

Chronology of Christianity in Japan Centered on Nagasaki

The Arrival and Flourishing of Christianity

1549 (Tenbun 18)

Jesuit missionary Francis Xavier brings Christianity to Japan.

IMAGE 1: Portrait of Saint Francis Xavier (Kobe City Museum)

1550 (Tenbun 19)

Francis Xavier starts preaching at Hirado.

1562 (Eiroku 5)

Ōmura Sumitada opens the port of Yokoseura (present-day Saikai).

1563 (Eiroku 6)

Missionary work gets underway on the Shimabara Peninsula.

Ōmura Sumitada converts to become the first Christian daimyo.

IMAGE II: Ōmura Sumitada from *Nihon junkyō seika* (The Flower of Japanese Martyrdom)

1566 (Eiroku 9)

Luis de Almeida and other foreign missionaries are invited to preach on the Gotō Islands.

1569 (Eiroku 12)

Todos os Santos (Church of all Saints) is the first church to be built in Nagasaki.

1570 (Genki 1)

Ōmura Sumitada negotiates the opening of the port of Nagasaki.

1571 (Genki 2)

The first Portuguese ship drops anchor at Nagasaki.

1580 (Tenshō 8)

Seminaries are established in Azuchi and Arima (now Minami Shimabara); a college is established in Bungo.

Ōmura Sumitada cedes the six districts of Nagasaki and Mogi (now the city of Nagasaki) to the Jesuits

1585 (Tenshō 13)

The four ambassadors of the Tenshō embassy have an audience with Pope Gregory XIII.

IMAGE III: Tenshō embassy, Augsburg Neue Zeyttung (Kyoto University Library)

The Repression of the Christians

1587 (Tenshō 15)

Toyotomi Hideyoshi promulgates an edict to expel the Christian fathers.

IMAGE IV: Decree on the Prohibition of Christianity (Matsura Historical Museum)

1588 (Tenshō 16)

Toyotomi Hideyoshi makes Nagasaki, Motegi, and Urakami into domains directly controlled by the *bakufu*.

1590 (Tenshō 18)

The ambassadors of the Tenshō embassy return to Japan, bringing back a letterpress printing machine and other items from the West.

1593 (Bunroku 2)

The Franciscan missionary Pedro Bautista arrives in Japan and starts preaching on behalf of the Franciscan Order.

1596 (Keichō 1)

The *San Felipe* incident takes place, in which a Spanish galleon is shipwrecked at Urado.

1597 (Keichō 1)

The “Twenty-Six Martyrs of Japan” (missionaries and laypersons) are put to death.

1601 (Keichō 6)

The ordaining of Japan’s first two native priests, from the Japan Diocesan Seminary of the Great God on Nagasaki Cape.

1602 (Keichō 7)

Augustinians and Dominicans arrive in Japan.

1603 (Keichō 8)

The *Konchirisan no ryaku* (*Short Treatise on Perfect Contrition*) is compiled.

IMAGE V: Written copy of the *Konchirisan no ryaku* manuscript (Nagasaki City Museum of History and Folklore)

1605 (Keichō 10)

The Nagasaki agent turns Nagasaki Village in the Ōmura fiefdom into territory directly controlled by the shogun; provides the northern part of Urakami in compensation.

1612 (Keichō 17)

Okamoto Daihachi Incident

Edict is promulgated prohibiting Christianity in the shogun’s lands.

1613 (Keichō 18)

Date Masamune sends Hasekura Tsunegawa on a diplomatic mission to Europe.

1614 (Keichō 19)

Edict prohibiting Christianity throughout Japan is promulgated.

Missionaries are expelled from Japan. (Henceforth, they will make intermittent attempts to slip into the country.)

Churches and other Christianity-related buildings are destroyed.

1616 (Genna 2)

Foreign merchant vessels (except those from China) are restricted to the ports of Hirado and Nagasaki.

1619 (Genna 5)

Cash rewards are offered in Nagasaki to help catch Christians.

The Great Kyoto Martyrdom (52 laypersons are put to death).

1622 (Genna 8)

The Great Genna Martyrdom (55 missionaries and Japanese *doshuku* acolytes are put to death).

1623 (Genna 9)

The Great Edo Martyrdom (50 missionaries and laypersons are executed).

Manila-based Franciscans, Dominicans, and Augustinians slip missionaries into Japan.

1624 (Kan'ei 1)

Spanish vessels are forbidden to enter Japan.

1626 (Kan'ei 3)

Nagasaki Magistrate Mizuno Kawachi no kami Morinobu orders residents of Nagasaki to renounce Christianity.

1627 (Kan'ei 4)

Lord of Shimabara Peninsula Matsukura Shigemasa starts torturing Christians at the Unzen volcanic springs.

1628 (Kan'ei 5)

Fumi-e, the forced trampling of Christian images, is introduced.

1629 (Kan'ei 6) ~

Nagasaki Magistrate Takenaka Uneme no Shō Shigeyoshi intensifies the repression of the Nagasaki Christians.

1633 (Kan'ei 10)

Ships other than *hōshosen* (ships specifically authorized for foreign trade) are banned from entering Japan's waters. Unauthorized Japanese ships are banned from leaving Japan.
The Jesuit Cristóvão Ferreira renounces his faith and remains in Japan.

1634 (Kan'ei 11)

The Church Calendar of Bastian is compiled.

1635 (Kan'ei 12)

Japanese are forbidden to sail overseas or return home if already abroad.

Daimyo and *hatamoto* (shogunal vassals) given orders to carry out inquisitions based on a system of temple registration.

1636 (Kan'ei 13)

Artificial island of Dejima is completed in Nagasaki; Portuguese are required to move there.

IMAGE VI: "Map of Dejima," Kawahara Keiga (Nagasaki Museum of History and Culture)

1637 (Kan'ei 14) ~

Shimabara Rebellion, siege of Hara Castle (which falls the following year).

1638 (Kan'ei 15)

Cash rewards for uncovering Christians are introduced on a national basis.

1639 (Kan'ei 16)

Portuguese ships are completely banned from Japan.

1640 (Kan'ei 17)

Inspector Inoue Chikugo no kami Masashige is appointed Grand Inquisitor.

1641 (Kan'ei 18)

The trading post of the Dutch East India Company is moved from Hirado to Dejima.

1642 (Kan'ei 19)

Jesuit missionary Father Antonio Rubino secretly enters Japan; Father Marquez enters the following year.

1644 (Shōhō 1)

The missionary Konishi Mansho is martyred in Kyoto.

1657 (Meireki 3) ~

Over 400 people are executed in the Kōri Crackdown in the Ōmura domain.

The evangelist Bastian, who was mainly active in Sotome, is executed.

1660 (Manji 3) ~

Bungo Crackdown.

1661 (Kanbun 1) ~

Nōbi Crackdown.