

Saint Stephen's welcomes everyone who wishes to follow Christ, worship together, grow in faith and share God's love through service to others.



St. Stephen's Episcopal Church

MORNING PRAYER FEAST OF MARTYRS OF JAPAN

Wednesday 7 Feb 2024 9:30 AM

From [Wikipedia](#)



Announcements and Welcome
Rev Deacon Dorothy Gutwein

The [Martyrs of Japan](#) (Japanese: 日本の殉教者, [Hepburn](#): *Nihon no junkyōsha*) were [Christian](#) missionaries and followers who were persecuted and executed, mostly during the [Tokugawa shogunate](#) period in the 17th century. More than 400 martyrs of Japan have been recognized with [beatification](#) by the [Catholic Church](#), and 42 have been [canonized](#) as saints.

The 26 Martyrs of Japan at [Nagasaki](#) (1628 engraving).

Early Christianity in Japan

Christian missionaries arrived with [Francis Xavier](#) and the [Jesuits](#) in the 1540s and briefly flourished, with over 100,000 converts, including many [daimyōs](#) in [Kyushu](#). The shogunate and imperial government at first supported the [Catholic](#) mission and the missionaries, thinking that they would reduce the power of the [Buddhist](#) monks, and

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Opening Sentences *(Please stand as you are able)*

Leader: Send out your light and your truth, that they may lead me, and bring me to your holy hill and to your dwelling. *(Psalm 43:3)*

Confession of Sin

Deacon/Leader: Let us confess our sins against God and our neighbor.

(Short Silence may be kept.)

All: Most merciful God, we confess that we have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done, and by what we have left undone.

We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We are truly sorry and we humbly repent. For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ, have mercy on us and forgive us; that we may delight in your will, and walk in your ways, to the glory of your Name. Amen.

Deacon/Leader: Almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us all our sins through our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen us in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep us in eternal life. **Amen.**

The Invitatory and Psalter

Leader: Lord, open our lips.

People: **And our mouth shall proclaim your praise.**

All: Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen.

Jubilate *(For the Gloria):*

**Be joyful in the Lord, all you lands; *
serve the Lord with gladness
and come before his presence with a song.**

**Know this: The Lord himself is God; *
he himself has made us, and we are his;
we are his people and the sheep of his pasture.**

**Enter his gates with thanksgiving;
go into his courts with praise; *
give thanks to him and call upon his Name.**

**For the Lord is good; his mercy is everlasting; *
and his faithfulness endures from age to age.**

The Lessons (*Please be seated*)

First Lesson: A Reading from the Book of Galatians (2:19–3:6)

Through the law I died to the law, so that I might live to God. I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. I do not nullify the grace of God; for if justification comes through the law, then Christ died for nothing.

You foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you? It was before your eyes that Jesus Christ was publicly exhibited as crucified! The only thing I want to learn from you is this: Did you receive the Spirit by doing the works of the law or by believing what you heard? Are you so foolish? Having started with the Spirit, are you now ending with the flesh? Did you experience so much for nothing? —if it really was for nothing. Well then, does God supply you with the Spirit and work miracles among you by your doing the works of the law, or by your believing what you heard?

Just as Abraham “believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness,”

Reader: The Word of the Lord

People: **Thanks be to God**

Psalm 116:1 - 8

- 1 I love the Lord, because he has heard the voice of my supplication, *
because he has inclined his ear to me whenever I called upon him.
- 2 The cords of death entangled me;
the grip of the grave took hold of me; *
I came to grief and sorrow.
- 3 Then I called upon the Name of the Lord: *
"O Lord, I pray you, save my life."
- 4 Gracious is the Lord and righteous; *
our God is full of compassion.
- 5 The Lord watches over the innocent; *
I was brought very low, and he helped me.
- 6 Turn again to your rest, O my soul, *
for the Lord has treated you well.
- 7 For you have rescued my life from death, *
my eyes from tears, and my feet from stumbling.
- 8 I will walk in the presence of the Lord *
in the land of the living.

Gospel Lesson:

Deacon/Reader: The holy Gospel of Our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew
Mark (8:34-38)

People: Glory to you, Lord Christ.

Jesus called the crowd with his disciples, and said to them, "If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake, and for the sake of the gospel, will save it. For what will it profit them to gain the whole world and forfeit their life? Indeed, what can they give in return for their life? Those who are ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of them the Son of Man will also be ashamed when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels."

Deacon/Reader: The Gospel of the Lord

People: Thanks be to God

Reflection on readings / homily (optional)

The Apostles Creed:

Deacon/Leader: Let us say together the Apostles' Creed:

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth;

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord. He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again.

He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

The Prayers

Leader The Lord be with you.

People And also with you.

Leader Let us pray.

O God our Father, who brought the holy martyrs of Japan through the suffering of the cross to the joys of eternal life: Grant that we, encouraged by their example, may hold fast to the faith we profess, even unto death itself; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

The Suffrages (B)

V. Save your people, Lord, and bless your inheritance;

R. Govern and uphold them, now and always.

V. Day by day we bless you;

R. We praise your name for ever.

V. Lord, keep us from all sin today;

R. Have mercy upon us, Lord, have mercy.

V. Lord, show us your love and mercy;

R. For we put our trust in you.

V. In you, Lord, is our hope;

R. And we shall never hope in vain.

Collect for Guidance

Leader: O God, the King eternal, whose light divides the day from the night and turns the shadow of death into the morning: Drive far from us all wrong desires, incline our hearts to keep your law, and guide our feet into the way of peace; that, having done your will with cheerfulness during the day, we may, when night comes, rejoice to give you thanks; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Other Intercessions and Thanksgivings:

Birthdays, Anniversaries, Healing, Travel, Gratitude

Prayer of General Thanksgiving (All in unison)

Leader: Let us Pray

All: Accept, O Lord, our thanks and praise for all that you have done for us. We thank you for the splendor of the whole creation, for the beauty of this world, for the wonder of life, and for the mystery of love.

We thank you for the blessing of family and friends, and for the loving care which surrounds us on every side.

We thank you for setting us at tasks which demand our best efforts, and for leading us to accomplishments which satisfy and delight us.

We thank you also for those disappointments and failures that lead us to acknowledge our dependence on you alone.

Above all, we thank you for your Son Jesus Christ; for the truth of his Word and the example of his life; for his steadfast obedience, by which he overcame temptation; for his dying, through which he overcame death; and for his rising to life again, in which we are raised to the life of your kingdom. Grant us the gift of your Spirit, that we may know Christ and make him known; and through him, at all times and in all places, may give thanks to you in all things. Amen.

Deacon/Leader: People of St. Stephen's, what does God call us to do?

People: We are called to love and serve.

Deacon/Leader: Let us bless the Lord. Alleluia, alleluia!

People: Thanks be to God. Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

Deacon/Leader: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with us all for evermore.
Amen.

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help trade with [Spain](#) and [Portugal](#). However, the Shogunate was also wary of [colonialism](#), seeing that the [Spanish had taken power in the Philippines](#), after converting the population. It soon met resistance from the highest office holders of Japan.^[1] [Emperor Ōgimachi](#) issued edicts to ban Catholicism in 1565 and 1568, but to little effect.^[citation needed] Beginning in 1587 with imperial regent [Toyotomi Hideyoshi](#)'s ban on Jesuit missionaries, Christianity was repressed as a threat to national unity.^[2] While the Japanese view was that Christians were persecuted and executed for being more loyal to [Jesus](#) than the [Shogunate](#), the Catholic Church viewed them as martyrs: As the persecution was aimed at Christians as a group, and as they could escape only by [abjuring](#) their faith, the Catholic Church regarded the acts as being *in odium fidei* ("in hatred of the faith"), a principal factor in martyrdom. After the Tokugawa shogunate banned Christianity in 1614, it ceased to exist publicly. Many Catholics went underground, becoming [hidden Christians](#) ([隠れキリシタン](#), *kakure kirishitan*), while others lost their lives. Only after the [Meiji Restoration](#), was Christianity re-established in Japan.

26 Martyrs of Japan (1597)

The **Twenty-six Martyrs of Japan** ([日本二十六聖人](#), *Nihon Nijūroku Seijin*) refers to a group of [Christians](#) who were executed by [crucifixion](#) on February 5, 1597 at [Nagasaki](#).

Through the promulgation of decree on martyrdom, these first Martyrs of Japan were beatified on 14 September 1627 by [Pope Urban VIII](#). These saints were canonized saints on 8 June 1862 by [Pope Pius IX](#).^[3]

205 Martyrs of Japan (1598–1632)

Persecution flared episodically and over a period of 15 years, between 1617 and 1632, 205 missionaries and native Christians are known to have been killed for their faith. Christianity was proscribed and forced underground until the arrival of Western missionaries in the nineteenth century.

Through the promulgation of decree on martyrdom, these 205 Martyrs of Japan were venerated on 26 February 1866 and beatified on 7 May 1867, by [Pope Pius IX](#).^[4]

Augustine Recollects Martyrs (1632)

Two Spanish Augustinians arrived in Japan in the later half of 1632 from Manila to evangelize the Japanese. Upon arrival, Japanese authorities were notified by the Chinese merchants who had given them passage. The Augustinians fled into the mountains where Dominican missionaries instructed them in the language of the country. When they descended into the city they were recognized and arrested in November, 1632. On 11 December 1632, they were martyred for their faith.^[5]

Through the promulgation of decree on martyrdom, these two Augustinian Martyrs of Japan were venerated on 28 November 1988 and beatified on 23 April 1989, by [Pope John Paul II](#).^[4]

16 Martyrs of Japan (1633–1637)

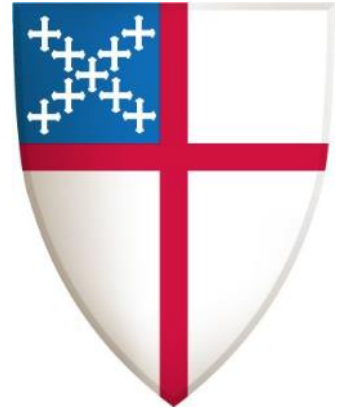
The martyrdom continued on with a group of missionaries and natives that belonged to the Philippine Province of the Dominican Order, called the Holy Rosary Province.^[6]

Through the promulgation of decree on martyrdom, these 16 Martyrs of Japan were venerated on 11 October 1980 and beatified on 18 February 1981, by [Pope John Paul II](#).^[7] They were later canonized saints on 18 October 1987, by [Pope](#) [Cont. online](#)

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(first) (Mid.) (Last)

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Adrs: _____ BrthDate _____

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