

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



World Cultural Heritage
Hidden Christian Sites
in the Nagasaki Region

7

Villages on Kuroshima Island

Guide Map

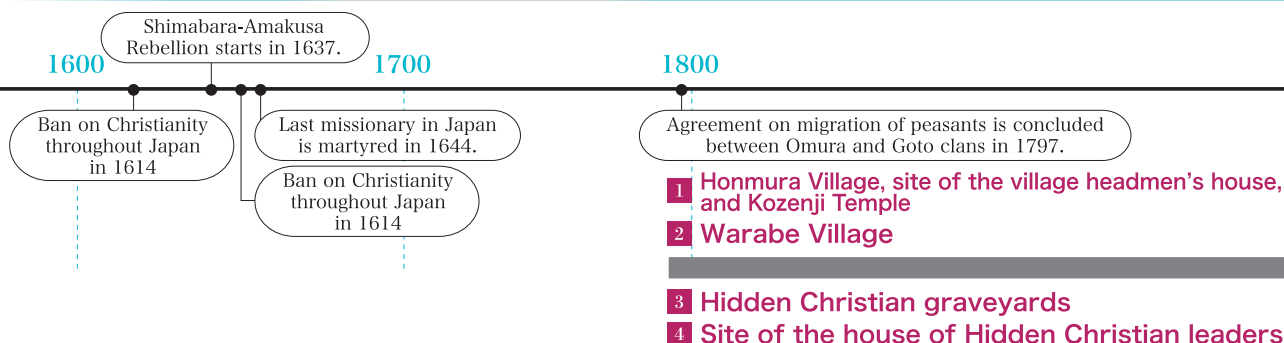


Significance of Villages on Kuroshima Island

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 Kuroshima 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 former pasturelands of Hirado clan on Kuroshima Island in need of redevelopment.

《Basic information》

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

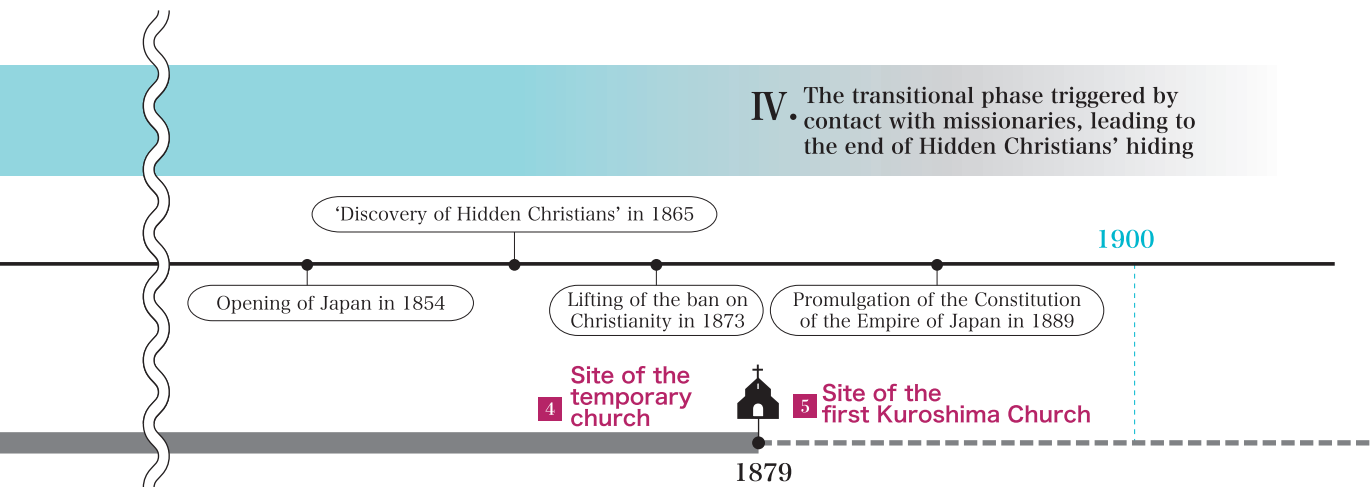
Dejima-Wharf 2nd floor, 1-1-205, Dejimamachi, Nagasaki City, Nagasaki Prefecture 850-0862
Tel +81-95-823-7650, Opening hours: 9:30 to 17:30

<http://kyoukaigun.jp/en/>

Hidden Christian Sites Information Centre



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



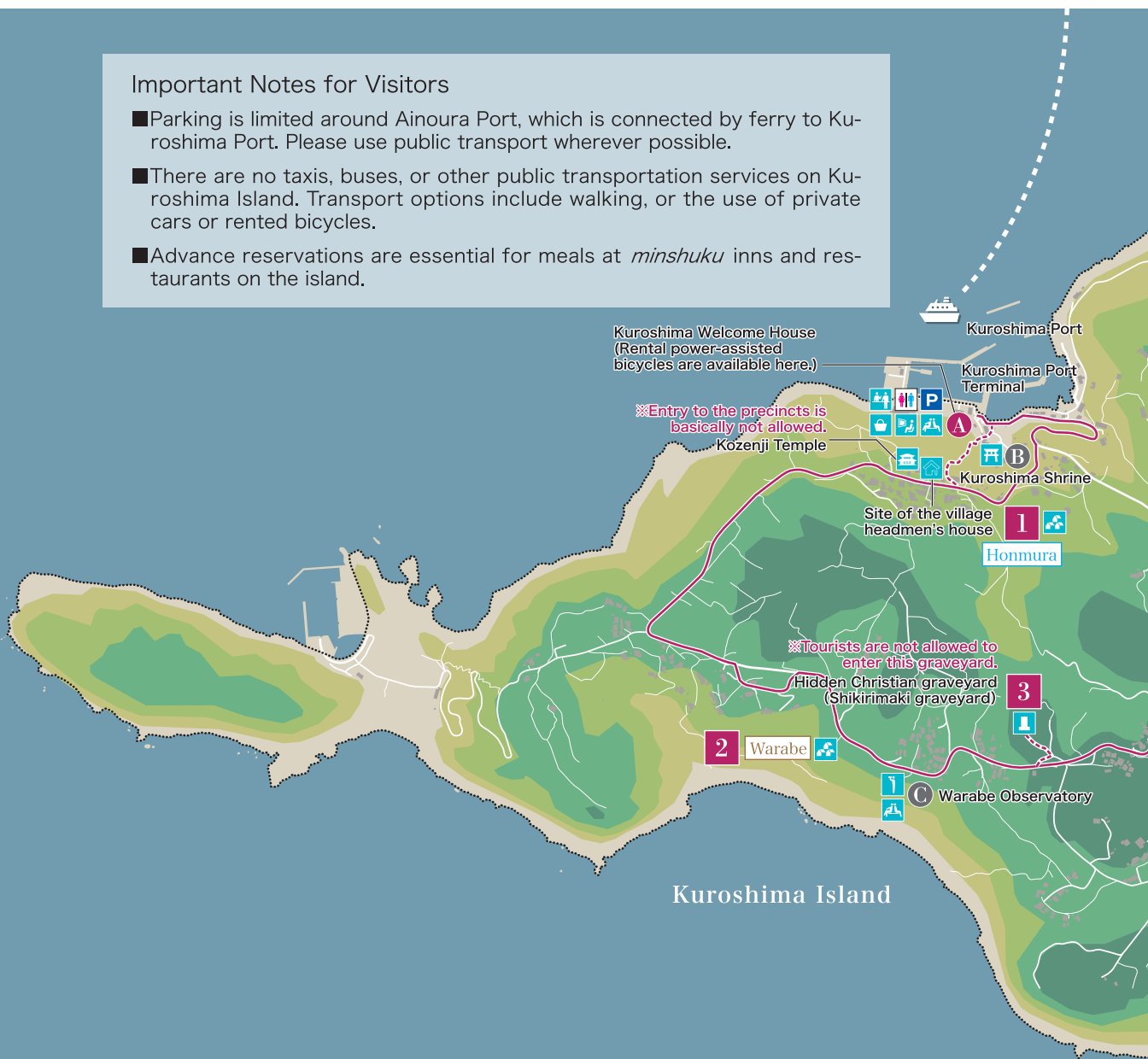
History

- References to Kuroshima Island can be found in a historical document dating back to the 13th century. In the 15th century, the island was under the control of a feudal lord based on Hirado Island, and the first village was established in Honmura **1** in the northern part of Kuroshima Island.
- There are no records attesting to a Catholic mission on the island in the 16th and the 17th centuries, suggesting that there was no introduction of Christianity to the island at that time.
- The Hirado clan established official pastures on the island in the 17th century, but they were abandoned in the early 19th century when horse farming became less important for the clan than crop production.
- The Hirado clan encouraged peasants to migrate to the island to convert the pastures into farmland, and the migrants formed seven new villages on the island (Furusato, Todobira, Hikazu, Nakiri, Neya, Tashiro, and Warabe). Among the migrants many were Hidden Christians from Sotome and other areas, and six out of these seven villages were actually Hidden Christian villages, while the remaining Furusato Village was Buddhist.
- Hidden Christians followed the encouragement of the clan to move to the island to cultivate its abandoned pastures, which they expected would help them blend in the existing communities and maintain their religious communities (**2** and **3**).
- The Hidden Christians on Kuroshima Island outwardly behaved as Buddhists and were affiliated to a Buddhist temple **1**. They secretly placed a figure called *Maria Kannon* in the temple and prayed to it. In such a way, they continued practising their secret faith.
- After the lifting of the ban on Christianity, the Hidden Christians on the island rejoined the Catholic Church and used their leader's house as a temporary church **4**.
- In 1879, the first Kuroshima Church **5** was constructed with timber in the central part of the island, which was convenient for everyone. The present church is the one rebuilt with brick in 1902.

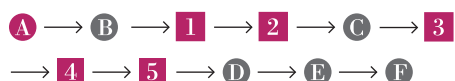
Wide-area map around Villages on Kuroshima Island

Important Notes for Visitors

- Parking is limited around Ainoura Port, which is connected by ferry to Kuroshima Port. Please use public transport wherever possible.
- There are no taxis, buses, or other public transportation services on Kuroshima Island. Transport options include walking, or the use of private cars or rented bicycles.
- Advance reservations are essential for meals at *minshuku* inns and restaurants on the island.



《Recommended route》



- Village Buddhist village
- Village Former Hidden Christian village

- Boundaries of the component
- On foot
- On foot or by car, etc.
- 0 Important spot
- A Guidance facility
- A Other spot



Parking space	Rest space	Village	Site of related building	Church
Toilets	Exhibition	Shinto shrine	Viewing spot	Remains of church
Guide and information office	Shop	Buddhist temple	Tomb or graveyard	

Introduction to important spots in Villages on Kuroshima Island

1 Honmura Village



※Entry to the precincts of Kozenji Temple is basically not allowed. If you wish to visit for sightseeing, please participate in guided tours.

Honmura is the oldest, Buddhist village on Kuroshima Island, built around the 14th century. During the ban on Christianity, The island's Buddhists lived alongside the Hidden Christians who arrived later, striving to avoid any unnecessary interference. The present public park is the site of the village headmen's house, where the *Efumi* ceremony was conducted to confirm that there were no Christians on the island. Kozenji Temple is said to have housed a statue of *Kannon* holding a baby. Hidden Christians on the island likened the statue to the Virgin Mary, while outwardly behaving as Buddhists.



Honmura Village



Site of the village headmen's house



The bell of Kozenji Temple, on which the names of Hidden Christian donors are engraved.



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Kozenji Temple



Maria Kannon statue of Kozenji Temple
(not existent)

2

Warabe Village



Warabe Village built on the site of pastures

There were official pastures of the Hirado clan in Warabe and Tashiro in the south of the island. The clan decided to abandon the pastures in 1802, and encouraged peasants to migrate to the island to cultivate the abandoned sites. Hidden Christians from Sotome and other areas settled in these sites, built houses on the hillside near the coast, and maintained their secret faith. In this village, we find a surviving example of land use practices from the period, with a copse of trees that serves as a wind-break, houses, and fields all arranged along a single line from the coast.

3

Hidden Christian graveyard (Shikirimaki graveyard)



※Please do not enter the precincts.



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This graveyard had been used by Hidden Christian households in Warabe Village until the current Catholic cemetery was built in the 1880s. Buddhist graves on the island face westward, though there are graves that face eastward in this graveyard. Since the graves facing eastward were built in the premodern times, the graves are believed to be those of the Hidden Christians.

4 Site of the house of Hidden Christian leaders (and the site of the temporary church)



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This is the site of the house of the Deguchi family, who served as Hidden Christian leaders on Kuroshima Island for generations during the ban on Christianity. It is also the place where a Catholic priest was secretly invited in 1872, the year before

the lifting of the ban, and where a mass was held for the first time on the island. The house was used as a temporary church after the ban was officially lifted, and this lasted until the first Kuroshima Church was built in the centre of the island in 1879. This site has been regarded as one of the sacred sites on the island, and a stone monument stands to honour the site.

5 Site of the first Kuroshima Church



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The first church on the island was designed by Father Pélu and built in the centre of the island in 1879 so that people could easily gather. The current Kuroshima Church is the second church. Inside the current church, some parts from the first church remain. For example, the current side altar used to be the main altar of the first church, and the communion rail of the first church was converted for use as a handrail for the choir stall.



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Introduction to other spots in Villages on Kuroshima Island

A Kuroshima Welcome House



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This facility displays materials on the history of Kuroshima Island, receives guide requests, lends bicycles with a motor-driven assist function and sells souvenirs such as local agricultural and marine products.

- Address: 8-4 Kuroshima-cho, Sasebo City, Nagasaki Prefecture
TEL: +81-956-56-2311
- Closing days are not fixed.
- [Website]<http://kuroshimakanko.com/>

B Kuroshima Shrine



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All residents on Kuroshima Island were devotees of this shrine during the ban on Christianity. The shrine holds an annual festival that all followers participate in, but few residents of villages other than the Buddhist villages (Honmura and Furusato) appeared in the festival of 1872. This revealed that the Hidden Christians on the island had rejoined the Catholic Church by that time.

C Warabe Observatory



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Towards the sea, on the left is Sotome area, and on the right are the Goto Islands. The islands of Odate and Enoshima can be seen in the offing. If the weather permits, the Goto Islands can be seen. It is this sea that the Hidden Christians crossed to migrate from Sotome to the Goto Islands during the ban on Christianity. The migrants to Kuroshima Island are thought to have landed on this side of the island.

D The present Kuroshima Church



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②

The current Kuroshima Church, the second church, was designed by Father Marmand, and erected in 1902. The main structure is built with brick, and a square belfry is set on the front elevation. The floor plan

has a central nave with aisles. The sectional elevation consists of three vertical elements dedicated with arcades, triforium and clerestories. Its ceiling is rib-vaulted, and decorative wood grains are painted on the surface of ceiling boards for a more opulent appearance. Granite collected in Kuroshima Island is used for foundation stones of pillars. Porcelain tiles produced in Imari are laid onto the floor of the apse. The pulpit and the chandelier were made of timber by Father Marmand.

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.



E Kuroshima Church Exhibition Room



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This facility exhibits religious tools used by the successive parish priests, Missal and other materials left in the church. The building was called Mon-beya, and it was used to teach children catechism and as accommodation for the sisters.

F Catholic cemetery

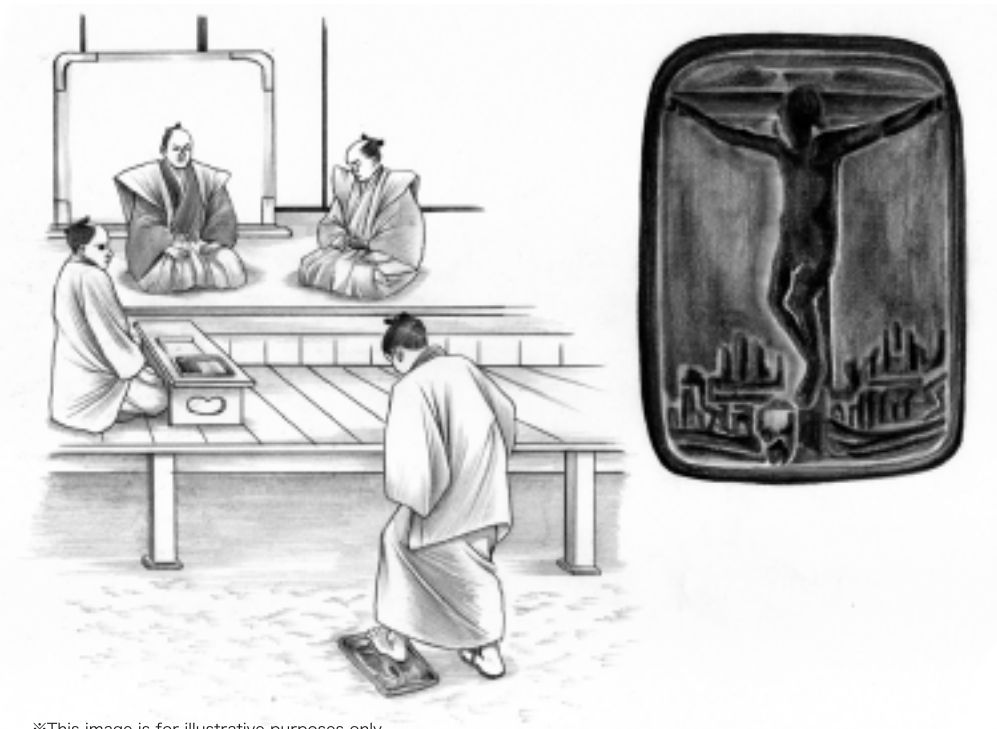


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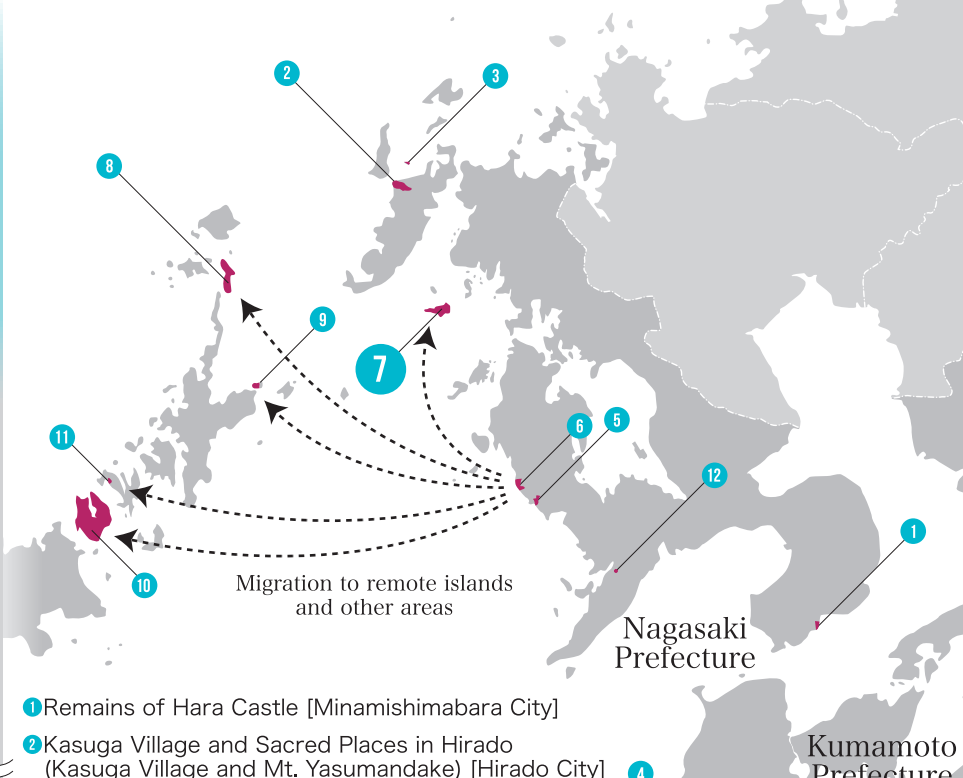
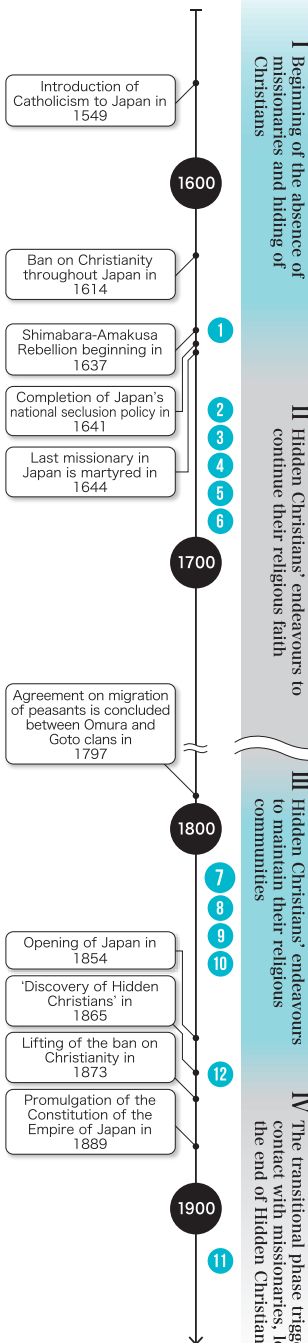
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During the ban on Christianity, burials for Hidden Christians were organised within each village. After the first church on Kuroshima Island was built in the centre of the island in 1879, a common cemetery for local Catholics was also established adjacent to the church. The grave of Father Marmand, who built the current Kuroshima Church, is located here.



※This image is for illustrative purposes only.

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 Kuroshima Island:
Sasebo City Board of Education, Social Education Division
 1-10 Hachimancho, Sasebo City, Nagasaki Prefecture 857-8585 JAPAN
 TEL: +81-956-24-4111
 [Website] <http://www.city.sasebo.lg.jp/kankou/kankou/kuroshima.html>
 [Email] syakai@city.sasebo.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>

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United Nations
 Educational, Scientific and
 Cultural Organization



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