



長崎の教会群を世界遺産へ  
We aim at inscription on  
the World Heritage List  
in 2015.



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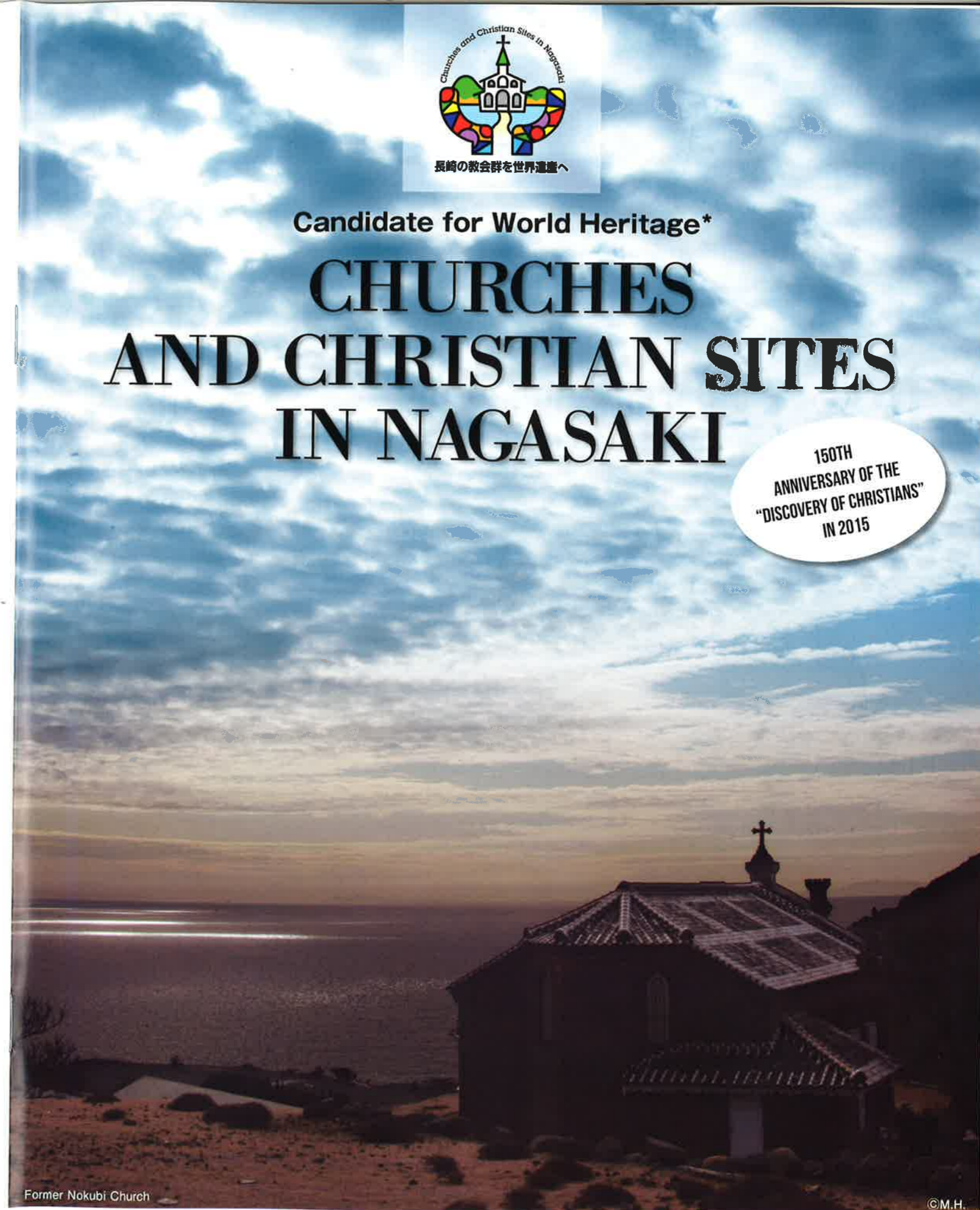
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Candidate for World Heritage\*

# CHURCHES AND CHRISTIAN SITES IN NAGASAKI

150TH  
ANNIVERSARY OF THE  
"DISCOVERY OF CHRISTIANS"  
IN 2015



Former Nokubi Church

©M.H.

**Nagasaki prefecture: Nagasaki city, Sasebo city, Hirado city, Goto city, Minami-Shimabara city, Ojika town, Shinkamigoto town**

**Kumamoto prefecture: Amakusa city**

\* "Churches and Christian sites in Nagasaki" is included in Japan's Tentative List for World Heritage nomination.



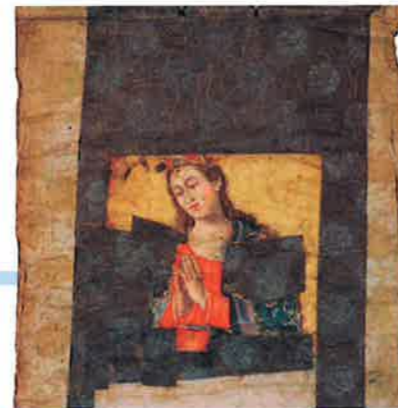
## Contents

• Historical Background of the “Churches and Christian Sites in Nagasaki”	P1
• Process of Propagation and Penetration of Christianity into Japan	
1. Propagation of Western Civilization and Flourishing of Christianity in Japan	P3
2. Suppression of Christianity and Factors Leading to the National Seclusionist Policy	P5
3. Continuation of the Christian Faith by Hidden Christians	P7
4. Re-opening of Japan to Trade and the Revival of Christianity	P9
• Summary Scheme “the Christian Faith in Japan: Its Growth and Subsequent Development”	P11
• UNESCO World Heritage Inscription Criteria and the Value of “Churches and Christian Sites in Nagasaki”	P12
• Stages of World Heritage List Inscription and End Goal of “Churches and Christian Sites in Nagasaki”	P13
• Distribution Map	P14

## Historical Background of the “Churches and Christian Sites in Nagasaki”

“Churches and Christian Sites in Nagasaki” is an historical site that illustrates the propagation and penetration of Christianity into Japan over a period of 450 years. This history is far from linear, but developed in the Nagasaki region through a unique process which can be divided into three stages: “introduction and prosperity”, “suppression and concealment”, and “revival”.

During the Age of Exploration, the wave of Western civilization swept over Japan, and ships from Europe brought with them Christianity. In 1549, Francis Xavier introduced Christianity to Japan, and Jesuit missionaries soon began spreading Catholicism throughout western Japan. The Nagasaki region in particular was one of the main centers of this missionary work. A seminary was built in Arima, a domain within that region, and four young Japanese men who studied there were dispatched to the Pope as ambassadors in 1582.



*Yuki-no Santa Maria*  
Presumed to have been painted in Nagasaki at the beginning of the 17th century, and preserved by hidden Christians.  
(Housed in Twenty-Six Martyrs Museum.  
Photo: Nagasaki Bunkensha)



*Statue of Maria Kannon*  
The Virgin Mary in the shape of a Buddhist deity was venerated by hidden Christians during the ban on Christianity  
(Housed in Twenty-Six Martyrs Museum.  
Photo: Nagasaki Bunkensha)

However, the ban on Christianity that had begun with an edict issued by Hideyoshi Toyotomi expelling missionaries tightened under the Tokugawa Shogunate, which banned Christianity throughout Japan in 1614. As a result, persecution of Christians intensified, and eventually led to the Shimabara-Amakusa Rebellion of 1637. Many artifacts, including medals and crucifixes, have been unearthed at the site of Hara Castle (where the rebellion came to an end), showing how deeply rooted Christianity was in the region. As the ‘Sakoku’ policy (which prohibited private trade with other countries) got even stricter and the suppression of priests and lay people resulting from the ban on Christianity intensified, Christians who were deprived of priestly leadership were forced to develop their own religious organizations. While pretending to be Buddhist on the surface, they continued to practice their faith in secret until the Meiji government lifted the ban on Christianity some 250 years later.

In the 19th century, the European powers along with the United States (all of whom had achieved strength through industrial revolution) began to advance into East Asia, and forced Japan to re-open its doors to trade. Shortly after, during the social upheavals which had been triggered by Japan’s re-opening, something truly remarkable was to occur. In 1865, a group of ‘Hidden Christians’ visited Oura Cathedral (which had recently been built in Nagasaki by a French missionary to the newly re-opened Japan) in order to confess their faith. This stunning and moving discovery of Christians who had practiced their religion in secret for 250 years was reported to the world.

The ban on Christianity was officially lifted in 1873 in response to strong protests from the West. After that, churches were built in the villages that had continuously preserved their faith despite the ban, as a testimony to their keeping of the faith.

These quiet, modest churches (which bring to mind the hardships of the period when Christianity was driven underground) were built in remote locations such as hillsides, plateaus, and beautiful island inlets. Surrounded by the natural landscape of the Nagasaki region, they form a unique rural landscape. The churches also have outstanding value as buildings due to their distinctive fusion of Western and Japanese architectural techniques and styles.

The sacred places and martyrdom sites which helped Christians to sustain their faith in the absence of churches during the years while they were in hiding can still be seen in villages of the Nagasaki region, preserving the landscape of the period of religious prohibition.



*Statue of the Virgin Mary in Oura Cathedral*  
the first thing the hidden Christians asked to see when they were discovered in Nagasaki in 1865  
(Photo: Nagasaki Bunkensha)



“Churches and Christian Sites in Nagasaki” is composed of historical sites, sacred sites, villages and churches that help illustrate propagation and penetration of Christianity into Japan over a period of more than 450 years. Our goal is to have it inscribed as a world heritage site in 2015, the 150th anniversary of the “discovery of Christians”, in order to share this valuable property with the entire world and pass it down to future generations.



# Propagation of Western Civilization and Flourishing of Christianity in Japan

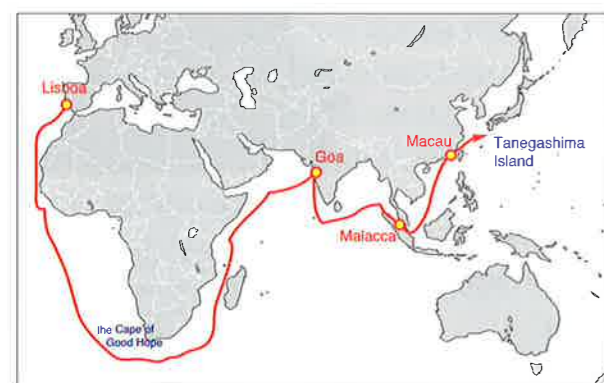
## Japan Encounters Europe

While daimyos (feudal lords) fought each other throughout Japan, Europe had entered its Age of Exploration in which Spain and Portugal competed for territory in Africa, Asia, and the Americas. When Columbus arrived in the Americas in 1492, Portugal was establishing a new route to Asia via the Cape of Good Hope on the southern coast of Africa. By the early 16th century Portugal had established trading posts in Goa, Malacca and Macau, and in 1543 Japan had its first direct contact with the West when a Portuguese ship drifted off course and landed on Tanegashima Island.

The Portuguese introduced Japan to elements of Renaissance civilization such as firearms, medicine, and astronomy. In addition, they brought Christianity, which was being spread throughout the world by missionaries from the Society of Jesus and other religious orders.



*Saint Francis Xavier*  
Presumed to have been painted by a Japanese painter during the Edo era. (courtesy of Kobe City Museum)



## Introduction of Christianity

Francis Xavier, one of the co-founders of the Society of Jesus, heard about the newly discovered island of Japan and its people's strong curiosity in new ideas from Anjiro, a Japanese person he met in Malacca, and decided to begin a mission in Japan. Christianity was introduced to Japan for the first time when Xavier landed in Kagoshima in 1549. The following year, Xavier proselytized on the island of Hirado and also visited Kyoto (via Yamaguchi), which was the capital of Japan at that time. Following Xavier, many missionaries from the Society of Jesus and other religious orders came to Japan. They strove to understand the Japanese language, culture, and customs, and converted many Japanese to Christianity, partly through their work in hospitals and their engagement in other forms of Christian charity work. Christianity thus spread throughout Japan, and especially throughout western Japan. In the Nagasaki region, many people converted to Christianity in trading ports such as Hirado, Yokoseura, Kuchinotsu, Amakusa and Nagasaki, as well as in the Goto islands.



## Flourishing of Christianity

Christianity also spread among the aristocracy. Sumitada Omura, daimyo (feudal lord) of the Omura Domain, was baptized in Yokoseura in 1563, making him the first Christian Daimyo. Sumitada encouraged missionary work in his domain and in 1580 ceded Nagasaki and Mogi to the Society of Jesus. Many churches were built in Nagasaki after that and Christian culture flourished to such an extent that it earned the name 'Little Rome'.

Harunobu Arima, nephew to Sumitada who controlled the southern area of the Shimabara Peninsula, was also baptized and became a Christian Daimyo in 1580. Minor and major seminaries were built in the castle town of Hinoe where the Arima clan resided, establishing a center for Christian education in Japan. The four teenage boys who later came to form the "Tensho Embassy" (or Tensho Boys Mission) to Europe studied here, before setting off for Rome in 1582 from the Port of Nagasaki.



**COMPONENT**  
**Site of Hinoe Castle**  
(Minami-Shimabara city)

## Important missionaries in Japan

<b>Francis Xavier (1506-1552)</b> Introduced Christianity to Japan, and proselytized in Kagoshima, Hirado, Yamaguchi, Bungo and other areas. He set off to begin a mission in China as well but died of a fever before he reached the mainland.
<b>Cosme de Torres (1510-1570)</b> Accompanied Xavier to Japan and became his successor after his death. He proselytized in Bungo, the Nagasaki region, and other areas, and baptized Sumitada Omura. He died in Shiki in Amakusa.
<b>Luís de Almeida (1525-1583)</b> Taught Western medicine and opened a hospital and an orphanage in Bungo. He proselytized in Kagoshima and in the Nagasaki region, as well as in other areas. He died in Amakusa.
<b>Luís Fróis (1532-1597)</b> After landing in Yokoseura, he engaged in missionary work in Bungo, Nagasaki, and other areas. He wrote "History of Japan" based on the records of his missionary work. He died in Nagasaki.
<b>Alessandro Valignano (1539-1606)</b> As Visitor of Missions, he supervised the introduction of Catholicism to the Far East. He engaged in missionary work in Bungo, Nagasaki, Azuchi, and other areas. Valignano led the Tensho Embassy to Goa. He died in Macau.

1549: Francis Xavier introduces Christianity to Japan.  
1550: Xavier begins mission in Hirado.  
1563: Sumitada Omura is baptized and becomes the first Christian Daimyo.

1584: Tensho Embassy is granted an audience with Philip II of Spain.

1585: Tensho Embassy is granted an audience with the Pope.



*Newspaper article on the Tensho Embassy published in Augsburg, Germany in 1585*

Four young men were sent to Rome on behalf of three Christian Daimyos, Sorin Otomo in Bungo, Harunobu Arima, and Sumitada Omura. They received a warm welcome in the various cities in Europe they visited and stayed for a total of two years, after which they returned to Nagasaki. (Housed in the Kyoto University Library. Photo: Nagasaki Bunkensha)



# Suppression of Christianity and Factors Leading to the National Seclusionist Policy

## Crackdown on Christians Initiated by Hideyoshi

In 1587, Japan's most powerful daimyo, Hideyoshi Toyotomi, suddenly issued an edict expelling missionaries. Prior to that, he had been on friendly terms with the missionaries from Society of Jesus, but he probably decided to issue the edict when he saw that Christianity had spread among the peasants to a greater extent than expected and that the whole of Nagasaki had been ceded to the Society of Jesus. He seized back parts of Japan which had been given to the Jesuits and ordered the destruction of many churches in the Arima and Omura domains. However, because he placed importance on trade with Portugal, the crackdown did not extend beyond that.

This changed in 1596 when a Spanish ship called the San Felipe landed in Tosa. Members of the crew told the Japanese that, "Spain will dispatch Christian missionaries, convert the population and eventually conquer this country." In response, Hideyoshi intensified the ban on Christianity. He had six missionaries doing missionary work in Kyoto and Osaka and 18 laypeople captured, and ordered their public execution in Nagasaki. As a warning to others, they were forced to walk all the way from Kyoto to Nagasaki (one month's journey) barefoot and in the dead of winter. Along the way, two more laypeople were captured, making a total of 26 that were crucified on a hill in Nishizaka, Nagasaki in 1597. The incident was reported far and wide in both Europe and Mexico, and the martyrs were later beatified in 1627, before being canonized by the Pope in 1862.



Monument commemorating the 26 Martyrs (Nagasaki city)

## Persecution of Christians

The religious ban initiated by Hideyoshi was expanded in 1612 to include the prohibition of Christianity in Edo, Sunpu, and Kyoto under the Tokugawa Shogunate. One factor that led to this was a bribery scandal between the Christian Daimyo Harunobu Arima and a man named Daihachi Okamoto, a vassal of the Shogun's close advisor. In 1614, the ban was extended to the entire country and in addition the churches were destroyed, Christians forced to renounce their faith, and all missionaries were ordered to go to Nagasaki. In the Arima domain which Harunobu had been banished from, Christians were persecuted under his eldest son and successor Naozumi Arima, and the seminaries around Hinoe Castle were relocated to Nagasaki. The missionaries who had been sent to Nagasaki were then ordered to leave Japan, but over 40 missionaries disobeyed and went underground to continue their missionary work. Suppression by the Tokugawa Shogunate continued to intensify, and many Christians were martyred under its orders. In 1622 the "Great Genna Martyrdom" occurred in which several missionaries, along with lay people suspected of harboring them (56 people in total) were publicly executed on a hill in Nishizaka.

## Shimabara-Amakusa Rebellion

The Matsukura clan, who now controlled the whole of Shimabara area (including the Arima domain once controlled by the Christian daimyo Harunobu Arima), imposed forced labor and excessive taxes on the local peasants of that area. Suffering from famine and overtaxation, in 1637 the peasants of the Arima domain took up arms together with the peasants of Amakusa (who suffered from similar oppression) and revolted against their



COMPONENT Site of Hara Castle (Minami-Shimabara city)

lords in what became known as the Shimabara-Amakusa Rebellion. Roughly 37,000 peasants gathered and were besieged at the site of Hara Castle, the castle of the Arima clan which had been dismantled under the law which allows only one castle per province. The siege lasted for 88 days, and ended with the slaughter of every rebel, including women and children. Hara Castle was completely demolished after that, but archaeological investigation has revealed countless human bones, crucifixes and medals. It is thought that the unity of the community (which had been united through its shared Christian faith since the time of Harunobu Arima's reign) enabled the rebels to hold out in the castle site for so long both isolated and unaided.

## Christian Faith in Amakusa

In Amakusa, proselytization of Christianity began in the 16th Century with the arrival of Luís de Almeida, and several churches and seminaries were built there. Following the Shimabara-Amakusa Rebellion of 1637, Amakusa, which had been under the direct control of the Shogunate, came under the control of the Nagasaki bugyo (governor). Several policies were put in place to crackdown on Christians, including the Terauke policy (in which every member of the population was forced to register at a Buddhist temple to prove they were not a Christian) and the e-fumi ceremony (where people were forced to step on a plate with an image of Christ or the Virgin Mary to prove they were not Christians). In Sakitsu, Amakusa, the same plate employed in Nagasaki was used at the residence of the shoya (village headman). The people of Sakitsu pretended to be Buddhist on the surface while continuing to practice their faith in secret as hidden Christians. In 1805, according to records documenting the so-called "Amakusa Kuzure" crackdown in which 5,205 hidden Christians were revealed, 70% of the Sakitsu villagers were hidden Christians.



COMPONENT Sakitsu Village in Amakusa (Amakusa city)



e-fumi ceremony (painted by Keiga Kawahara) (Housed in National Museum of Ethnology, Leiden. Photo: Nagasaki Bunkensha)

Introduction and Prosperity	Suppression	Faith in Hiding	Revival
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- 1587: Hideyoshi Toyotomi issues edict expelling missionaries.
- 1597: 26 missionaries and laypeople martyred at Nishizaka, Nagasaki.
- 1614: Christianity banned throughout Japan
- 1622: Great Genna Martyrdom



Martyrs in Nagasaki 1622 (Housed in the Church of the Gesù of Rome. Photo: Nagasaki Bunkensha)

- 1636: Dejima completed
- 1637: Shimabara-Amakusa Rebellion occurs.



This painting illustrates how 120,000 of Shogun's soldiers surrounded and attacked Hara Castle (shown in the lower half) during the Shimabara-Amakusa Rebellion. (「原城攻圍陣營並城中圖」 Housed in Matsura Historical Museum. Photo: Nagasaki Bunkensha)



# Continuation of the Christian Faith by Hidden Christians

## The National Seclusionist Policy and Christians Forced Underground

The Tokugawa Shogunate continued to aggressively implement the national seclusionist policy, known as 'Sakoku', that prohibited private trade with other countries. Dejima, a small artificial island within the Nagasaki port (which had been built with the purpose of containing foreigners), was completed in 1636, and in 1639 all Portuguese were ordered to leave the country and missionaries were prohibited from entering. After the last priest, Mancio Konishi, was martyred in 1644, Christianity was forced completely underground and from then on Christians practiced and passed down their faith in secret without priestly leadership.



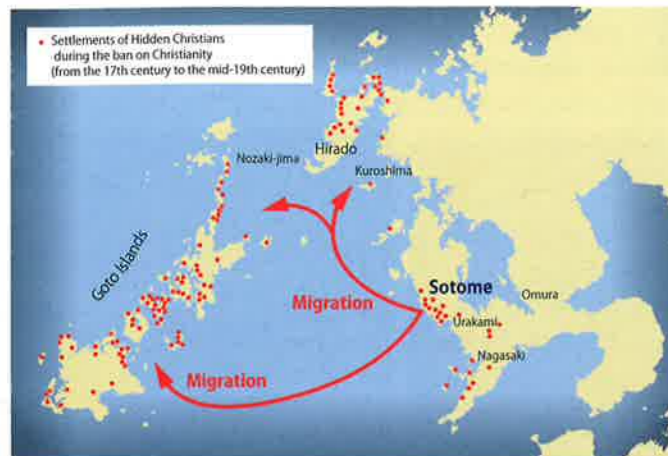
Dejima from [寛文長崎図屏風]  
(Housed in Nagasaki Museum of History and Culture.  
Photo: Nagasaki Bunkensha)

## Suppression in the Omura Domain and Migration from Sotome

Even in the Omura Domain where Christian culture had once flourished under the Christian Daimyo Sumitada Omura, Christians were persecuted under his son Yoshiaki Omura. This persecution reached its peak in 1657, when a great number of hidden Christians were seized and 411 people who refused to renounce their faith were beheaded in what became known as Kori Kuzure. As this thorough crackdown continued in the domain, hidden Christians remained only in secluded locations such as the mountainous area of Sotome where the watchful eyes of the authorities could not reach very well.

Close to the sea and covered in steep mountains, life in Sotome for the hidden Christian was poverty-stricken. Hidden Christians also suffered when the Omura Domain implemented the so-called "thinning" policy, in which all children besides the eldest male were killed for economic reasons. Traditional Japanese attitudes to this kind of occurrence differed from traditional Christian ones, meaning that the hidden Christians suffered especially because of their faith's strict prohibition on the taking of any innocent life. Continuing to practice their faith under the guise of Buddhists provided spiritual support to the hidden Christians under these harsh conditions.

From the end of the 18th century the hidden Christians of Sotome migrated to undeveloped distant islands such as Goto, Nozakijima, and Kuroshima. Many of them dreamt of a place where they could observe their faith in peace, but the reality was one of continued hardship due to conflicts with the original inhabitants and barren soil.



## Passing Down Christianity in Hirado

Even in Hirado, where Christianity had flourished since 1550 when Xavier had begun his missionary work there, a strict religious ban was implemented from the end of the 16th century, resulting in the martyrdom of numerous Christians and forcing the remaining ones further underground.

In order to pass down their faith to their children, they developed a religious organization which resembled the ones the original foreign missionaries had brought ('confralia'), and practiced Christian prayers called 'oratio' and other religious rituals without priests. Since they could not obtain sacred images, they observed their faith by praying before paintings called 'Okake-e' hidden in their closets. In place of churches, sites where their ancestors were martyred and other sacred sites such as Mt. Yasumandake and Nakaenoshima Island provided a focus for their worship and thus helped to sustain their faith. These sacred sites are still venerated to this day, preserving the unique landscape of the period of religious prohibition.

The descendants of the hidden Christians of the Hirado region continued to pass down the unique religious customs and traditions taught by their ancestors even after the religious ban was lifted in 1873. These so-called 'Kakure Christians' continue to preserve their traditions even today.



### COMPONENT Sacred Places and Village on Hirado Island

Nakaenoshima Island, to the north-west of Hirado Island, is still one of a number of sacred places for Kakure Christians. Omizu-tori ceremony is still held sporadically to gather holy water from this island.



Omizu-tori ceremony  
(Photo: Nagasaki Bunkensha)

Introduction and Prosperity	Suppression	Faith in Hiding	Revival
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- 1644: Last priest martyred.
- 1657: Kori Kuzure crackdown in the Omura Domain.
- 1800s onward: Christians migrate from Sotome to remote islands.
- 1805: Amakusa Kuzure crackdown



Okake-e painting  
Another name for this kind of paintings is 'Nando-gami' (closet god), since it was hidden and venerated in the closet. These paintings were kept and passed down secretly during the ban on Christianity. (Housed in Shimano-yakata Museum, Ikitsuki town, Hirado city. Photo: Nagasaki Bunkensha)

## Hidden Christians and Kakure Christians

During the time when Christianity was outlawed, Christians passed down their faith secretly by using statues of Maria Kannon (the Virgin Mary in the shape of a Buddhist deity) and by disguising their Christian faith as Buddhism in many ways. These people came to be known as 'Hidden Christians'.

On the other hand, those who did not officially return to the Catholic Church even after the ban on Christianity was repealed and continued their faith in the unique manner they had developed during the ban came to be referred to as Kakure Christians.



# Re-opening of Japan to Trade and the Revival of Christianity

## Discovery of Christians at Oura Cathedral

By the mid-19th century, Christians had been forced to practice their faith in secret for around 250 years due to the religious ban and the Sakoku seclusionist policy enacted by the Tokugawa Shogunate. Around the time of social upheaval at the end of the Edo Period, the shogunate repealed the seclusionist policy and re-opened Japan, and a foreign settlement was established in the port of Nagasaki (which had now begun trading with five Western countries with whom amity treaties had been established). Oura Cathedral was built in the Nagasaki foreign settlement and was dedicated to the 26 martyrs who were executed in Nishizaka in 1597 (and who had just previously, in 1862, been canonized by the Pope). One month after the dedication ceremony, in March 1865, a group of Japanese people came to the cathedral. There turned out to be hidden Christians from Urakami, who were risking their lives to confirm whether the Frenchman in the cathedral was the missionary they had waited so long for. "We are of one heart with you," they said as they confessed their faith to Father Petitjean. This event came to be known as the "discovery of Christians". This stunning and moving discovery of Japanese Christians who had passed down the teachings of Christ in secret for 250 years despite religious suppression was reported to Europe, and it is still considered to be one of the greatest miracles in the entire history of world religion.



**COMPONENT**  
**Oura Cathedral**  
(Nagasaki city)



Monument commemorating "Discovery of Christians" (Oura Cathedral)  
The monument was built in 1965 to commemorate the centenary of the discovery.

## Repeal of the Edict Banning Christianity

Even after the discovery of these hidden Christians, the religious ban that started under the shogunate continued under the Meiji Government. Many hidden Christians were seized and lost their lives in places such as Urakami and the Goto Islands where incidents of oppression known as the Urakami Yoban Kuzure and Goto Kuzure took place. The West responded to these incidents by putting heavy pressure on Japan and especially Tomomi Iwakura, Minister of the Right at that time (i.e. Japan's second most powerful politician), who received strong protests to allow religious freedom in Japan when he visited the US and Europe. Due to increasing criticism from the international community, in 1873 the Meiji Government officially lifted the ban on Christianity. For the first time in 250 years of practicing their faith in secret, Christians in Japan were able to practice their faith openly.



**COMPONENT**  
**Former Gorin Church**  
(Goto city)



**COMPONENT**  
**Shitsu Church and Related Sites**  
(Nagasaki city)



**COMPONENT**  
**Ono Church**  
(Nagasaki city)



**COMPONENT**  
**Kuroshima Church**  
(Sasebo city)

## Construction of Churches by Lay People

Now enjoying religious freedom, Christians all over the Nagasaki region built churches in the villages where they had hidden as a testimony to their keeping of their faith. Unfortunately, because of the harsh conditions they had been forced to live under during the period of persecution and concealment, they lacked both funds and materials with which to build the churches. They managed to gather funds from cutting into their already scarce living expenses and from money received from the foreign missionaries' private funds. Because they could not purchase enough materials, they had to endure certain hardships—including having to make lime by hand by burning shells and drawing patterns on window glasses by themselves (as substitute for stained glass). Many lay people volunteered to help construct the churches and transport the necessary materials. To this day, these churches are treasured by the Christians in these villages which were built by their descendents at such great pains.

Today there are over 130 churches in Nagasaki Prefecture—the highest distribution of churches in Japan. They form a unique rural landscape within the natural environment of the Nagasaki region. The quiet churches located in the mountains and island inlets whisper the story of Christians who kept their faith in these small villages and passed it down from generation to generation throughout the period of religious persecution and concealment.



**COMPONENT**  
**Former Nokubi Church and Related Sites**  
(Ojika town)



**COMPONENT**  
**Tabira Church**  
(Hirado city)



**COMPONENT**  
**Egami Church**  
(Goto city)

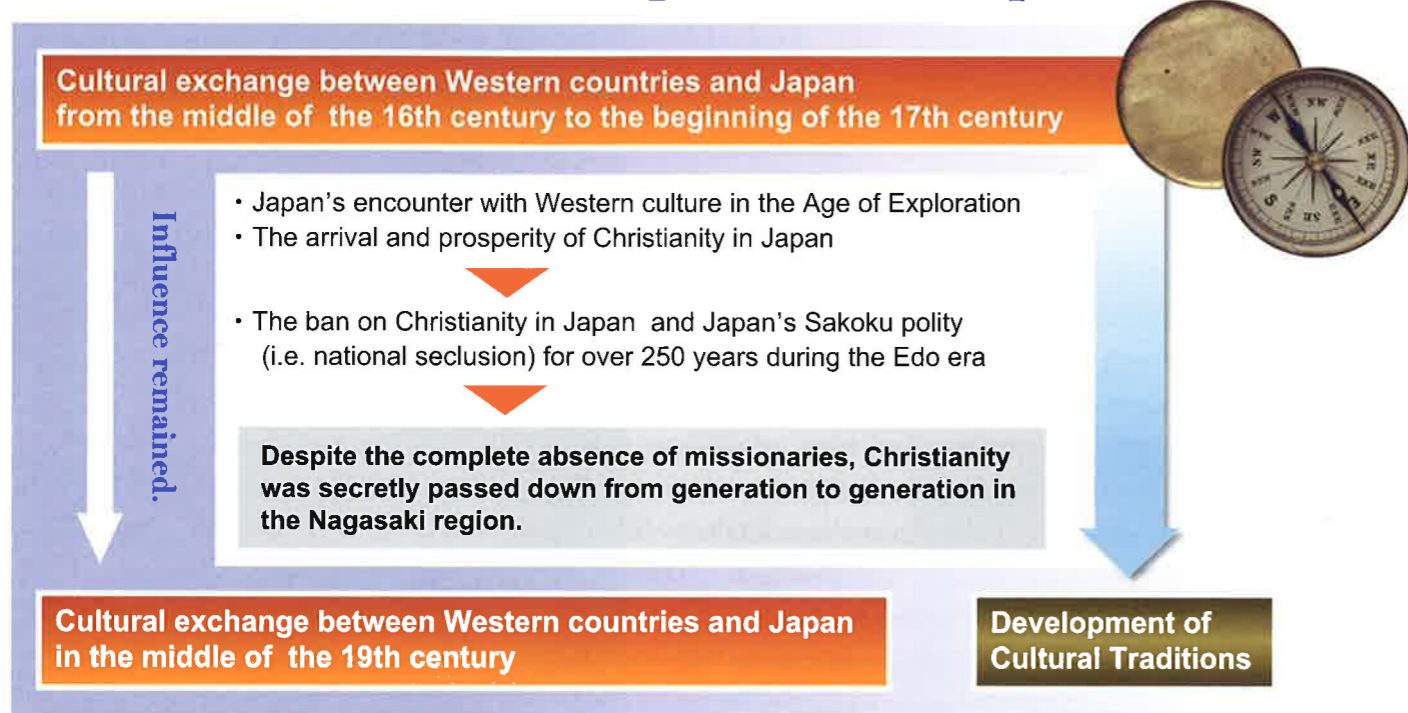


**COMPONENT**  
**Kashiragashima Church**  
(Shinkamigoto town)

- 1859: Ports such as Nagasaki, Yokohama, and Hakodate open to trade and foreign settlement is established.
- 1862: The 26 men and boys martyred at Nishizaka are canonized as saints.
- 1865: Oura Cathedral dedicated, "Discovery of Christians" at Oura Cathedral
- 1867: Urakami Yoban Kuzure crackdown
- 1868: Goto Kuzure crackdown
- 1871: Tomomi Iwakura (Japanese Minister of the Right at the time) journeys around the world.
- 1873: Tomomi Iwakura returns to Japan. Ban on Christianity officially lifted
- 2007: "Churches and Christian Sites in Nagasaki" listed on the UNESCO World Heritage Tentative List.
- 2015: 150th anniversary of the "Discovery of Christians"



# The Christian Faith in Japan: Its Growth and Subsequent Development



Catholic missions re-started after Japan was re-opened to the outside world, and subsequently the ban on Christianity was removed. As a result, churches were built in the places where Christian faith had been handed on in secret, using architectural technique which fused traditional Japanese ones with those imported from the Western countries.

## Characteristics of Church Architecture in the Nagasaki Region

- Exhibits a fusion of western architectural styles such as gothic with Japanese traditional ones such as wagoya roof structure
- Uniquely designed to accommodate the Japanese custom of kneeling by including tatami mats and low ceilings.
- Use of materials that are found nowhere else such as the stacked natural stone of Ono Church and the Arita porcelain tiles around the altar of Kuroshima Church
- The motif of a Japanese camellia, which grows wild on the Goto Islands, can be found in a variety of ornamentation decorating the churches. During the ban on Christianity, Japanese camellia were used in place of roses to represent the Virgin Mary.



Arita porcelain tiles in Kuroshima Church



The interior of Nakanoura Church (Photo: Nagasaki Bunkensha)

## Father Marc Marie de Rotz (1840~1914)

Transferred from France to Nagasaki, Father Marc Marie de Rotz built several churches and seminaries, including the Former Latin Seminary of Oura Cathedral, Ono Church, and Shitsu Church, all of which influenced Japanese architecture. He also used his own funds to help local people in Sotome become self-reliant and ran Shitsu Aid Center, a vocational aid facility.



(Photo: Nagasaki Bunkensha. Housed in Father de Rotz Memorial Museum.)

## Yosuke Tetsukawa (1879-1976)

Architect and master carpenter born on Kamigoto Island. He studied western architecture under Father Marc Marie de Rotz and designed and constructed several outstanding churches that fuse Western architectural techniques with traditional Japanese methods. Each church he built possesses great value as a cultural property.



(Photo: Nagasaki Bunkensha. Housed in the Office of Registered Architect, Mr. Susumu Tetsukawa.)

# UNESCO World Heritage Inscription Criteria and the Value of “Churches and Christian Sites in Nagasaki”

*Criteria (ii): to exhibit an important interchange of human values, over a span of time or within a cultural area of the world, on developments in architecture or technology, monumental arts, town-planning or landscape design;*

“Churches and Christian Sites in Nagasaki” constitutes a legacy of the **interchange of values between Japan and the West over a period of more than 450 years**, from which emerged **cultural traditions and rural landscape formed since the period of ban on Christianity**, as well as **church architectural styles unique in the world** (an integration of Japanese and Western construction techniques and styles).

*Criteria (iii): to bear a unique or at least exceptional testimony to a cultural tradition or to a civilization which is living or which has disappeared*

“Churches and Christian Sites in Nagasaki” bears an **exceptional testimony to unique religious and cultural traditions** which emerged from Japan’s encounter with Christianity over a period of more than 450 years, and which uniquely acclimatized to the living environment, natural environment, and folk customs of Japan.

*Criteria (vi): to be directly or tangibly associated with events or living traditions, with ideas, or with beliefs, with artistic and literary works of outstanding universal significance (The World Heritage Committee considers that this criterion should preferably be used in conjunction with other criteria.)*

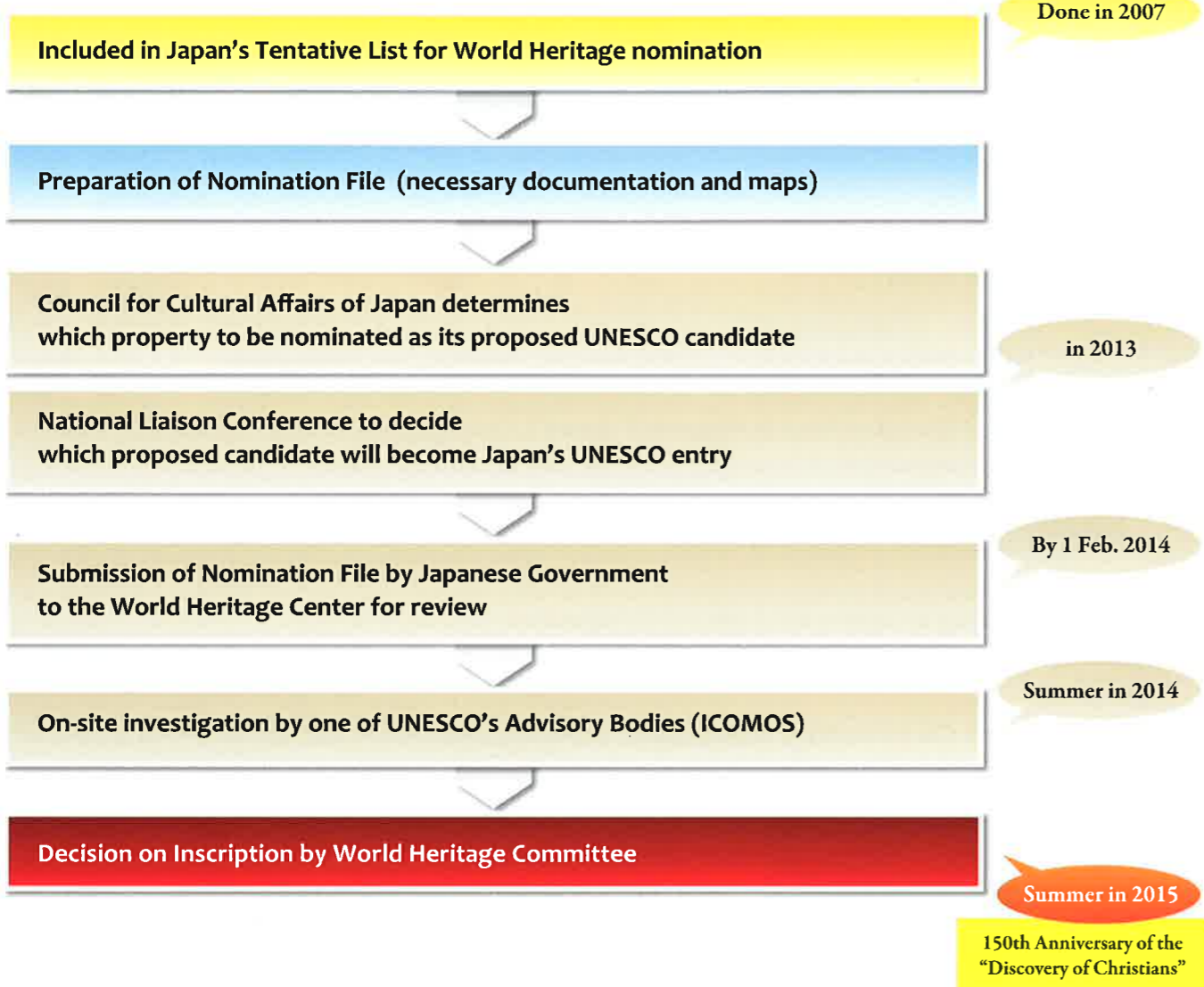
“Churches and Christian Sites in Nagasaki” is directly associated with the following events of **outstanding universal significance: the expansion of international trade and cultural exchange during the Age of Exploration in the 16th century, the national seclusionist policy and suppression of Christianity in Japan in the 17th century, and the revival of Christianity and the reopening of Japan as part of a broader wave of globalization in the 19th century.**



“Nanban Byobu” Screen by Naizen Kano (1570-1616) (courtesy of Kobe City Museum)  
The arrival of a European ship in Japan is drawn. We can see a temple with a cross on its roof.



# Stages of World Heritage List Inscription and End Goal of “Churches and Christian Sites in Nagasaki”



Kuroshima Church (Photo by Mr. Yuichi Higurashi)

## Distribution Map of “Churches and Christian Sites in Nagasaki”

