

Higirijizoson (日限地藏尊)

Kiryu, Gunma

Suwasan **Kannonin** (観音院)

The Shingon Sect

The Busan group



Selected in “*Sights of Gunma 100*”

Temple Festival (縁日)

On the 24th of every month, there is a temple festival called *Ennichi* (縁日). Main street is closed to cars for this monthly temple festival, and there are many street stalls. This temple festival is very lively. Not only people from Kiryu but also people from Saitama and Tokyo visit this event every month. Even the normal day, smoke of the incense stick by the visitors does not cease. The devotion is done every day, and joins many people’s faith.

Origin

A long time ago, there was a textile factory where many apprentices worked until late night every day. This factory had strange trouble. A rumor was going about that there was a skin head hobgoblin watching the inside of the factory from the window, and the apprentices there were scared of the creature. One night, a master of the factory shot the hobgoblin with a gun. He had confidence that he really shot and killed it, however, there was nothing at the scene. He did not sleep well that night, and waited for dawn. The next morning, he found that there were marks of blood on the ground. He followed the traces of blood, and the traces disappeared at the entrance of *Kannonin* (観音院).

Another night after that strange occurrence, *Ojiso-sama* (お地藏様) appears in the master’s dream and said “*I was standing outside of the factory to protect people working there every night. I am now standing in the wilderness, so there is no faith from the public. To protect many people in the world, I need a temple, and if you pray on a certain day, your desire will come true*”.

The master immediately told this story to people in the village and collected donations. He created a temple and moved *Ojiso-sama* in from the wilderness, and held vigorous Buddhist services and devotions. It was mysterious that there was a gunshot mark on *Ojiso-sama*’s shoulder. The grace of *Ojiso-sama* can be gained by everyone who truly believes in *Ojiso-sama* seriously.

Higiri Jizoson (日限地藏尊)
- Kannon In Temple (観音院) -

