

# Russian Orthodox Official Compares Anti-Church Protests to Romanov Executions

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**Marina Moldavskaya / TASS**

Recent mass protests against plans to replace a city park in central Russia with an Orthodox cathedral are akin to the execution of the country's last royal family, the head of Yekaterinburg's diocese said.

Protests erupted in Russia's fourth-largest city this month after fencing went up around a riverside park ahead of the church's construction, resulting in arrests and clashes with vigilantes and riot police. Yekaterinburg is also the site of the 1918 shooting by Bolshevik revolutionaries of Tsar Nicholas II, his wife and five children. The church canonized them as martyrs in 2000.

"The church is being challenged today. This challenge thundered from Yekaterinburg in the same way that shots had thundered and the blood of the holy imperial martyrs was shed 100 years ago," Metropolitan Kirill of Yekaterinburg and Verkhoturye [said](#) on Saturday.

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Russian Orthodox Church leader Patriarch Kirill had earlier [claimed](#) that Russia constructs three new churches per day. Twenty-five new churches had been built in 2018 in Moscow alone, he said.

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