

Why Did the Jizo Statue Block the Road?

亡くなった人の魂を守り、導いてくれると言われるお地蔵さま。たいていは道端に安置されていますが、ここではなぜこんな道路の真ん中に鎮座しているのでしょうか。あなたは古くからの言い伝えや迷信を信じますか？



1. Article

Read the following article aloud.

While driving through the [rural](#) and residential areas of Moka City in Tochigi Prefecture, I noticed what seemed to be a person standing right in the middle of the road. I approached the figure [cautiously](#), only to realize it was a Jizo statue.

While stone statues like this are common in Japan, they are usually placed along roadsides to offer protection and guide the souls of the [deceased](#). Finding one in the middle of the road, however, is definitely unusual.

According to the book History of Ninomiya Town, this area was once part of a temple's approach path before the town was merged with Moka City. After the temple was [abandoned](#) in the 1800s, a new road was constructed, and the Jizo statue was relocated. However, following a series of misfortunes in the village, the statue was returned to its original position in 1847 — right in the middle of the road.

With a road width of about 5 meters (16 feet), vehicles have no choice but to slow down. [Consequently](#), the Jizo statue also plays a role in enhancing traffic safety in the area.

Source : Why Did the Jizo Statue Block the Road?
[JAPAN Forward](#)

2. Key phrases and vocabulary

First repeat after your tutor and then read aloud by yourself.

1. **rural** 田舎の、地方の、農業の

The **rural** lifestyle is peaceful but sometimes lacks modern conveniences.

2. **cautiously** 注意深く、用心深く、慎重に

The doctor spoke **cautiously**, trying not to worry the patient.

3. **deceased** 故人、死去した、亡き～

The police are investigating the cause of death of the **deceased** person.

4. **abandon** 放棄する、置き去りにする、見捨てる、（土地などを）明け渡す、
（計画・勝負・希望・習慣などを）諦める・断念する

They had to **abandon** the car when it broke down.

5. **consequently** 結果的に、その結果として、それゆえ

The company failed to launch the new business; **consequently**, they had to lay off workers.

3. Questions

Read the questions aloud and answer them.

1. What did the author first think the figure in the middle of the road was?
2. How does the presence of the Jizo statue affect traffic in the area?
3. Have you ever seen a statue or landmark that surprised you in your city or while traveling? What was it?
4. What other traditions or beliefs about protecting people or areas from bad luck do you know?
5. Do you believe in or respect the spiritual practices that are common in your country?

4. 日本語関連記事： 道の真ん中にお地蔵さま、その真相は？ 栃木県真岡市

本ページは出典記事原文の日本語訳です。本教材の要約英文の日本語訳ではありません。

栃木県真岡（もおか）市の田畑や住宅が点在する地域を車で走っていると、道路の真ん中に誰かがたずんでいた。ゆっくりと近づくと、なんとお地蔵さまだ。なぜこんなところにあるのだろうか。

合併前の「二宮町史」によると、この場所はかつて寺院の参道だった。廃寺後の1800年代に道路をつくった際、お地蔵さまを移設したところ、村人に続けて災いが起こった。そのため、1847年に元々あった場所、道路の真ん中に戻されたという。

道幅は約5メートルで、車は否応（いやおう）なしに徐行する。お地蔵さまは、地域の交通安全にも一役買っていた。

出典：道の真ん中にお地蔵さま、その真相は？ 栃木県真岡市
[The Sankei Shimbun](#)