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Navalny Meets With Orthodox Church Rep to Discuss Protests

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Anti-corruption blogger Alexei Navalny met Wednesday with a representative of the Russian Orthodox Church to discuss the current situation surrounding opposition protests, Interfax reported.

Navalny met with church spokesman Vsevolod Chaplin for about an hour, Chaplin said. Navalny then participated in a parish meal for Eve of the Epiphany.

"It was a very interesting and benevolent meeting," Chaplin told Interfax.

"We discussed the latest demonstrations.... We exchanged opinions regarding how we can help to foster dialogue between various political and social forces, dialogue between the authorities and society," Chaplin said.

Chaplin did not specify how in particular the two sides might cooperate to foster dialogue.

Navalny said in an interview earlier this month with author Boris Akunin that he is a "typical

post-Soviet believer".

"I keep fasts and cross myself at church, but I go to church rather infrequently," Navalny said.

"I don't think that my religiosity can be converted into political capital—it will just look ridiculous. I don't over-emphasize it and I don't hide it—it is what it is," Navalny said in the interview.

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