

Oura Church Christian Museum

Two stately old buildings, both with exterior galleries, stand just below Oura Church on the right-hand side. The white-plaster Latin Seminary dates from 1875, while the red-brick Archbishop's Residence dates from 1915. Both buildings were designed by Father Marc de Rotz, the multitalented parish priest of Sotome. The Archdiocese of Nagasaki converted them into the Christian Museum in 2018.

Constructed in 1864, Oura Church is the oldest Catholic church in Nagasaki. It was here, on March 17, 1865, that the Hidden Christians of Urakami revealed their existence to Father Bernard Petitjean in the incident known as the Discovery of the Hidden Christians. When Father Petitjean went out to preach around Nagasaki, he would often provide the local Christian communities with new medals, rosaries, and crosses in exchange for the older religious artifacts, such as Maria Kannon statues, that had been using during the centuries when their religion was banned. He brought these artifacts back to Oura Church. As a consequence, the archdiocese has an interesting collection of Hidden Christian items, some of which are on display here. In addition, the museum provides a very clear chronological overview of the introduction, suppression, and revival of Christianity in Japan.