

Russian Orthodox Priests Start 'Murmansk-Vladivostok' Expedition

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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The record-breaking Expedition Trophy auto race kicked off in Veliky Novgorod on Monday with 15 teams, one of Russian Orthodox priests on a mission to bless Lake Baikal, Interfax reported.

The longest wintertime race in the world, covering 16,000 kilometers, will see the priests travel in an all-terrain vehicle from Murmansk, in Russia's northwest, to Vladivostok, in the Far East.

The race's founder, Alexander Kravtsov, said the priests' participation in the journey was symbolic. "We always blessed the vehicles at the starting line, but we've never had a team made up entirely of priests."

The team's captain has a mission of his own to carry to Vladivostok a cross reliquary with a piece of stone from Calvary. He also plans to bless the water of Lake Baikal.

The race, which ends March 8, offers a grand prize of \$100,000. It was not immediately clear whether the priest team would be eligible.

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