

*****NEWS RELEASE*****

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New animated film ‘*The 21*’ shows the power of faith in the face of evil

*‘As Christians, we know that death is not the end, nor even the greatest thing to fear. These brave men’s stories need to be told so that the world will know where to find hope that is never extinguished,’ says **Executive Producer Jonathan Roumie***

LOS ANGELES — Ten years ago, the world was shocked when ISIS militants brutally executed 21 Coptic Christian prisoners in orange jumpsuits on a beach in Libya on February 15, 2015. The killers released a video showing all but the moments of death, which came by beheading. In 2023, Pope Francis extended the title of martyrdom to the 21, making this the first time in history that non-Catholic believers were recognized as martyrs by the Catholic Church.

To honor the 21 martyrs, all of whom died with dignity, unwilling to deny their faith in Jesus Christ, MORE Productions has made a short animated film, “[The 21](#),” to uphold the men’s spiritual victory in the face of abject evil.

To watch the trailer for “*The 21*,” click [here](#).

Executive produced by **Jonathan Roumie** (who plays Jesus in “The Chosen”), “*The 21*” was made in collaboration with the global Coptic Community and by a team of 70+ artists from more than 24 countries and will be available for streaming Friday, February 14.

“As Christians, we know that death is not the end, nor even the greatest thing to fear. These brave men’s stories need to be told and shared so that the world will know in Whom we find the ultimate example of hope...one that is never extinguished,” says Executive Producer Jonathan Roumie.

The film project began with a vision from MORE Productions’ founder, Mark Rodgers, to tell a different story of the 21 Coptic Christians’ martyrdom. After visiting Egypt in 2019, Mark felt called to create a film that highlighted the spiritual victory of the martyrs, who stood firm in their faith despite facing death. With encouragement and support from many in the Coptic community, MORE Productions developed this 13-minute short, animated film to reflect on their legacy. “*The 21*” presents a more accurate narrative of the men’s abduction, detention and execution and has been developed based on extensive research and multiple conversations with the family members, friends and Coptic clergy who knew the 21.

“*The 21*” was Oscar-shortlisted and has been accepted to several film festivals this year.

“It’s up to those of us in the creative community, to make films like this to spotlight and honor those who made the ultimate sacrifice for their faith; martyrs (and their families) who have shown the rest of us what discipleship truly means, and what sainthood looks like,” Roumie says. “God’s love transcends and renews all things.”

In addition to ***Roumie***, the filmmakers include Tod Polson, formerly at Cartoon Saloon (writer/director/ animator), Mandi Hart (producer, President of More Productions), and Mark Rodgers (origin story).

Almost [80% of the world’s inhabitants](#) live in countries where there are still high levels of governmental or societal restrictions on religion, and persecution has been steadily increasing. Coptics, a 1,500-year-old Christian community in Egypt, have been persecuted throughout their history and still face many hardships similar to those faced by the Jews, the Uyghurs and others. Organizations like [Pew Research](#) and [International Christian Concern](#) release annual reports revealing worldwide watch lists of this repression and persecution by the most dangerous countries, organizations and individuals.

For more information including where to watch the film, visit “*The 21*” website at www.The21Film.com.

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To interview a “*The 21*” representative, contact Media@HamiltonStrategies.com, or Chelsey Dickson at chelsey@tkomarketing.net.