

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



World Cultural Heritage
Hidden Christian Sites
in the Nagasaki Region

11

Egami Village on Naru Island

(Egami Church and its Surroundings)

Guide Map

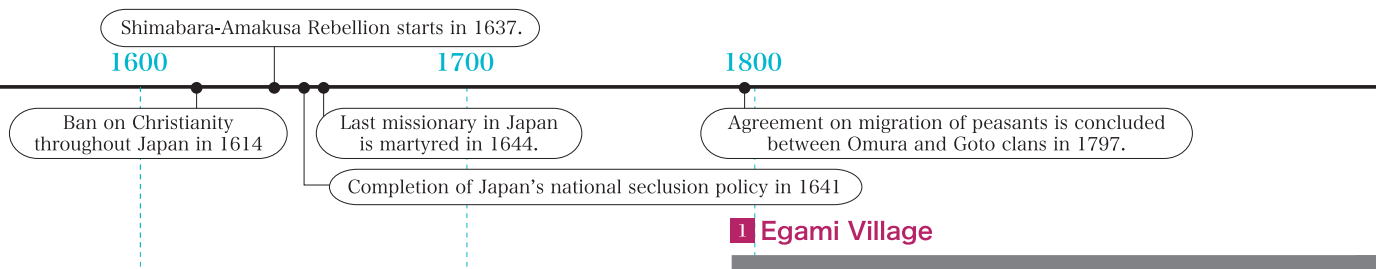


Significance of Egami Village on Naru Island

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 community



Position in 'Hidden Christian Sites in the Nagasaki Region'

- ◎ Egami Village on Naru Island is one of the components that visually showcases the end of 'hiding' of Hidden Christians.
- ◎ Egami Village was established by Hidden Christians who migrated there during the ban on Christianity, and Egami Church visually marks the end of their 'hiding' following the lifting of the ban.

《Basic information》

Designation title as cultural assets	Egami Church
Designation category	Important Cultural Property designated by the national government
Year of designation	2008, and additionally in 2012
Location	Naru-machi, Goto City

Manners when visiting the village

Please remember that there are people living in the village. 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 church

When you wish to visit Egami 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

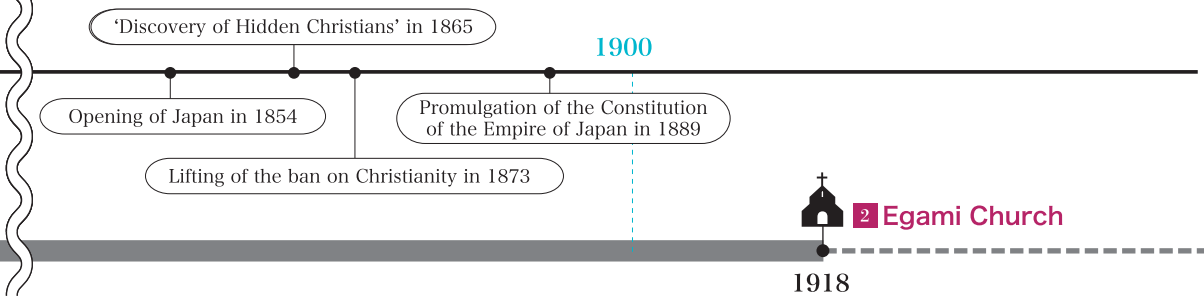
<http://kyoukaigun.jp>

Hidden Christian Sites Information Centre

Search

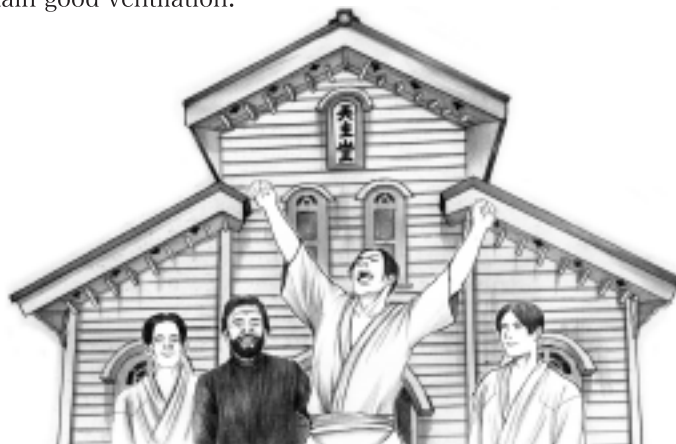


IV. The transitional phase triggered by contact with missionaries, leading to the end of Hidden Christians' hiding



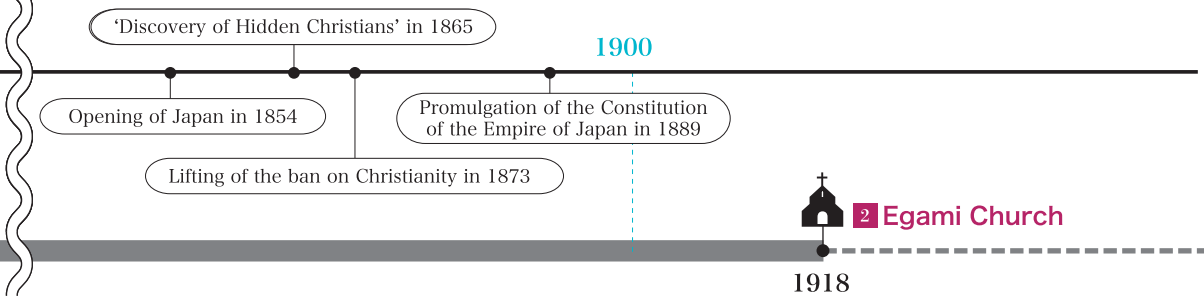
History

- ◎ Naru Island was a port of call for ships situated along the trading route between Japan and China. In the 15th century, the island came under the control of the Uku clan, who had ruled the other parts of the Goto Islands.
- ◎ Although Catholicism was introduced to the island in the early 17th century, Christian communities later disappeared due to the national ban on Christianity.
- ◎ Beginning in the late 18th to the 19th centuries, Hidden Christians migrated from Sotome to Naru Island.
- ◎ Four Hidden Christian households settled in Egami, which was a very small alluvial plain isolated from the pre-existing Buddhist villages. The Hidden Christians opened up rice paddies in the plain and built houses on the sloping terrain **1**.
- ◎ The Hidden Christian communities secretly continued to practise their religious faith, and after the lifting of the ban on Christianity they rejoined the Catholic Church.
- ◎ Egami Church **2** was built in 1918 on a small strip of terraced land in the valley with funds gathered from fishing for *kibinago* herring.
- ◎ The church stands in a location that is close to a spring and protected from strong sea winds. Traditional Japanese techniques are applied to deal with the humidity of the area and to maintain good ventilation.



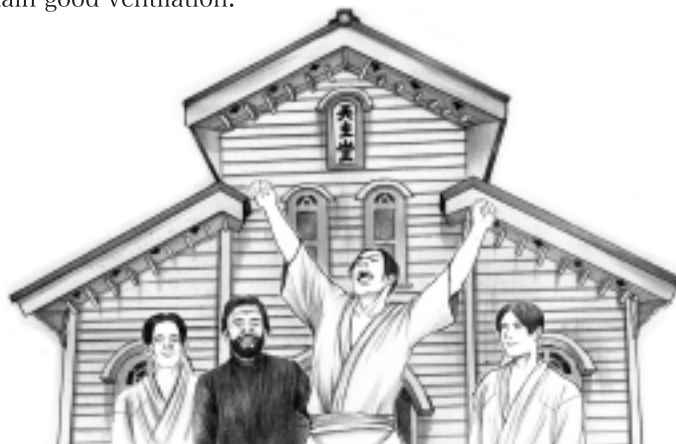
*This image is for illustrative purposes only.

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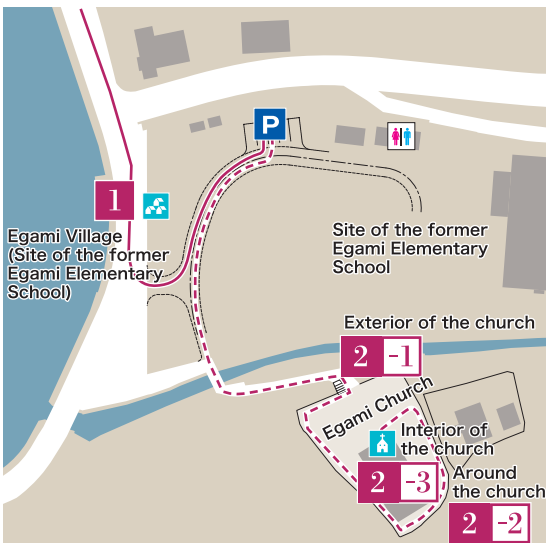
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Wide-area and enlarged maps around Egami Village on Naru Island



《Recommended route》

1 → 2-1 → 2-2 → 2-3 → A

.....	Boundaries of the component	0	Important spot	Village
- - - - -	On foot	A	Other spot	Viewing spot
—————	On foot or by car, etc.	P	Parking space	Church
			Toilets	

Introduction to important spots in Egami Village on Naru Island

1

Egami Village (Site of the former Egami Elementary School)



①

Hidden Christian migrants settled in Egami from the end of the 18th century downward. They established their own village on narrow strips of land in valleys near the coastline, some distance from the already existing villages. They earned their living by growing rice in scarce paddies in the downstream, while continuing their religious practice in secret. All the villagers rejoined the Catholic Church in 1881, and built the first church in 1906. Egami Elementary School was constructed on former rice paddies in 1908.

2

-1

Exterior of Egami Church (Site of the first Egami Church)



①



①



①



①

In 1906, after the lifting of the ban on Christianity, the first Egami Church was built in this location. Later in 1918, the villagers built a full-fledged church in timber (the current Egami Church). The floor is set high off the ground to protect against the high humidity, and it has ornamented vents in the soffits. Constructed by applying traditional building methods to various parts of the building, Egami Church is a blend of Japanese architectural design, which suits the local climate and culture, with western architectural style.

2 -2 Around Egami Church



①

The stone-paved watercourse and stone retaining walls that were constructed together with the church still remain around the building.

2 -3 Interior of Egami Church



①

The church has three naves, a rib-vaulted ceiling, and three vertical elements (arcades, triforium-like decorative belts, and arches on the upper walls).



①

The floor is covered by wooden slats, as Japanese customarily take off their shoes inside a house. The internal space has three naves with vertical elements, such as arcades and triforium-like decorative belts. The ceiling is rib-vaulted while king post trusses are applied to its roof structure. The building is a full-scale wooden church. Pillars and parts are decorated with wood grain, as well as window glass with flower patterns, hand-drawn by parishioners.

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 spot in Egami Village on Naru Island

A Viewing spot facing Shiwanoura Bay



①

Okushi Village



①

Egami Village

We see Okushi Bay in the front, and the village on the left is a Buddhist village, Okushi Village. Egami Village is in the area where we can see the white building on the right. Looking at these villages, we can see a clear difference; the Buddhist village shows a clustered form while the migrants' village was a dispersed settlement. Seine net fishing for *kibinago* herring was carried out jointly by the Christians of Egami Village and the Buddhists of Okushi Village and the profits from fishing were used to fund the construction of Egami Church.

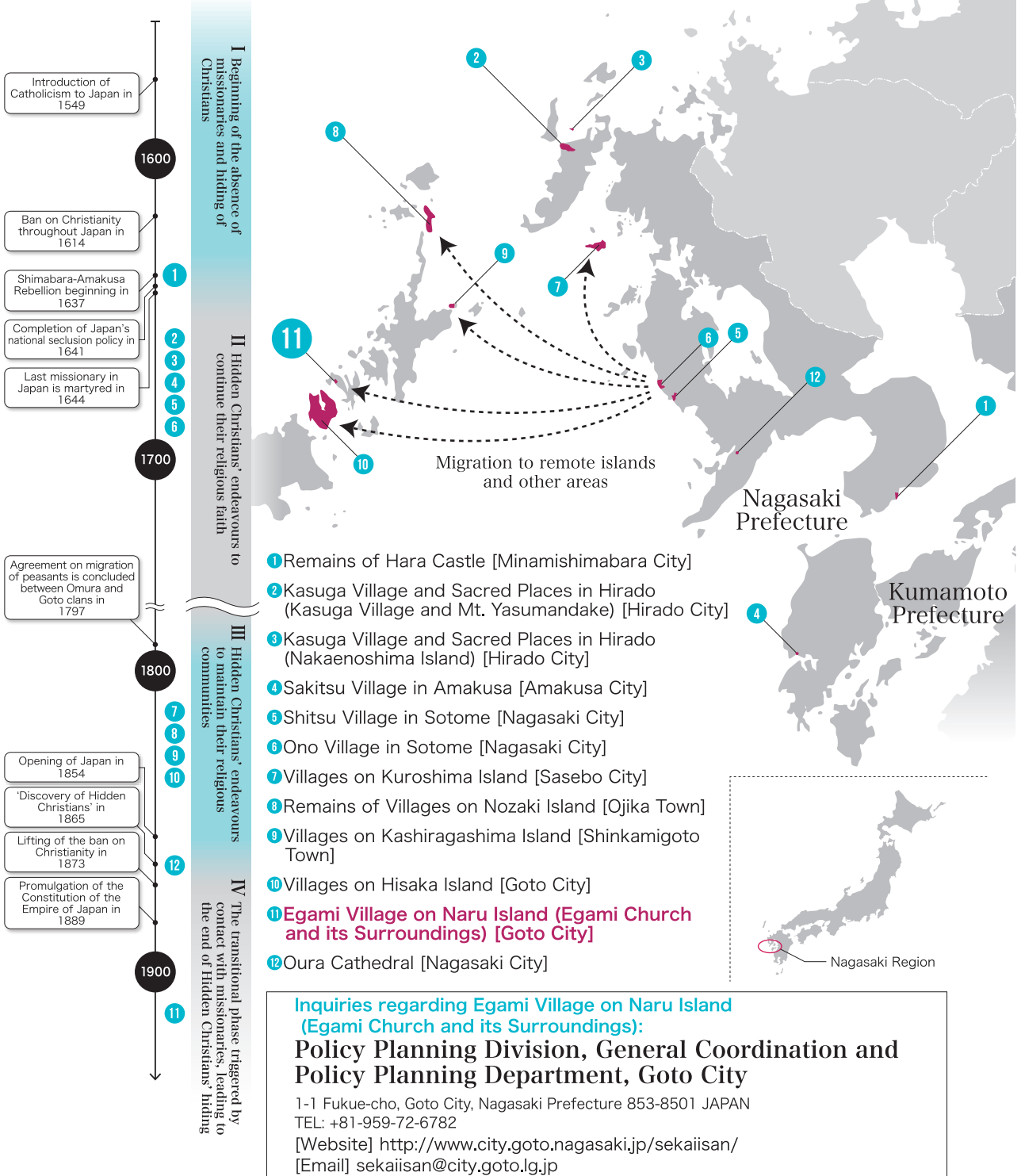
Goto Tourism and Historical Archive Centre



You can learn the history and culture of Christians in Goto with original items, audio-visual materials, panels, models, 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'



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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