

{Inscribed on the World Heritage List in July 2018.}



World Cultural Heritage
Hidden Christian Sites
in the Nagasaki Region

10

Villages on Hisaka Island

Guide Map

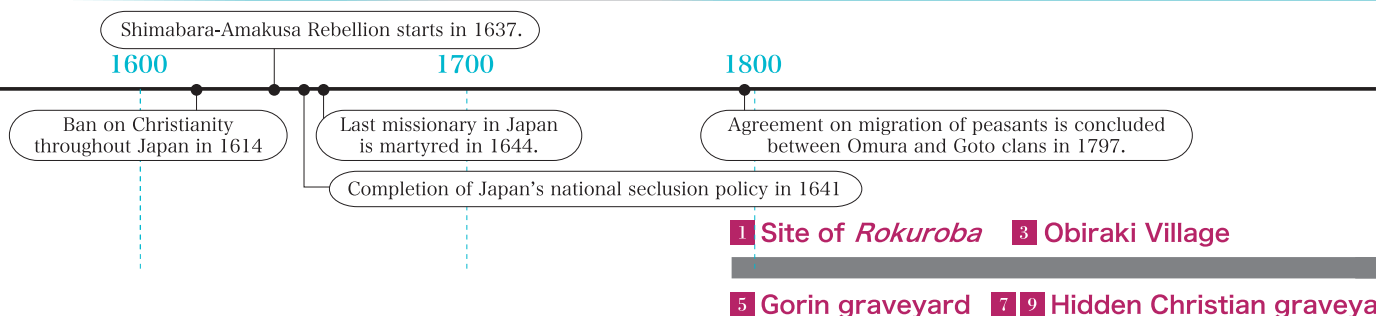


Significance of Villages on Hisaka Island

I. Beginning of the absence of missionaries and hiding of Christians

II. Hidden Christians' endeavours to continue their religious faith

III. Hidden Christians' endeavours to maintain their religious communities



Position in 'Hidden Christian Sites in the Nagasaki Region'

- Villages on Hisaka Island are one of the four components that demonstrate to which locations Hidden Christians chose to migrate in order to maintain their religious communities.
- Hidden Christian migrants maintained their communities after they settled in undeveloped land on Hisaka Island in accordance with a migration policy established by the Goto clan.

《Basic information》

Designation title as cultural assets	Former Gorin Church
Designation category	Important Cultural Property designated by the national government
Year of designation	1999
Location	Warabi-cho, Goto City

Designation title as cultural assets	Cultural Landscape of Hisaka Island in Goto
Designation category	Important Cultural Landscape selected by the national government
Year of designation	2011
Location	Goto City

Manners when visiting the villages

- Please remember that there are people living in the villages. Thus, please respect their privacy and follow proper manners while you enjoy exploring around.
- Since there are no public trash cans, please take home any trash you may have.
 - When you walk in the street, please do not take up the entire street and always walk within the shoulders of the roads.
 - If you smoke, please do so within designated areas and do not smoke and walk at the same time or litter cigarette butts.
 - Please never under any circumstances trespass, enter any crop field, peek into people's homes, or open any doors to people's homes without permission.
 - Please use designated restrooms only.

Give prior notice before visiting the churches

When you wish to visit the Former Gorin Church, please contact the relevant organisation below and give it prior notice via its website. Please note that, owing to a large number of visitors or due to religious events inside the church, there are times when it may not be possible for you to visit.

'Hidden Christian Sites in the Nagasaki Region' Information Centre

Dejima-Wharf 2nd floor, 1-1-205, Dejimamachi, Nagasaki City, Nagasaki Prefecture 850-0862 Japan
Tel +81-95-823-7650, Opening hours: 9:30 to 17:30

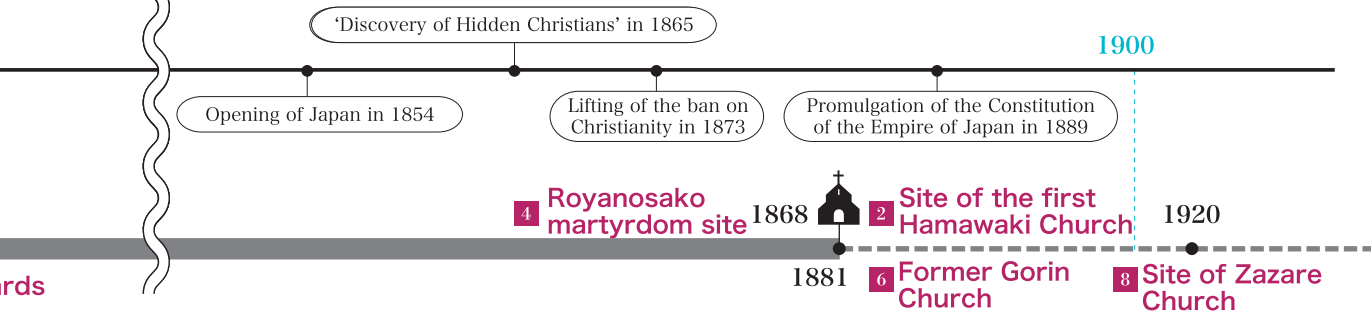
<http://kyoukaigun.jp>

Hidden Christian Sites Information Centre

Search



IV. The transitional phase triggered by contact with missionaries, leading to the end of Hidden Christians' hiding



History

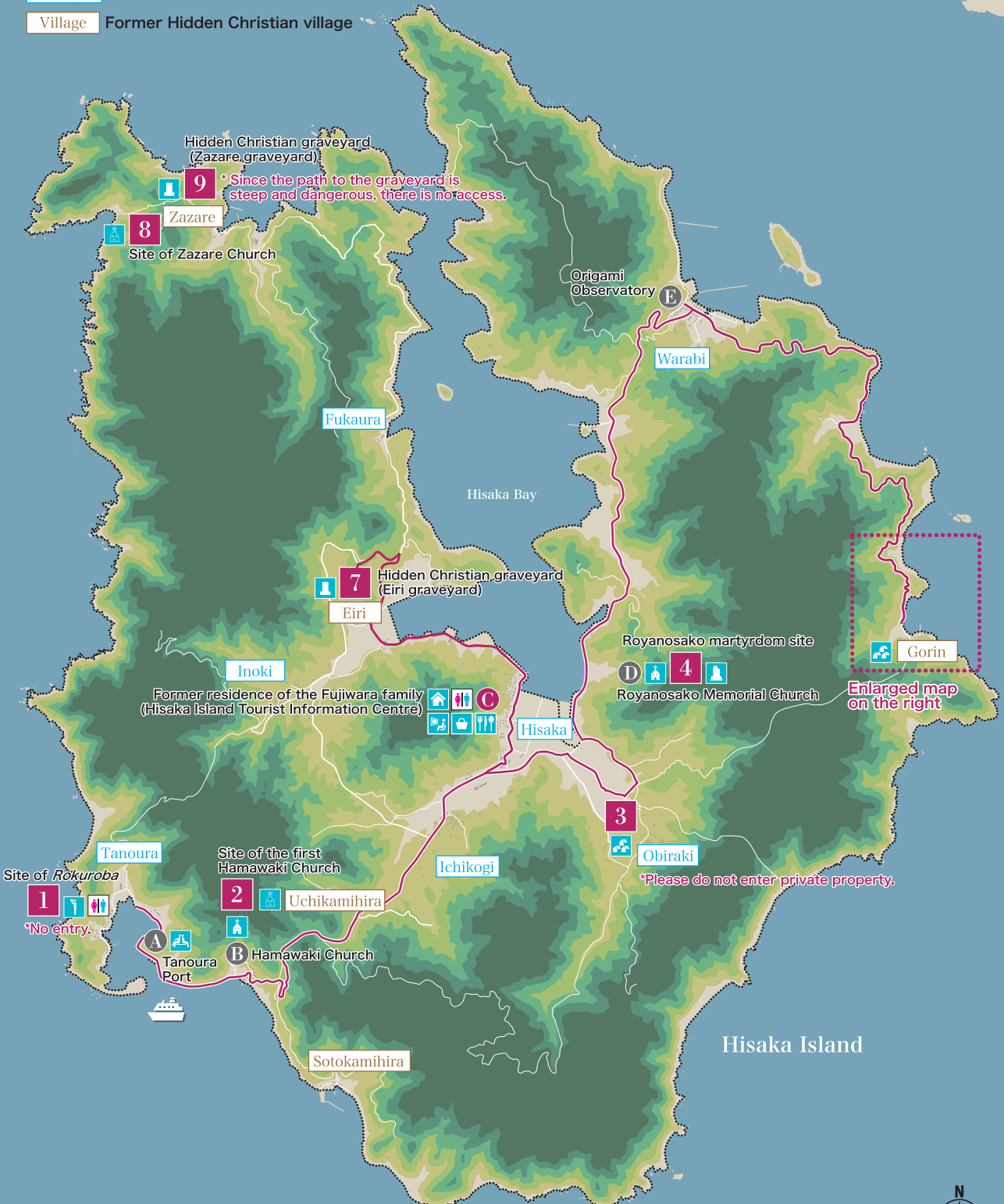
- ⊙ Hisaka Island used to be a port of call for ships bound for China from Japan. In the 17th century, the island came under the control of the Goto clan.
- ⊙ It is possible that Catholicism was introduced to Hisaka Island in the late 16th or the early 17th century. Later, however, all the Japanese Catholics disappeared from the island due to the national ban on Christianity.
- ⊙ In the 18th century, there were only Buddhists on the island. In the end of that century, Hidden Christians migrated from Sotome to the island following the migration policy of the Goto clan, and formed new villages there.
- ⊙ These Hidden Christian villages were located on the periphery of pre-existing Buddhist villages or in isolated places far from Buddhists.
- ⊙ As these new Hidden Christian villages had scarcely any land suitable for cultivation and difficulty in opening up new farmlands, the migrants needed to build mutual cooperation with the existing Buddhist communities; for example, by developing new rice paddies next to those of the Buddhist communities **3**, and by assisting in daily fishing and farming activities carried out by local Buddhists **1**.
- ⊙ The Hidden Christian migrants maintained their communities in such ways on Hisaka Island, and after the 'Discovery of Hidden Christians', they contacted foreign missionaries.
- ⊙ When the Hidden Christians on the island started revealing their faith in public amid the ban on Christianity still in effect, this resulted in a new wave of persecution. The authorities confined Hidden Christians in a prison, and many lost their lives there **4**.
- ⊙ After the lifting of the ban, Hidden Christians on the island rejoined the Catholic Church and built wooden churches (**2**, **6** and **8**). Hidden Christian graveyards have continued to be used by Catholic communities (**5**, **7** and **9**).

Wide-area and enlarged maps around Villages on Hisaka Island

Naru Island

Village Buddhist village

Village Former Hidden Christian village



Enlarged map on the right

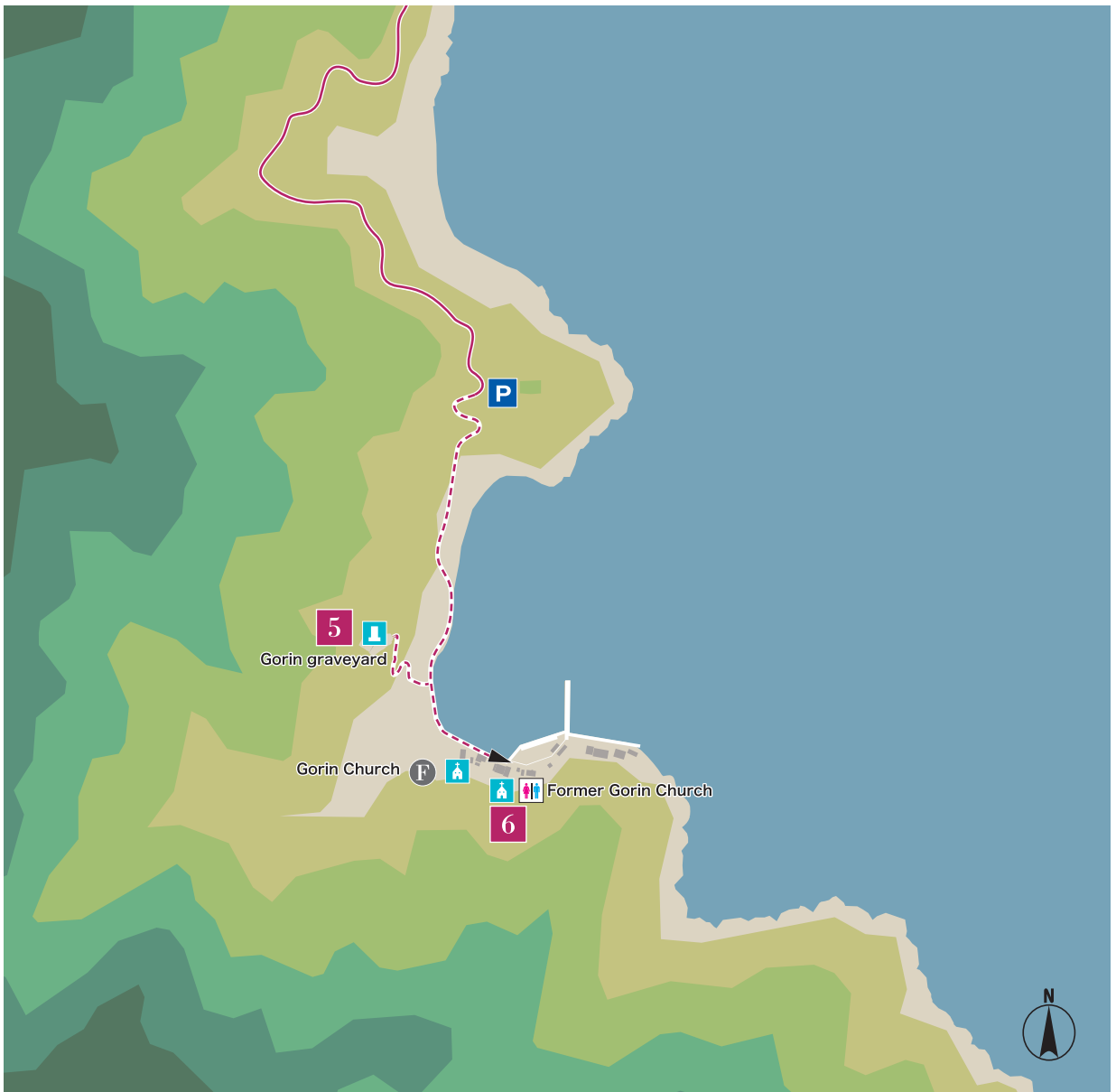
*Please do not enter private property.



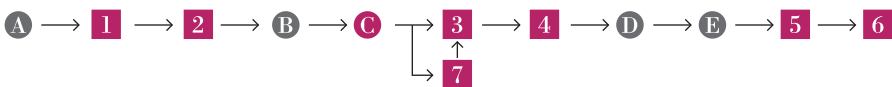
Fukue Island

Enlarged map of Villages on Hisaka Island

5 Gorin Village



《Recommended route》



Boundaries of the component	Important spot	Parking space	Exhibition	Village	Tomb or graveyard	Remains of church
On foot	Guidance facility	Toilets	Shop	Viewing spot	Monument, etc.	
On foot or by car, etc.	Other spot	Rest space	Restaurant	Related building	Church	

Introduction to important spots in Villages on Hisaka Island

1 Site of *Rokuroba*



*Since this site is managed as a cultural asset, it can only be seen from a distance.



A referential picture, housed in Nagasaki Museum of History and Culture, depicts how they used the turntables of *Rokuroba* to haul in their fishing nets.

①

Seine fishing of *kibinago* herrings flourished at the Tanoura port. It is known that fishing was carried out jointly by Buddhist communities and Hidden Christian migrants. *Rokuroba* (or foundation of man power winch used to haul in fishing nets), which bears witness to such activities, still remains in good condition at the end of the Tanoura Bay.

2 Site of the first Hamawaki Church



Hamawaki Church (photo taken before 1931)

①

Following the lifting of the ban on Christianity, the first wooden church on Hisaka Island was built in Hamawaki in 1881, marking the end of 'hiding' of Hidden Christian villagers. The current Hamawaki Church was built in 1931 at the adjoining place, replacing the original wooden structure with a concrete one. A congregation hall was constructed at the site of the first church, but the masonry at the base of the congregation hall is the same that was used in the first church, preserving the original form. The earlier wooden structure of the church was dismantled during reconstruction, and was rebuilt in Gorin Village on the eastern coast of the same island.

3 Obiraki Village *Please do not enter private property.



①

Obiraki Village was formed through mutual cooperation between Buddhist communities and Hidden Christian communities. It was first cultivated by the sons who had not inherited family headship in other villages within the island and therefore moved to this area. This historical background made it easy to accept migrants from outside. Hidden Christian migrants to the village cleared land along the valleys on the margins of the paddy fields maintained by the Buddhists, making a living by finding ways to share water with the Buddhists and continuing to adhere to their faith in secret.

4 Royanosako martyrdom site



①



①

In 1868, here occurred religious suppression of those Hidden Christians who revealed their faith following the 'Discovery of Hidden Christians'. The authorities confined almost 200 Hidden Christians in a small prison, subjecting them to severe torture and forcing them to renounce their faith. As many as 42 people lost their lives. This persecution attracted strong protests from Western countries, finally leading to end of the centuries-long ban on Christianity.

Gorin Village



Gorin Village was formed by Hidden Christians who came to Hisaka Island following the migration policy of the Goto clan. This village is different from other Hidden Christian villages on the island in that it was formed in an isolated location from pre-existing Buddhist villages.

5 Gorin graveyard



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This graveyard provides a glimpse of changes in the shapes of gravestones from the period of the ban on Christianity to the times after the ban was lifted. Some of the gravestones were made by piling up oval stone rubble. These graves belong to the period when Christianity was forbidden. After the Hidden Christians joined the Catholic Church, they could build Christian-style graves and flat gravestones began to be used. The lower level of the graveyard was built earlier, suggesting that the graves on the lower level belong to the period of the ban on Christianity.



①



②

The first church on Hisaka Island (Hamawaki Church) was relocated here and used as Gorin Church. After the lifting of the ban on Christianity, churches were built in each village on Hisaka Island. In 1931, the original Hamawaki Church was dismantled and relocated to Gorin Village. This church was in use until 1984, and now is owned and managed by Goto City as a building designated as cultural property.

Code of etiquette

A church is a place of prayer. When visiting, you are kindly requested to observe the code of etiquette and respect the church's spiritual atmosphere.



- Please remove your hat and respect the church's spiritual atmosphere.
- Please do not touch any statues or other items within the church.
- Please do not enter the chancel (the area surrounding the altar and marked by an altar rail).
- Please do not eat, drink or smoke within the church.



*These images are for illustrative purposes only.

7

Hidden Christian graveyard (Eiri graveyard)



This graveyard was made by Hidden Christians in Eiri Village.

8

Site of Zazare Church



①

Zazare Church used to stand here. Although the inconvenient location of Zazare Village had prevented the villagers to build a church soon after lifting of the ban on Christianity, a wooden church was finally built in 1920 near the top of a mountain overlooking the village. The church was abandoned in 1969 due to integration with another church, and later destroyed due to typhoons and other causes.

9

Hidden Christian graveyard (Zazare graveyard)



①

This graveyard was made by people of Zazare Village. Some of the gravestones belong to powerful Hidden Christian leaders in Hisaka Island. The inscription on the big cross in the centre of the graveyard suggests that they made the graveyard in 1884. The graveyard space resembles the interiors of a church in that the cross has been erected at a higher level just like the altar in a church and stone monuments are arranged around the graveyard in the way the Stations of the Cross are placed in a church.

Introduction to other spots in Villages on Hisaka Island

A Tanoura Port



This port is the gateway to Hisaka Island. It is also used as a port for regular ferries to and from Fukue Island.

B Hamawaki Church



①

Since the first Hamawaki Church [2](#), built in 1881 in timber, had deteriorated due to sea winds, the current Hamawaki Church was built in 1931, replacing the original wooden structure with a concrete one to endure typhoons. It was the first church constructed with reinforced concrete in the Goto Islands. Situated on high ground overlooking the Tanoura Strait, Hamawaki Church's white façade stands out strikingly against the greenery of the mountains behind it. The church can be seen from the opposite shore and from ships passing far away, making it an important landmark on Hisaka Island.

C Former residence of the Fujiwara family (Hisaka Island Tourist Information Centre)



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The residence of the Fujiwara family is a representative old folk house on Hisaka Island. It is presumed to have been built around late 1880s. The Fujiwara family was influential in the economy of Hisaka Island. It is said that the Fujiwara family gave refuge to and let escape Hidden Christians during the Royanosako Martyrdom. Today, the residence has become a facility that serves as a base for the dissemination of information on the Important Cultural Landscape and the World Heritage site as well an exchange hub for tourism-focused regional promotion. Visitors who make an advance reservation can also enjoy a meal in the rest area.

- Address: 103 and 104 Hisaka-cho, Goto City TEL: +81-959-77-2115
- Opening hours: 9:00 to 17:00
- Closed on every Monday from November to June (or the following day instead if Monday is a national holiday), also from 29th Dec. to 3rd Jan.
- Admission free.

D Royanosako Memorial Church



①

The present memorial church stands at the site of Royanosako Martyrdom [4](#) that occurred in 1868. The floor of the church is carpeted in different colours to indicate how small the prison was, providing a vivid reminder of the suffering that the martyrs endured. The Royanosako Martyrs' Memorial Ceremony is held here on the last Sunday of October every year, and the church attracts local worshippers and pilgrims seeking to pay homage to the martyrs and be guided by the faith of their forebears.

E Origami Observatory



Situated on the northeast side of Hisaka Island, observation decks were constructed by the local residents themselves. In 2002, like-minded members of the island community got together to propose the establishment of a mountaintop location where both visitors and locals could enjoy scenic views of Hisaka Island. The community turned out in full force to build a path and construct observation decks in two different locations close to the summit of the mountain. These activities were awarded the Minister of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism's Tedukuri Furusato-sho Prize (community development division) in 2006.

F Gorin Church



①

The present Gorin Church was newly built in 1985 near the Former Gorin Church [6](#), which had become deteriorated, in order to preserve the old, historic church. The present church is one of the newest churches in the Goto Islands, where a number of old churches remain.



Maria Kannon of Eiri Village

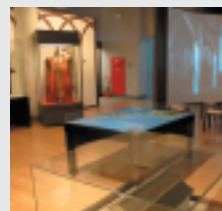
Hidden Christian leaders in Eiri kept over generations a white porcelain statue of Buddhist Bodhisattva *Kannon* imported from China. Hidden Christian villagers secretly revered it as the Virgin Mary. The statue is now housed in Dozaki Church Christian Archive Centre.



Dozaki Church Christian Archive Centre

Dozaki Church was rebuilt in 1907 with red bricks by Father Pélu of the Paris Foreign Missions Society. It has an exhibition of historical materials dating back to the Meiji period or later. The collection includes the Catholic liturgical calendar (*Ocho*) kept by Hidden Christian leaders (*Chokata*) and wood engravings created by Father Marc Marie de Rotz.

- Address: 2019 Okuura-cho, Goto City TEL: +81-959-73-0705
 - Opening hours: 9:00 to 17:00 (During the summer vacation season except for 13th to 15th Aug., 9:00 to 18:00; from 11th Nov. to 20th Mar., 9:00 to 16:00)
 - Closed from 30th Dec. to 3rd Jan.
 - Entry fee: adults (300 JPY), students of high school/ junior high school (150 JPY), elementary school students (100 JPY)
- Group tours or physically disabled people: adults (250 JPY for groups, 150 JPY for disabled people), students of high school/ junior high school (100 JPY), elementary school students (50 JPY)

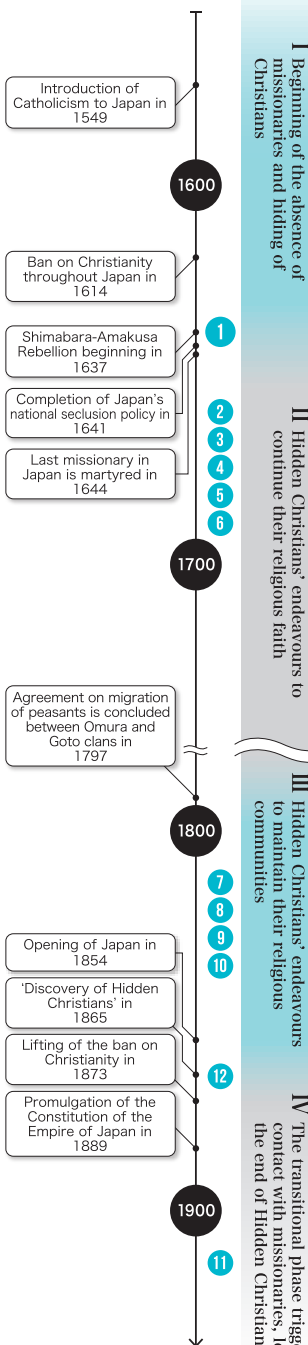


Goto Tourism and Historical Archive Centre

One can learn the history and culture of Christians in Goto with original items, panels, models, audio-visual materials, etc. This centre also has exhibition on general history and culture of Goto, folk events, articles of everyday use and so on.

- Address: 1-4 Ikeda-machi, Goto City TEL: +81-959-74-2300
 - Opening hours: 9:00 to 17:00 (It opens till 18:00 from June to September.)
 - Closed from 29th Dec. to 3rd Jan.
 - Entry fee: adults (230 JPY), students of university/high school (170 JPY), junior high school/ elementary school (110 JPY)
- Group tours (20 or more people): adults (190 JPY), students of university/high school (140 JPY), students of junior high school/ elementary school (90 JPY)

12 components of 'Hidden Christian Sites in the Nagasaki Region'



- 1 Remains of Hara Castle [Minamishimabara City]
- 2 Kasuga Village and Sacred Places in Hirado (Kasuga Village and Mt. Yasumandake) [Hirado City]
- 3 Kasuga Village and Sacred Places in Hirado (Nakaenoshima Island) [Hirado City]
- 4 Sakitsu Village in Amakusa [Amakusa City]
- 5 Shitsu Village in Sotome [Nagasaki City]
- 6 Ono Village in Sotome [Nagasaki City]
- 7 Villages on Kuroshima Island [Sasebo City]
- 8 Remains of Villages on Nozaki Island [Ojika Town]
- 9 Villages on Kashiragashima Island [Shinkamigoto Town]
- 10 Villages on Hisaka Island [Goto City]
- 11 Egami Village on Naru Island (Egami Church and its Surroundings) [Goto City]
- 12 Oura Cathedral [Nagasaki City]

Inquiries regarding Villages on Hisaka Island:
Policy Planning Division, General Coordination and Policy Planning Department, Goto City
 1-1 Fukue-cho, Goto City, Nagasaki Prefecture 853-8501 JAPAN
 TEL: +81-959-72-6782
 [Website] <http://www.city.goto.nagasaki.jp/sekaiisan/>
 [Email] sekaiisan@city.goto.lg.jp

Issued by Prefectures of Nagasaki and Kumamoto, Cities of Nagasaki, Sasebo, Hirado, Goto, Minamishimabara and Amakusa, and Towns of Ojika and Shinkamigoto

Hidden Christian Sites Search <http://kirishitan.jp/en>

Photographers/ 〇Ikeda Tsutomu, ㊦Higurashi Yuichi
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 Cultural Organization



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