FRANCISCAN CHAPEL CENTER · FINANCE COMMITTEE · 29 SEPTEMBER 2026

# Gotō

## *A Musical of the Hidden Christians*

Why this story, why it is evangelization, and what we ask the parish to invest.



PRESENTED BY NALU CAMANSE FOR THE GOTŌ WORKING GROUP

PHOTOGRAPHS: CATHERINE LEMAÎTRE, GOTŌ ISLANDS

THE PROPOSAL

# A sacred musical, written and performed by our parish

A three-act musical telling the story of the Hidden Christians of the Gotō Islands, who kept the Catholic faith alive in secret for over 250 years. Staged by FCC in the Sacred Heart Campus Chapel in Hiroo, which the school offers us rent free.

- Sat 13 November 2027, provisional
- About 90 minutes
- Rehearsed at FCC
- No admission fee
- One performance, 500 seats

TONIGHT, THREE QUESTIONS

I Why this story?

II Why is it evangelization?

III What does it cost, what comes back, and what do we ask?

*We know the committee's first question is why. We start there.*

# For over 250 years, they kept the faith with no priests

- **1614** Japan bans Christianity. On Gotō, fishing and farming families keep praying in secret, parents teaching children the prayers by heart.
- **1865** At Ōura Church in Nagasaki, hidden Christians reveal themselves to a French priest. The Church learns they are still there.
- **1868** The *Gotō Kuzure*. On Hisaka Island over 200 Christians are held for eight months in a cell of twelve tatami mats. 42 lose their lives.
- **1873** The ban is lifted. The survivors come home and build their churches by hand.
- **2018** UNESCO inscribes the Hidden Christian sites of the Nagasaki region, Gotō villages among them, as World Heritage.



*The memorial on Hisaka Island, which keeps the Christian names of those who died in the 1868 prison.*

*"The hearts of all of us here are the same as yours."*

# "Where is the statue of Santa Maria?

A HIDDEN CHRISTIAN WOMAN TO FR. BERNARD PETITJEAN · ŌURA CHURCH, NAGASAKI · 17 MARCH 1865

For two and a half centuries the Church in Japan had no priests to keep it alive. Farmers and fishermen kept it alive themselves, by handing it to their children. That is evangelization in its oldest form, and it is the story of the Church in the country where we worship.

# It brings the Gospel to people who would never come to Mass

I.

## An invitation people will accept

Christians are about 1% of Japan. Many of our colleagues, neighbours and friends will gladly come to an evening of music in a chapel, and hear the Gospel sung there.

II.

## Japan's own story

These were Japanese families on Japanese islands, and their stone churches were designed by a Buddhist builder from Gotō. The show reaches a Japanese audience through their own history, checked by a historian.

III.

## How the Church has always taught

From medieval mystery plays to Oberammergau, where a village has staged the Passion every ten years since 1634, the Church has told its story on stage. Pope Francis calls this *the way of beauty*.

◆ *"Each particular Church should encourage the use of the arts in evangelization."* Pope Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium* 167

# This story belongs to our parish, and the door is open now

A FRANCISCAN STORY

## Our friars died for this faith

In 1597 six Franciscan friars were crucified at Nagasaki with twenty companions. Among them was St. John of Gotō, a 19-year-old catechist and the only saint born on these islands. A Franciscan parish telling this history is telling its own.

FORMATION

## It teaches our own people

Many of us worship in Japan without knowing how the Church here survived. The show gives our parishioners, and their children, the story of the Church they belong to.

COMMUNITY

## The parish makes it

The composer, the story, the history and the coordination all come from FCC. The cast, choir and crew will too, with rehearsals at FCC at no cost.

WHY NOW

## A free chapel and a ready writer

Sacred Heart offers its chapel rent free, saving the ¥900,000 rental of the old plan. A librettist who spent a month in Nagasaki's Christian villages is ready to begin. Phase 1 secures both.

# How we will measure it, and report back to you

The reach can be measured. Every guest registers in advance at FCC, so the registration card tells us who came and who wants to hear more.

## Guests

How many came, against the chapel's 500 seats.

## Reach

How many came from outside FCC, and from outside the Church.

## Response

How many asked for parish news, a visit to FCC, or to learn about becoming Catholic.

## Parish

How many parishioners took part as cast, choir, crew and volunteers.

We bring these numbers back to this committee after the performance, alongside the final accounts.

THE PRODUCTION

# One fisherman's life, three chapters of the Church in Gotō

EDO PERIOD · ABOUT 1820S

ACT ONE

## The Secret Life

Daichi, a young fisherman, is forced to step on a sacred image at the annual *fumie*. Shaken, he drifts away, until a young woman's quiet faith brings him home to a faith he now chooses for himself.

*Hidden beauty*

1865 TO 1868

ACT TWO

## The Collapse

News of the Ōura discovery divides the village between hope and caution. Persecution follows: a hiding place in a sea cave, a fire that gives them away, arrest, and exile. Daichi hears what happened on Hisaka Island.

*The cost of visibility*

1873 TO THE EARLY 1900S

ACT THREE

## The Restoration

The survivors return. A French missionary helps them rebuild, and the community is torn over rejoining the Church. The stone church rises anyway, built by all of them, and old Daichi carries his mother's Maria Kannon inside.

*Building as resurrection*

**Music** Mathieu Kranich **Libretto** Gareth **Story** Vincent Olandesca **History** Catherine Lemaître, with historian Pierre Sevaistre **Spiritual director** Fr. Clifford, OFM

IV · WHAT IT COSTS

# ¥5 million, released in three phases

| | |
|---|---|
| **PHASE 1 · COMMIT NOW** | |
| Librettist and venue thank-you, with a 10% buffer | ¥760,100 |
| **PHASE 2 · BUILD, 2027** | |
| Costumes, hair, makeup and wigs | ¥1,000,000 |
| **PHASE 3 · DELIVER, 2027** | ¥3,025,000 |
| Staging, lighting, sound and set | ¥1,500,000 |
| Marketing | ¥1,000,000 |
| Playbill booklets | ¥300,000 |
| Catering and miscellaneous | ¥225,000 |
| **CONTINGENCY** | |
| For what cannot be priced yet | ¥214,900 |
| Production budget | ¥5,000,000 |

### WHAT ¥5 MILLION BUYS

- Period costumes and Edo-period wigs
- A built set and the full props: the Maria Kannon, fumie plates, lanterns, fishing nets
- Hired staging, lighting and sound for a chapel with no stage
- A full marketing campaign and printed playbill booklets

**Most of it is volunteer.** No fee is budgeted for the composer, director, cast, choir or organisers. The only paid role is the librettist.

# Each guest gives ¥2,000–3,000, and sponsors close the rest

ONE PERFORMANCE, 85% FULL

## ¥850,000–1,275,000

425 guests in the chapel's 500 seats. No admission fee may be charged, a condition of the school, so guests register in advance at FCC with a suggested donation.

| WHAT COMES BACK | ¥2,000 EACH | ¥3,000 EACH |
|---|---|---|
| Donations (425 guests) | ¥850,000 | ¥1,275,000 |
| Merchandise | ¥100,000 | ¥100,000 |
| **Total back** | **¥950,000** | **¥1,375,000** |

*Baseline: 85% of the chapel's 500 seats for one performance.*

**Sponsors and patrons raise the balance:** ¥3,625,000 to ¥4,050,000. Fundraising progress comes to this committee before Phases 2 and 3 are released.

YOUR QUESTIONS

# The questions we expect, answered plainly

## Is a musical really the parish's work?

Pope St. Paul VI wrote that the Church “exists in order to evangelize”. This show proclaims the Gospel in a form our Tokyo neighbours will accept an invitation to, and forms our own people along the way.

## What if the date falls through?

The school confirms its 2027 calendar in March 2027. Until then only Phase 1, ¥760,100, is committed, and the libretto it pays for can be staged on another date.

## Will people come?

Guests register in advance, so we see demand weeks ahead and report it. This history already draws people: Gotō's Hidden Christian villages are World Heritage, and Endō's novel *Silence*, set in this history, became a Scorsese film in 2016.

## Will it take money from other ministries?

The parish advances the funds, and guests' donations and sponsorship are raised to repay them. Each later phase comes back to this committee with the numbers before it is released.

THE DECISION

# What we ask of the Finance Committee




¥0

Production budget **¥5,000,000**

## 1

### Approve a production budget of ¥5,000,000

Costumes and wigs, a built set, staging, lighting and sound for the chapel, marketing and playbills, with ¥214,900 held for what cannot be priced yet.

## 2

### Release Phase 1 now: ¥760,100

The librettist and the thank-you donation to the school, with a 10% buffer. This is the only money committed before the date is confirmed.

## 3

### Release Phases 2 and 3 at two checkpoints

March 2027, when the school confirms the date and the room; and mid-2027, when the cast is set. Each comes back to you with fundraising and costs first.



*Catholic women of Gotō carrying bricks for their church.*

# When the ban was lifted, the people of Gotō built their churches with their own hands. *We are asking our parish to help tell their story.*

## THE GOTŌ TEAM

**Fr. Clifford Augustine, OFM**
*Spiritual director*

**Mathieu Kranich**
*Composer*

**Catherine Lemaître**
*History and sources*

**Anna Kuaraya**
*Social media and marketing*

**Gareth**
*Librettist*

**Nalu Camanse**
*Budget*

**Caje Fernandes**
*Coordinator*

**Vincent Olandesca**
*Music and story*

**Claire Tan**
*Planning and coordination*

**Charme Zepeda**
*Social media and marketing*

**Pierre Sevaistre**
*Historical advisor*