

Homoerotic Calendar Has 'Orthodox Christian Priests' Posing Naked

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Wall calendars
OC 2015

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A gay rights group has published a calendar featuring almost-naked "Orthodox Christian priests."

In a provocative stunt to remind believers that homosexuality is not a deadly sin, a gay rights group has published a calendar featuring almost-naked "Orthodox Christian priests," posing in an alleged Moscow region church.

Orthodox-Calendar.com remains vague on whether the models were actual priests, saying in a video statement that it is "irrelevant."

The 13 pictures, published on the group's website, push the boundaries of conservative tolerance with images of muscular, model-type men striking seductive poses.

The group claims the photo shoot for the calendar — which is sold on its website in soft and X-rated versions for around \$13 and \$30 respectively — was held south of Moscow, though this could not be verified.

Orthodox Calendar made no mention of whether proceeds from the sales would go toward promoting the cause of LGBT rights.

The calendar is dubbed "S.A.L.I.G.I.A." after a Latin acronym for the seven deadly sins, which include lust, pride, envy, gluttony, avarice, sloth and wrath — but not homosexuality.

The group behind the calendar, which hails from Romania, according to the Huffington Post, claims to be "the only organized global effort against homophobia in the Orthodox region."

"Some priests believe that same sex unions are NOT a sign of the coming apocalypse, contrary to what Russian Orthodox Patriarch Kirill may claim," Orthodox Calendar said in a press release.

The head of the Russian Orthodox Church said last year that "the recognition of same-sex unions by Western countries leads humanity toward the end of the world," according to Gay.ru LGBT news website.

But he also advocated respect for the rights of LGBT people, despite the perceived "immorality" of their sexual orientation.

The Russian Orthodox Church, which previously pledged a campaign against "sodomy," has not commented on the calendar, which is in its third annual installment with the 2015 edition.

The Russian government and legislature, both increasingly conservative, have in recent years criminalized the spreading of material promoting "gay propaganda among minors" and "offending religious sentiment."

The former is punishable with fines of up to 1 million rubles (\$19,500), while the latter can amount to one year in prison. No cases against the makers of the calendar or its buyers have been reported.

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