



For Immediate Release

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## **Pets Celebrated at Mission San Luis Saturday, October 1, 2011**

*~Seventh Annual Blessing of Animals to be held at Tallahassee's foremost historic site~*

TALLAHASSEE — Mission San Luis invites pet owners, animal lovers, and furry, feathered, or other friends to the seventh annual *Blessing of Animals* to be held on Saturday, October 1, 2011 from 10 A.M. to 3 P.M. This event is free and open to the public. It will feature:

- Individual pet blessings by Father Oscar Sarmiento. Photographs of each blessing will be available for purchase.
- The North Florida Paso Fino Horse Association showcasing this breed's unique history and abilities.
- Hands-on art activities for children.
- Complimentary pet treats.
- Representatives from various animal organizations exhibiting with pet adoptions and information about their services.
- *Theater with a Mission* performing scenes from Spanish Golden Age drama.

Guests are requested to bring pet food donations for the Leon and Gadsden County Animal Shelters. Animals must be on leashes or in a carrier.

The *Blessing of Animals* originated in the 13<sup>th</sup> century in remembrance of St. Francis, the patron saint of animals and the environment, who believed that all animals should be treated with dignity and respect. Similar ceremonies are held across the country each October.

“The Blessing of Animals is one of our most popular events, honoring both the Franciscan mission history and Hispanic Heritage Month. This year, the Friends of Mission San Luis board determined that the event should be free to the visiting public, to encourage even more pets and their companions to attend.” said David B. Ramsay, Chairman of the Friends of Mission San Luis, Inc. “The *Blessing of Animals* is extraordinarily satisfying because it allows exhibitors to showcase their services, pet owners to show off their beloved companions, and animals to feel special and pampered.” The event is sponsored by the Friends of Mission San Luis, Inc, the Mission's citizen support organization, and the site is administered by the Florida Department of State.

Mission San Luis is a living history village and National Historic Landmark. It was the western capital of Spanish Florida from 1656 to 1704 and is on 60 beautiful acres of north Florida. Today, the 17<sup>th</sup> century is brought to life through costumed living history guides, exhibits, archaeology, and reconstructed colonial buildings. The site is located at 2100 West Tennessee Street. Daily hours are 10 A.M. to 4 P.M., Tuesday through Sunday. For more information please call 850.245.6406 or visit [www.missionsanluis.org](http://www.missionsanluis.org)

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