

NAGASAKI – SPIRITUAL DESTINATION

A Sacred Land of Faith in Asia

The Heritage of Hidden Christians and the Pilgrimage Destination of Nagasaki

To Whom It May Concern,

Greetings from the **Nagasaki Prefectural Tourism Federation**.

Nagasaki Prefecture is internationally recognized as the historical center of Christianity in Japan and one of Asia's most significant destinations of faith. It is a place where stories of hope, sacrifice, perseverance, and unwavering belief have been preserved and passed down through generations.

Following the prohibition of Christianity in Japan, many believers endured severe persecution. Some sacrificed their lives as witnesses to their faith, while others chose to preserve their beliefs in silence and secrecy.

Despite the absence of priests, the inability to openly celebrate the sacraments, and the lack of religious freedom, these faithful communities continued to pass on their faith for more than 250 years.

Yet, the light of faith never disappeared.

Today, the history of the **Hidden Christians of Nagasaki** is recognized as one of the world's most remarkable spiritual and cultural legacies, symbolizing endurance, hope, and steadfast devotion to God.

Nagasaki is now known worldwide as an international pilgrimage destination, welcoming visitors from across the globe. Sacred sites such as **Ōura Cathedral, Urakami Cathedral**, and the villages and churches of the **Hidden Christian Sites in the Nagasaki and Amakusa Region**, recognized as a UNESCO World Heritage Site, bear witness to this extraordinary history of faith.

A pilgrimage to Nagasaki offers visitors the opportunity to:

- Honor and remember the Japanese martyrs and faithful witnesses who sacrificed for their beliefs.
- Learn about the introduction, development, and survival of Christianity in Japan.

- Experience the spiritual legacy of the Hidden Christians, whose faith endured for more than 250 years.
- Pray, reflect, and renew their spiritual lives in sacred places of worship.
- Discover the unique harmony of faith, history, culture, and hospitality that defines Nagasaki.

The **Nagasaki Prefectural Tourism Federation** and **Asia Travel and Sports Co., Ltd. (Thailand)** are currently working together to promote initiatives in pilgrimage travel, cultural exchange, educational visits, study tours, and people-to-people exchange programs aimed at strengthening friendship and mutual understanding between Thailand and Japan.

As part of this collaboration, Asia Travel and Sports Co., Ltd. supports communication and outreach with archdioceses, dioceses, Catholic schools, church organizations, and Catholic communities throughout Thailand, creating opportunities for Thai Catholics to encounter and appreciate Nagasaki's rich spiritual heritage.

We sincerely hope that pilgrimages to Nagasaki will serve as a bridge of friendship between our two nations, fostering cultural understanding while inspiring spiritual growth and deeper reflection on faith.

Nagasaki is not merely a travel destination.

It is a land where the memory of faith lives on.

A land of prayer.

And a place where one may encounter God anew.

Sincerely,

Nagasaki Prefectural Tourism Federation

Nagasaki Prefecture, Japan JP

