



The Season of **Epiphany**

St. Stephen's Episcopal Church

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

FEAST OF THE MARTYRS OF JAPAN

Wednesday 5 Feb 2025 9:30 AM

From [Wikipedia the free encyclopedia](#)



[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. The Japanese saw the rituals of the Christians causing people to pray, close their eyes with the sign of the cross and lock their hands together – this was seen as psychological warfare against the Japanese and this was punished as such. More than 400 martyrs of Japan have been recognized with [beatification](#) by the [Catholic Church](#), and 42 have been [canonized](#) as saints.

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

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Welcome and Announcements

Rev Allison Cornell

Entrance Rites

The people stand as they are able.

Opening Acclamation:

Presider Blessed be the one, holy, and living God.

People **Glory to God for ever and ever.**

Gloria:

**Glory to God in the highest,
and peace to his people on earth.**

**Lord God, heavenly King,
almighty God and Father,
we worship you, we give you
thanks,**

we praise you for your glory.

**Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the
Father,**

**Lord God, Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world:
have mercy on us;**

**you are seated at the right hand of
the Father:**

receive our prayer.

For you alone are the Holy One,

you alone are the Lord,

you alone are the Most High,

Jesus Christ,

with the Holy Spirit,

in the glory of God the Father.

Amen.

Salutation:

Presider God be with you.

People **And also with you.**

Presider Let us pray

Collect of the Day: *(All, in unison)*

**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 Word of God: *(please be seated)*

First Lesson: A reading from the book of Lamentations (3:52-60):

Those who were my enemies without cause
have hunted me like a bird;

they flung me alive into a pit
and hurled stones on me;

water closed over my head;
I said, "I am lost."

I called on your name, O Lord,
from the depths of the pit;

you heard my plea, "Do not close your ear
to my cry for help, but give me relief!"

You came near when I called on you;
you said, "Do not fear!"

You have taken up my cause, O Lord,
you have redeemed my life.

You have seen the wrong done to me, O Lord;
judge my cause.

You have seen all their malice,
all their plots against me.

Lector: The word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

The Psalm: Psalm 39:5-8

**5 Lord, let me know my end and the number of my days, *
so that I may know how short my life is.**

**6 You have given me a mere handful of days,
and my lifetime is as nothing in your sight; *
truly, even those who stand erect are but a puff of wind.**

**7 We walk about like a shadow,
and in vain we are in turmoil; *
we heap up riches and cannot tell who will gather them.**

**8 And now, what is my hope? *
O Lord, my hope is in you.**

The Second 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,”

Lector: The word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

Gospel Lesson: Mark (8:34-38):

Deacon: The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew

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: The Gospel of the Lord.

People: **Praise to you, Lord Christ**

Sermon

Nicene Creed *(Contemporary Version)* *All say together:*

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father; through him all things were made.

For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven, was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary and became truly human.

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father, who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets.

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.

We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.

We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen

Prayers of the People:

Leader: I ask your prayers for God's people throughout the world;

People: For our Bishops Sean, and Jennifer, for this gathering; and for all ministers and people.

Leader: Pray for the Church. *Silence*

Leader: I ask your prayers for peace;

People: For goodwill among nations; and for the well-being of all people.

Leader: Pray for justice and peace. *Silence*

Leader: I ask your prayers for those who suffer in body, mind or spirit:

People: For the poor, the sick, the hungry, the oppressed, and those in prison.

Leader: Pray for those in any need or trouble. *Silence*

Leader: I ask your prayers for those who feel God's call in their hearts:

People: For all who seek God, or a deeper knowledge of him.

Leader: Pray that they may find and be found by him. *Silence*

Leader: I ask your prayers for the departed

People: For those we love but see no more.

Leader: Pray for those who have died. *Silence*

Leader: In the Anglican Cycle of Prayer pray for *The Diocese of Los Angeles – The Episcopal Church*

In the Diocesan cycle of prayer we pray for *St. St. Alban's, in Tucson.*

People: May God bless and guide them.

Leader: We pray for the first peoples of this land, especially the Apache and Tohono O'Odham peoples who call this area home.

People: For greater understanding and cooperation between us towards the common good for all.

Leader: Praise God for those in every generation in whom Christ has been honored.

People: May we have grace to glorify Christ in our own day. Amen.

Confession of Sin:

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

The people stand, sit, or kneel.

All: Holy One, we encounter you in our lives and try to follow faithfully, but so often we get lost or turn away. We try to love our neighbors as ourselves, but we frequently fail. We take the wrong path and stray from the ways of your love. Forgive us, Lord, and guide us back to you. Amen.

Absolution:

Presider: God of Love, we return to you, and we accept your grace, we accept your pardon, we accept the gift of a new chance to follow in your pathways, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Exchange of the Peace:

Presider: May the peace of Christ be always with you

All: And also with you.

The Ministers and People may greet one another in the name of the Lord.

The Offertory:

Presider: Offer to God a sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving, and make good your vows to the Most High.

Offertory Hymn:

Doxology (Hymn #380 v. 3):

**All: ♪ Praise God from whom all blessings flow
 Praise him all creatures here below
 Praise him above ye heavenly host
 Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen. ♪**

The Holy Communion

EOW 2

The Great Thanksgiving

Presider The Lord be with you.

People **And also with you.**

Presider Lift up your hearts.

People **We lift them to the Lord.**

Presider Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

People **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

Presider continues:

We praise you and we bless you, holy and gracious God, source of life abundant. From before time you made ready the creation. Your Spirit moved over the deep and brought all things into being: sun, moon, and stars; earth, winds, and waters; and every living thing.

You made us in your image, and taught us to walk in your ways. But we rebelled against you, and wandered far away; and yet, as a mother cares for her children, you would not forget us. Time and again you called us to live in the fullness of your love.

And so this day we join with Saints and Angels in the chorus of praise that rings through eternity, lifting our voices to magnify you as we sing (say):

Presider and People: Sanctus

S#S124

**Holy, Holy, Holy Lord, God of power and might
heaven and earth are full of your glory.**

Hosanna in the highest

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

Hosanna in the highest

Glory and honor and praise to you, holy and living God. To deliver us from the power of sin and death and to reveal the riches of your grace, you looked with favor upon Mary, your willing servant, that she might conceive and bear a son, Jesus the holy child of God.

Living among us, Jesus loved us.

He broke bread with outcasts and sinners, healed the sick, and proclaimed good news to the poor.

He yearned to draw all the world to himself yet we were heedless of his call to walk in love.

Then, the time came for him to complete upon the cross the sacrifice of his life, and to be glorified by you.

On the night before he died for us, Jesus was at table with his friends. He took bread, gave thanks to you, broke it, and gave it to them, and said: *“Take, eat: This is my Body, which is given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.”*

As supper was ending, Jesus took the cup of wine. Again, he gave thanks to you, gave it to them, and said:

“Drink this, all of you: This is my Blood of the new Covenant, which is poured out for you and for all for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me.”

Now gathered at your table:

O God of all creation, remembering Christ, crucified and risen, who was and is and is to come, we offer to you our gifts of bread and wine, and ourselves, a living sacrifice.

Pour out your Spirit (+) upon these gifts that they may be the Body and Blood of Christ. Breathe your Spirit over the whole earth and make us your new Creation (+), the Body of Christ given for the world you have made.

In the fullness of time bring us, with St. Stephen and all your saints, from every tribe and language and people and nation, to feast at the banquet prepared from the foundation of the world.

Through Christ and with Christ and in Christ, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, to you be honor, glory, and praise, forever and ever. **AMEN**

And now as Jesus taught us, we pray: (*Contemporary Lord's Prayer*)

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your Name.

Your kingdom come, your will be done

On earth as in heaven.

Give us today our daily bread.

Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.

Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil.

For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours,

Now and forever. Amen.

The Breaking of the Bread: *(Presider breaks the consecrated bread in silence)*

Fraction: **ALL:**

Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world, grant us peace.

Invitation to Communion:

Presider: These are the gifts of God for the People of God.

People: Christ invites us all to be known and fed here.

(All are invited and welcome to come forward and receive communion in this church. We have gluten free bread and real wine. To intinct/dip your bread into the wine, please go to the left altar rail. To sip wine from the cup please come to the right altar rail. If you do not wish to receive the bread and wine, you may cross your arms over your chest and receive a blessing instead.)

Prayers for Birthdays, Anniversaries, Healing, Travel and Gratitude

Post Communion Prayer:

Presider: Let us pray:

All: Loving God, we give you thanks for restoring us in your image and nourishing us with spiritual food in the Sacrament of Christ's Body and Blood. Now send us forth a people, forgiven, healed, renewed; that we may proclaim your love to the world and continue in the risen life of Christ our Savior. Amen.

Benediction:

Presider: God's Blessing be with you, Christ's peace be with you, the Spirit's outpouring be with you, now and always. **Amen.**

Dismissal:

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

People: We are called to love and serve.

Deacon: Let us go forth into the world, rejoicing in God's Spirit.
Alleluia! Alleluia!

People Thanks be to God. Alleluia, Alleluia, (*Alleluia!*)

Continued from front:

reduce the power of the [Buddhist](#) monks, and 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. [Emperor Ōgimachi](#) issued edicts to ban Catholicism in 1565 and 1568, but to little effect.^[11] Beginning in 1587 with imperial regent [Toyotomi Hideyoshi](#)'s ban on Jesuit missionaries, Christianity was repressed as a threat to national unity.^[12] 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](#) after a forced march from Kyoto to [Nagasaki](#). with the crucifixion taking place on 5 February 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](#).^[13]

205 Martyrs of Japan (1598–1632)

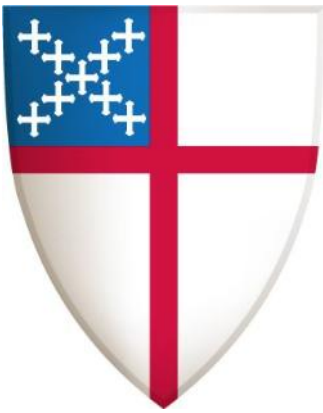
Persecution flared episodically and over a period of 15 years, between 1617 and 1632, 205 missionaries and native Christians are known to have been killed for their faith, 55 of them during the [Great Genna Martyrdom](#), a further 50 during the [Great Martyrdom of Edo](#) (but only three were beatified as part of the 205 Martyrs of Japan).^[14] 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](#).^[15]

Augustine Recollects Martyrs (1632)

Two Spanish [Augustinian Recollects](#) 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. They 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.^[16]

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](#).^[17] 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.^[17]



ST. STEPHEN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

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Welcome Visitor!!!

Please leave your name and contact info below. If you'd like to speak with someone, please check here

Or you can also use the QRC here to fill this out online.



Info Update Giving Envelopes Mail News Letter

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