

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



World Cultural Heritage
Hidden Christian Sites
in the Nagasaki Region

9

Villages on Kashiragashima Island

Guide Map

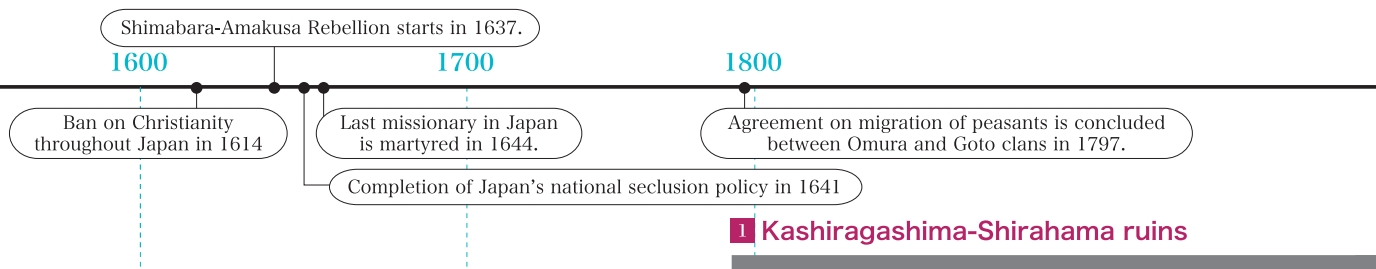


Significance of Villages on Kashiragashima Island

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 Kashiragashima 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 Kashiragashima Island, which once had been used for sick people.

《Basic information》

| | |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| Designation title as cultural assets | Kashiragashima Church |
| Designation category | Important Cultural Property designated by the national government |
| Year of designation | 2001, and additionally in 2003 |
| Location | Shinkamigoto Town, Minamimatsuura District |

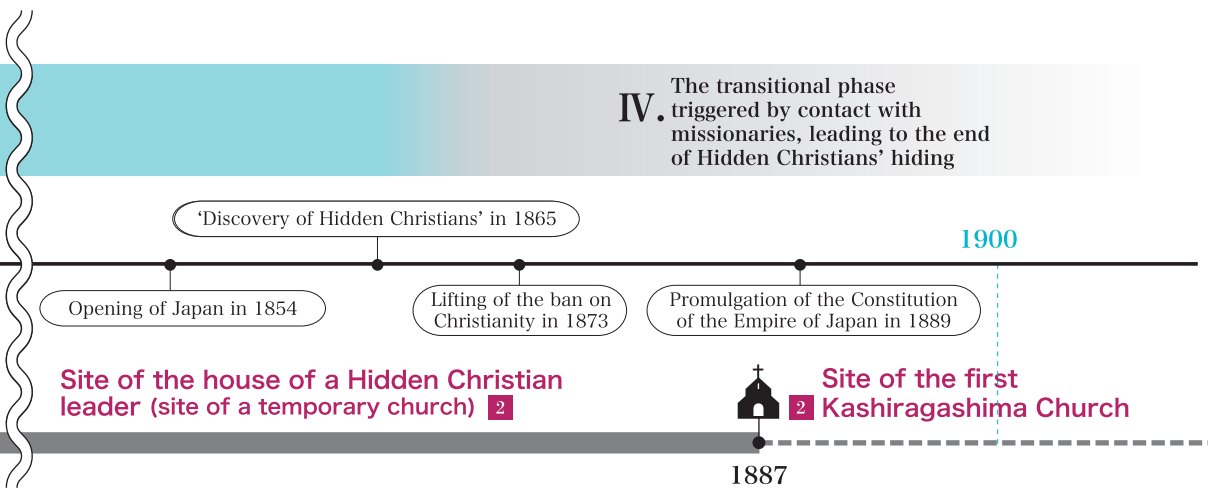
| | |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| Designation title as cultural assets | Stone-built Village Landscape of Sakiura in Shinkamigoto |
| Designation category | Important Cultural Landscape selected by the national government |
| Year of designation | 2012 |
| Location | Shinkamigoto Town, Minamimatsuura District |

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.

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



History

- ◎ Archaeological excavations have revealed signs of human use of the coastal areas of Kashiragashima Island dating back to the prehistoric era. However, the island remained uninhabited for many centuries.
- ◎ Historical records from the 19th century state that the island was used for the sick at that time.
- ◎ Many tombs of inhabitants in that century were found on a coastal sand dune in Shirahama area **1** .
- ◎ In the middle of the 19th century, Maeda Gidayu, a Buddhist man, moved to the island which other people avoided in order to open up new land and lived in Fukuura area.
- ◎ Gidayu invited several households to settle there also. These newcomers were Hidden Christians who had initially migrated from the Sotome area to the Goto Islands.
- ◎ The Hidden Christians decided to follow the Buddhist by outwardly behaving as Buddhists and move to the isolated island so that they could maintain their religious communities there.
- ◎ The Hidden Christians settled in the Shirahama area on the northern coast and in the Tajiri area on the southern coast. They constructed stone retaining walls to make terraces and grew potatoes as their main form of sustenance.
- ◎ The villagers had continued the Hidden Christian faith in the isolated environment until they secretly contacted missionaries of Oura Cathedral and rejoined the Catholic Church following the 'Discovery of Hidden Christians'.
- ◎ Domingo Matsujiro, the principal Hidden Christian leader in the Kamigoto area, came to Shirahama on Kashiragashima Island, built a temporary church and lived there **2** .
- ◎ In 1887, the first church **2** on the island was built in timber near the temporary church.
- ◎ A Catholic cemetery was established near the seacoast in 1905. The first church was replaced with the current stone building in 1919.

Wide-area and enlarged maps around Villages on Kashiragashima Island



Important Note for Visitors

Those who wish to visit Kashiragashima Church and other places in Shirahama area need to take a shuttle bus from Shinkamigoto Airport. This bus service aims at protecting the environment of the villages on the island and ensuring transportation security. Your understanding and cooperation are appreciated.

Area area where Hidden Christians used to lived

As Maeda Gidayu's grave is private property, it is not open to the public and its exact location is not indicated in this map.

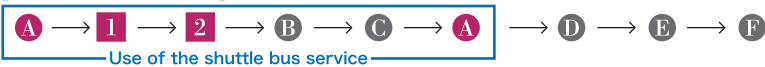


Enlarged map of Villages on Kashiragashima Island

■ Shirahama area



《Recommended route》



| | | | | | | | | | |
|-------|-----------------------------|---|-------------------|---|------------------------------|----|-------------------|----|------------------------------|
| | Boundaries of the component | Ⓐ | Guidance facility | 🏠 | Guide and information office | 🏘️ | Village | 🏛️ | Remains of tomb or graveyard |
| ----- | On foot | Ⓐ | Other spot | 🚽 | Rest space | 🏝️ | Island | 🏠 | Related building |
| ——— | On foot or by car, etc. | Ⓐ | Parking space | 📺 | Exhibition | 👁️ | Viewing spot | 🏛️ | Church |
| ——— | Shuttle bus | 🚻 | Toilets | 🛒 | Shop | 🏛️ | Tomb or graveyard | 🏛️ | Remains of church |
| 0 | Important spot | | | | | | | | |

Introduction to important spots in Villages on Kashiragashima Island

Shirahama area



Kashiragashima Island, which was uninhabited around the mid-19th century, had previously been used for sick people brought from other areas. Then Hidden Christians migrated to the island for cultivation under the leadership of a Buddhist who supported their settlement. They continued the religious faith there in secret during the ban on Christianity.



1

Kashiragashima-Shirahama ruins



Archaeological excavation in Shirahama (photo taken in 1995)



Archaeological excavation in Shirahama (photo taken in 1995)

An official map created around 1877 indicated the coastal area in Shirahama was used as graveyard, and it was confirmed in 1995 when the bones of 45 people were unearthed during an archaeological excavation. These people are thought to have been the sick brought from other areas. Some of these bodies were extended. This distinctive burial style suggests that Hidden Christians were also buried here. After the lifting of the ban on Christianity, the current Catholic cemetery was used instead.

2 Site of the house of a Hidden Christian leader (Site of a temporary church)



Site of the first Kashiragashima Church



① A stone monument indicating the location of the temporary church

Domingo Matsujiro, the principal Hidden Christian leader in Kamigoto, came to the island in 1867, built his house here and used it as a temporary church. The first wooden church was built in 1887 around here. Following its deterioration, construction of the current church started with local sandstone.



Tajiri area

***Please do not enter private property.**



① Farmland developed with stone retaining walls

Hidden Christian migrants in Tajiri grew potatoes on steep slopes as their main form of sustenance. Those migrants from Sotome brought their cultivation techniques and stone masonry skills with them to this area, which has retained the land use pattern dating back to the period of the ban on Christianity. Some stone steps and huts with stone walls still remain.

Fukuura area



Fukuura was the first settlement formed by Maeda Gidayu on Kashiragashima Island. At first, nobody was eager to move with him to the island that had been used for the sick. He invited several households from Tainoura on Nakadori Island, and these newcomers were Hidden Christians. They camouflaged their religious faith by following the Buddhist man.

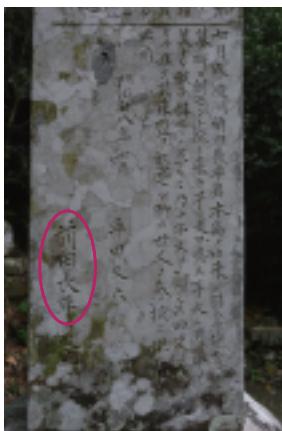
Grave of Maeda Gidayu in Fukuura



*The graveyard is private property, so please do not enter.



①



①

Gravestone inscribed with the name of Maeda Chohei



①

Gravestone with '*Kashiragashima Yuraiki* (The Origins of Kashiragashima Island)' inscribed on it

Gidayu's gravestone is inscribed with *Kashiragashima Yuraiki* (the Origins of Kashiragashima Island), which details the history of the cultivation. The gravestone in the centre is Gidayu's and the one on the right is his son's. The gravestone on the left belongs to Gidayu's grandson who converted to Catholicism; therefore, his gravestone follows the pattern of Catholic gravestones. The importance of this graveyard lies in the fact that those three gravestones demonstrate the relationship between Buddhists and Christians on the island.

Introduction to other spots in Villages on Kashiragashima Island

A Villages on Kashiragashima Island World Heritage Information Centre



Panels, videos, brochures, and other materials in the centre provide essential information to help visitors understand the World Heritage value of the island.

- Address: 744 Tomosumigo, Shinkamigoto Town, Minamimatsuura District, Nagasaki Prefecture TEL: +81-959-42-8118
- Opening hours: 9:00 to 18:00
- Admission free

B Kashiragashima Church



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The present Kashiragashima church was designed and constructed by Tetsukawa Yosuke. Its construction began in 1910, and it was completed in 1919 using nearby sandstone due to a shortage of building funds. The exterior appearance has a powerfully masculine character, a result of the method known as rustica, in which rough-surfaced quarried stones are piled up to form the outer wall. The interior presents a gentle, feminine space with a multitude of flower patterns, offering a marked contrast to the exterior. The coved ceiling, which is supported by dual braces, gives an unexpectedly high and spacious impression due to the lack of supporting pillars.

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.
- Please do not take photos inside the church.
- Please refrain from entering the church to sightsee when a Mass or other religious ceremony is being held.
- Thank you for your donation towards the preservation of the church. Offertory boxes are set inside the church.



Introduction to other spots in Villages on Kashiragashima Island

C Viewing spot ① facing Shirahama area



One can see the entire Shirahama area. Rokuro Island can be seen just in front.

D Viewing spot ② facing Shirahama area



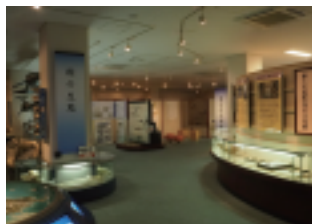
The entire Shirahama area and Rokuro Island can be seen from here.

E Viewing spot facing Kashiragashima Island



This spot commands a panoramic view of the island and the Kashiragashima Bridge.

F Geihinkan Museum



This museum has an exhibition (admission fee applies) profiling whaling activities and the churches of the Kamigoto area, and a local product sales corner. Panels, brochures, and other materials in the museum provide essential information to help visitors understand the World Heritage value of this island.

- Address: 578-36 Arikawago, Shinkamigoto Town, Minamimatsuura District, Nagasaki Prefecture TEL: +81-959-42-0180
- Opening hours: 9:00 to 17:00
- Closed from 29th Dec. to 3rd Jan.
- Admission free except for the exhibition area

Catholic cemetery



This cemetery was established after villagers rejoined the Catholic Church following the lifting of the ban on Christianity. It contains some gravestones made for Hidden Christians who survived the period of the ban and later became Catholic.

***Please do not enter the precincts.**

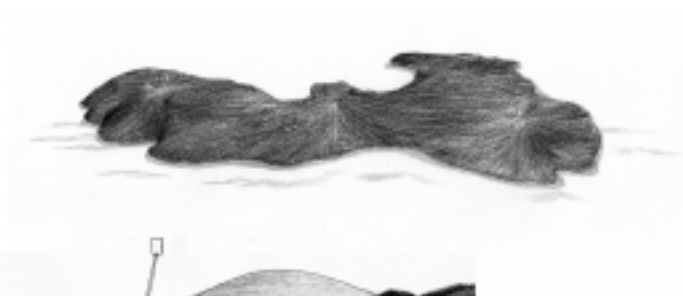
Rokuro Island



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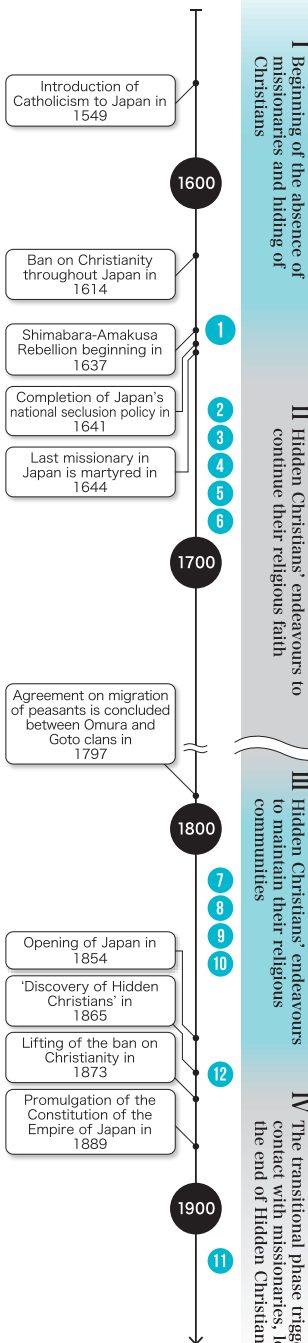
This is the island from which the stones used to build Kashiragashima Church were quarried. The original quarry dating from that time survives on the island to this day. While there is no history of human habitation on Rokuro Island, from the latter days of the Tokugawa Shogunate into Japan's postwar era it continued to be a source of the quarried sandstone known as Goto-ishi, which was shipped to Hiro, Nagasaki and other areas mainly for use as paving stones.

***Please see this island afar from viewing spots.**



*This image is for illustrative purposes only.

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



Inquiries regarding Villages on Kashiragashima Island:
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 [Website] <http://official.shinkamigoto.net/>
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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>

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United Nations
 Educational, Scientific and
 Cultural Organization



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