

They stayed... for love of Him...

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**May I never boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ,
through which the world has been crucified to me,
and I to the world. - Gal 6:14**



"Fr Paul Miki was the **son of an affluent Japanese military chief** and a **gifted evangelist** who strongly defended the faith against Buddhism. When the political climate became hostile to Christianity in Japan, the missionaries were ordered to leave. He and fellow Jesuit missionaries decided to continue their ministry in secret. **The Jesuits did not want to leave the faithful without the Holy Eucharist and Sacraments.** They were eventually arrested.

Fr Miki was **martyred** along with **two other Jesuits** and **23 other Christians** - united in a common faith and love for Jesus Christ and His Church. They were killed simultaneously by being raised on crosses and then stabbed with spears. The people pushed near, dipped cloths into the wounds and cut off pieces of the clothing of the holy martyrs as holy relics.

When **missionaries returned to** Japan in the **1860s**, at first they found no trace of Christianity. But after establishing themselves they found that thousands of Christians lived around Nagasaki and that they had secretly preserved the faith. The survival of Japanese Catholicism is one of the most moving stories in the entire history of the Church. For over two centuries the people had no priests but lived the faith as best they could, in secret, not daring to keep written materials but handing down their beliefs by word of mouth."

Excerpt ~ James Hitchcock, *The Nagasaki Martyrs*

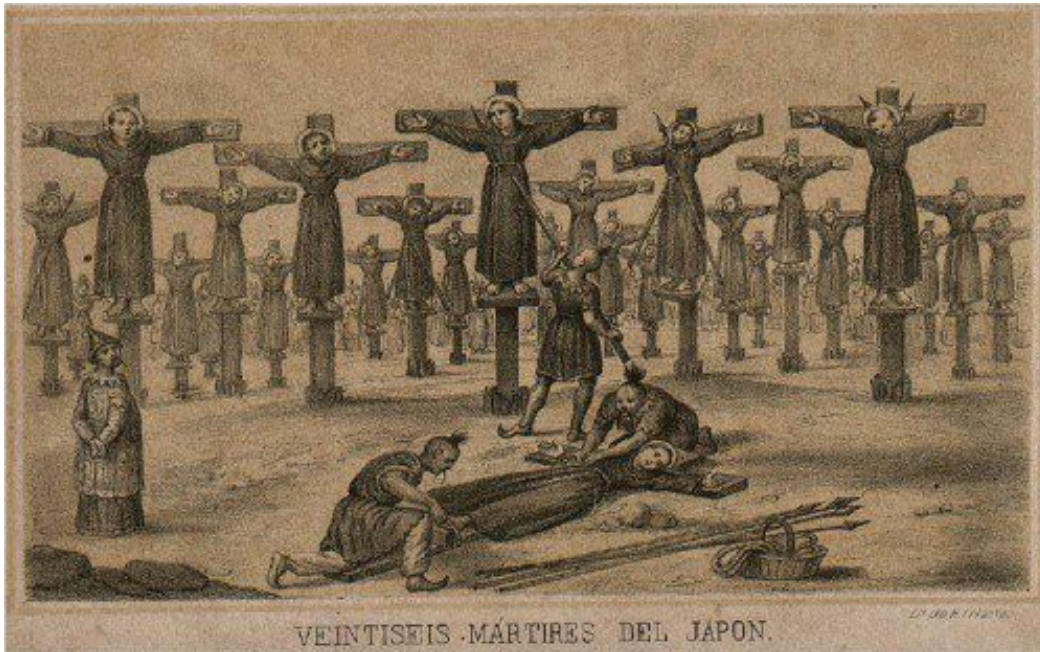
St. Paul Miki and Companions

Martyrs ~ Japan (d. 1597)

FEAST DAY - Feb 6

[Click here: St. Paul Miki - YouTube](#)

[Click here: St. Paul Miki and the Rise of Japan's Hidden Christians | Crisis Magazine](#)



**While hanging upon a cross Paul Miki
preached to the people gathered for the execution:**

"The sentence of judgment says these men came to Japan from the Philippines, but I did not come from any other country. I am a true Japanese. The only reason for my being killed is that I have taught the doctrine of Christ. I certainly did teach the doctrine of Christ. I thank God it is for this reason I die. I believe that I am telling only the truth before I die. I know you believe me and I want to say to you all once again: Ask Christ to help you to become happy. I obey Christ. After Christ's example I forgive my persecutors. I do not hate them. I ask God to have pity on all, and I hope my blood will fall on my fellow men as a fruitful rain."

At this point, he turned his eyes toward his companions and began to encourage them in their final struggle. The faces of them all shone with great gladness. Another Christian shouted to him that he would soon be in paradise. "Like my Master," murmured Paul, "I shall die upon the cross. Like Him, a lance will pierce my heart so that my blood and my love will flow out upon the land and sanctify it to His name."

As they awaited death the entire group sang the Canticle of Zechariah (see Luke 1:67–79). The executioners stood by respectfully until they had intoned the last verse. Then at a given signal they thrust their spears into the victims' sides. - Excerpt from Bert Ghezzi, *Voices of the Saints*

St Paul Miki and Companions, pray for us!