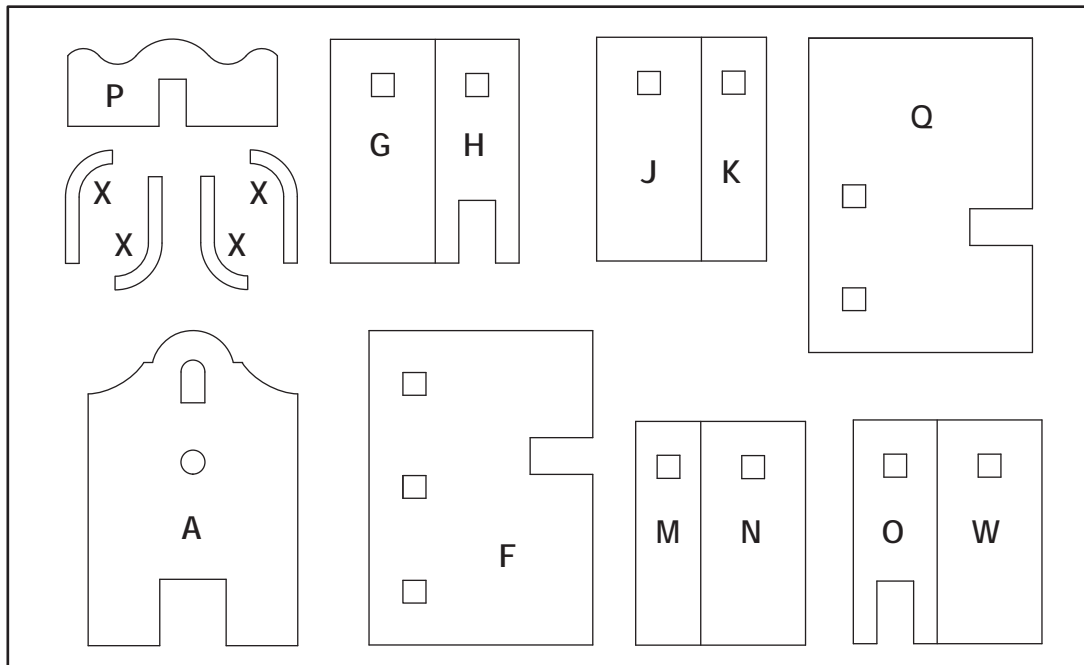
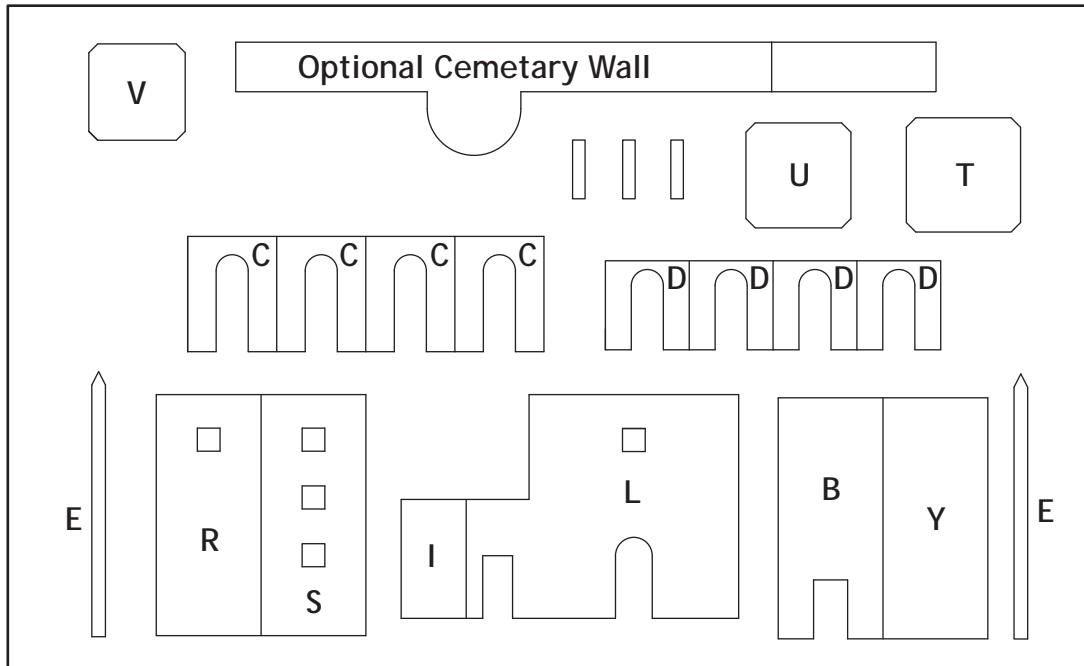


Mission San Juan Capistrano



Mission San Juan Capistrano

Number in Series: 7

Founded: November 1 1776 by Frs. Pablo Mugartegui and Gregorio Amurrio

Founder President: Blessed Junipero Serra

Named for: Saint John of Capistrano, Italy

Nickname: Jewel of the Missions

Indian Name: Sajirit or Quanis-savit

Known as the "Jewel of the Missions", San Juan Capistrano was founded on November 1, 1776, by Father Junipero Serra. It was named for the theologian St. John of Capistrano, Italy. Famous for its beautiful gardens, it is the spring home for thousands of swallows that annually migrate from their winter homes in Central America. Their arrival is celebrated on March 19, St. Joseph's Day, with the ringing of the mission bells.

Within the first year a small chapel that is still used today was completed. It is the oldest building in California still in use and the only remaining church where Father Serra is known to have said mass. A large stone church completed in 1806 was destroyed in the 1812 earthquake, killing 40 people, and was never rebuilt.

After secularization, the mission was rotting and near ruin. Father John O'Sullivan started restoration in 1910, and in 1918 it was once again made into an active church. Today the mission and grounds have been wonderfully restored and it serves as an active parish for the city of San Juan Capistrano.