Christianity in Japan
Introduction of Christianity

• 16th C.: Expansion of Portuguese colonial and mercantile empire in Asia
• 1549: St. Francis Xavier arrives in Kagoshima with “Yajiro”
• Sought audience with emperor
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Map of Christian progression through Japan.
Missionary Work

• Torres and Fernandez continue evangelizing (1579: only 55 missionaries)
• Nagasaki as Portuguese center
• Christian daimyo: Takayama Ukon and Konishi Yukinaga
• 1579: 100,000 Christians
Expansion of Christianity

• Oda Nobunaga granted concessions
• Valignano: conform to Japanese customs
• 1585: Gaspard Coelho and Hideyoshi
• 1587: Expulsion order
• 1602: Spanish Dominicans and Augustinians arrive
Martyrdoms

- 1596: Spanish ship sinks off coast of Shikoku; Hideyoshi seizes cargo
- 26 Martyrs of Nagasaki
- 1598: 300,000 Christians
- Ieyasu continues to tolerate Christian presence
- 1614 Expulsion order
Persecution and Suppression

- Covert missionary activity continued
- 1622: “Great Martyrdom”
- Christians flee to rural areas
- 1637-38: Shimabara Uprising
- 1639: Trade w/ Portuguese banned
- “Hidden Christians”: 60,000