

# Anti-Religious Protest Rankles Church

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**Maxim Stulov**

A group of teenagers organized a demonstration at Church of Christ the Savior on Monday night, incensing Russian Orthodox Church authorities already on edge after several recent incidents interpreted by the Church as attacks.

The teens demonstrated in front of the cathedral with signs containing "anti-religious slogans and insults to the Russian Orthodox Church," said Vladimir Legoida, a Church spokesman, Interfax reported. The group then moved along the Moscow River embankment toward the Kremlin. Six participants were later arrested by police.

"It is regrettable to learn that in these holy days, when the hearts of believers are filled with special Easter joy and all worldly cares and differences should retreat into the background, such acts are possible," Legoida said.

At the end of February, activists from the female punk group Pussy Riot held an impromptu concert inside the church, resulting in the arrest of three of the activists, who could face up to seven years in prison. Their case is set to be examined in court at the end of April.

Two weeks ago bloggers uncovered a picture in which a \$30,000 watch worn by Patriarch Kirill was digitally removed, causing a public backlash against the church after the Patriarch publicly denied owning such a watch.

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