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Orthodox Church Says It Won't Budge on Date of Russian Christmas

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Sergei Kiselyov / Moskva News Agency

The Russian Orthodox Church has said it has no plans to move the date Christmas to Dec. 25 in line with other Christian churches.

Orthodox Christians follow the Julian calendar, which celebrates the birth of Christ on Jan. 7. Some Russian officials, including the firebrand leader of the LDRP Vladimir Zhirinovsky, have previously called for Russians to celebrate Christmas on Dec. 25 as dictated by the Gregorian calendar.

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"We don't know exactly what day of the calendar year the Lord Jesus Christ was born, and the dates of the holidays are chosen rather arbitrarily," Russian church spokesman Metropolitan Hilarion said in an interview with state-run television this weekend.

Changing the date of Christmas would require shifting “the entire church calendar,” Hilarion told Rossia 24 on Saturday, and that, “Our church people won’t accept this.”

“I will repeat: the Russian Orthodox Church has no intentions whatsoever to change the church calendar.”

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