

Feminist Bares Breasts at Patriarch Kirill

By [The Moscow Times](#)

July 26, 2012



An activist being detained as she protests the visit of the patriarch, second right, at Kiev's airport on Thursday. **Gleb Garanich**

A topless activist with a Kiev-based women's rights group threw herself at Russian Orthodox Patriarch Kirill on Thursday, shouting "Go away!" before being detained by security.

The incident occurred at a Kiev airport shortly after the head of the Russian Orthodox Church stepped off a business jet to begin a three-day official visit to Ukraine.

The rights group, Femen, named Yana Zhdanova as the activist who had run up to the patriarch with the words "Kill Kirill" scrawled in black ink on her bare back.

Zhdanova got within a few meters of a startled-looking Kirill and a delegation of clergymen before being restrained by a man in a cream-colored suit and matching shoes.

Femen, in a statement posted on its LiveJournal blog, accused Kirill of harming Ukraine's interests by trying to drag the country into a Eurasia union with Russia and encouraging

the illegal detention of anti-Putin activists — a likely reference to the female Pussy Riot band members awaiting trial in Moscow over an anti-government performance in Christ the Savior Cathedral in February.

Church officials called the activist's behavior "shameful," recalling that the church has always been the target of such attacks.

"It is disgraceful that people are trying to cast a cloud over Patriarch Kirill's visit to Ukraine with pranks like this," Alexander Volkov, head of the patriarch's press service, told Interfax.

Volkov said the Femen activist's move showed that Kirill's visit to Ukraine is hugely significant and reflected "the deep spiritual crisis in certain layers of society."

Femen has staged many topless protests in Ukraine and a few in other countries, including at Davos, Switzerland, to coincide with the World Economic Forum.

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