

Pope Francis will visit Tokyo, Hiroshima, and Nagasaki The theme of the pope's visit to Japan is PROTECT ALL LIFE



Dates: November 23-26 (Saturday-Tuesday)

**Thirty-eight years since last papal visit
Official logo and special website prepared**

The Catholic Bishops Conference of Japan (CBCJ) reports that the Vatican has announced a visit by Pope Francis, the 266th pope, to Japan. This will be the second papal visit to Japan, the first being that of John Paul II in 1981.

The theme of the pope's visit is PROTECT ALL LIFE. A logo has been released, and a special site (<https://popeinjapan2019.jp/en/>) has been established. Schedules, details of the papal Mass and related information will be released on the site as needed.

Explanation of the Theme PROTECT ALL LIFE

The theme of Pope Francis's visit to Japan is quoted from a phrase in "A Christian prayer in union with creation" at the end of his Encyclical Letter *Laudato Sí*.

Each of us is given life as an image of God and led to advance toward our eternal homeland with all people. And this world is also designed and maintained by God "to be lived in" (Isaiah 45,18). Therefore, in order to "protect all life", we must respect not only each person's dignity but also the environment.

However, the earth as "our common home" is now trampled by humankind and groans with pain. Those groans overlap with the distress of all the abandoned people of the world. In Japan today as well, there is a multitude of problems related to life and peace in addition to the issues of economy, environment and relations with neighboring countries. Moreover, recovery from natural catastrophes and nuclear plant accidents remains a persisting problem.

The Church in Japan is making every effort to protect each life and respond to the various issues related to human life. This theme of the pope's visit to Japan expresses our determination to proclaim the Gospel of life brought by Christ, and to pray and work for the peace of Christ.



<CONTACT US>

Further information is available to media at:

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✕Please contact the press office
of the area you wish to cover (Tokyo, Hiroshima, Nagasaki).
Refer to the last page of this document for contact information.

For non-media inquiries:

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POPE IN JAPAN 2019 Logo



The logo expresses the theme of Pope Francis' visit to Japan, PROTECT ALL LIFE.

United with the red flame representing martyrs as the foundation of the Church in Japan and the light blue flame representing the Blessed Mother embracing all humanity as her children, the green flame in the likeness of Japan abundant with nature expresses the mission to proclaim the Gospel of hope. The red circle as the image of the sun symbolizes the love that embraces all life equally.

Note: Unauthorized use of the logo is prohibited except in cases of press reports. Please check the special site for details.

Greeting from Joseph Mitsuaki Takami, Archbishop of Nagasaki, president of the CBCJ



On behalf of the Catholic Church in Japan, I want to express my sincere thanks to Pope Francis for visiting Japan, and I join all of you in joyfully welcoming him.

Pope Francis began his ministry on March 13, 2013, and in July of the following year, Archbishop Takeo Okada, then president of the CBCJ, and I as vice president went to the Vatican with an invitation. Since then, I asked about a visit several times. Pope Francis himself has mentioned the Christian age of Japan in general audiences and directed churches throughout the world to distribute a photograph of a boy with the corpse of his baby brother following the atomic bombing of Nagasaki. I think the pope was laying the groundwork for this visit.

Clearly, Pope Francis' visit to Japan is a big event that cannot be realized without the understanding and cooperation of many people.

I am grateful that he will come to Japan with its small number of Christians compared to other countries. We will work hard to make the pope's visit to Japan a meaningful one.

I look forward to receiving your support.

Francis, the 266th Pope



Born Jorge Mario Bergoglio December 17, 1936, in Buenos Aires, Argentina.

After serving as superior of the Jesuits in Argentina and seminary rector, he was appointed archbishop of Buenos Aires.

Elected pope on March 13, 2013 on the fifth ballot of the conclave to elect a new pope.

The first Jesuit pope and the first pope from Latin America.

(For a more detailed introduction, see the special website.)

The 1981 visit to Japan of Pope John Paul II



Pope John Paul II made the first-ever papal visit to Japan February 23 to 26, 1981. The words of the pope in Tokyo, Hiroshima and Nagasaki impressed not only Catholics, but many people in Japan.

His "Peace Message" directed to the whole world from Hiroshima summarized his mission as a pilgrim of peace and continues to live in the memories of people.

◇ The Catholic Bishops' Conference of Japan (CBCJ)

The Catholic Church in Japan is organized in 16 districts (dioceses). Each diocese is headed by a bishop. The Catholic Bishops' Conference of Japan is an organization based upon Canon (Church) Law as a forum for the nation's bishops to discuss the common interests of the Catholic Church in Japan and to promote relevant activities.

◇ The Pope

The pope's titles include "Vicar of Jesus Christ," "Successor of the Prince of the Apostles," "Servant of the Servants of God." He is the present-day representative of Jesus the Savior and the successor of Peter, one of Jesus' disciples who was appointed leader of the apostles. He serves all who serve God.

The pope is also one of the bishops who are responsible for a diocese, the basic unit of the Catholic Church. His chief title is Bishop of Rome, followed by Supreme Pontiff of the Universal Church, Primate of Italy, Archbishop and Metropolitan of the Roman Province (a gathering of several dioceses around Rome). In addition, he is the head of the State of Vatican City.

◇ The Catholic Church in Japan (as of 2017)

Number of Catholics in Japan: 440,832 Japanese and a larger, but undetermined, number of non-Japanese

Number of Christians in Japan of all denominations: 1,921,834
(according to the Agency for Cultural Affairs Yearbook)

Number of Catholics in the world: approximately 1,313,000,000

Catholic Institutions in Japan:

Churches 969, Medical Facilities 42, Social Welfare Facilities 635

Educational Facilities 835 (Kindergartens 521, Middle, High Schools etc, 215)

Glossary of Catholic Usage

Bishop: A Church official responsible for a diocese, the unit of governance of the Catholic Church. Of the 16 dioceses in Japan, Tokyo, Osaka and Nagasaki are "archdioceses" and their leaders are called archbishops. Other bishops include "coadjutor bishops" and "auxiliary bishops" who assist the bishop who is responsible for the diocese, and "bishops emeritus" who have retired from service. Bishops are appointed by the Pope.

Creation: A Biblical concept that indicates that everything including human beings and except God is created by God.

Encyclical: A highly important type of official document published by the pope. It is usually directed to all Catholics for the purpose of guiding their religious life.

Jesuits: One of the religious orders of men in the Catholic Church. It was founded by Ignatius Loyola, Francis Xavier and others at the time of the Reformation in the 16th century to preach throughout the world. It was the Jesuits who first introduced Christianity to Japan. The Jesuits' main activities are education, missionary work and social service. Sophia University in Tokyo is a Jesuit institution.

Martyr: A believer who has been subjected to persecution and death by state power or the like for acting faithfully to his or her faith. In Japan, following Toyotomi Hideyoshi's outlawing of Christianity at the end of the 16th century, Christians were persecuted and many became martyrs. The Catholic Church in Japan honors these martyrs as models of faith.

Mass: The central worship of the Catholic Church. It is a gathering of believers to recall and give thanks for the death and resurrection of Jesus the Savior for the sake of humanity's salvation.

Reference: Press office in each area

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