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Putin Christened in Secret From his Father

By The Moscow Times

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President Vladimir Putin said in a documentary that his mother had him christened as a child in secret from his father, who was a member of the Communist Party organization in the factory where he worked.

"My mother baptized me in secret from my father, who was a member of the Communist Party ... It touched on me personally and my family," Putin said.

As a party member, his father would have faced problems if the authorities had found out about the christening.

The documentary Vtoroye Krescheniye Rusi, or The second baptism of Rus', airs Tuesday on television channel Rossia-1.

It focuses on the revival of the church over the last 25 years in Russia, Ukraine, Belarus,

Moldova, and Kazakhstan. Among other things, the film includes Putin's discussion about how the church affects modern life in Russia, Vesti.ru reported.

In January, 2012, a few months before the presidential election, Putin visited the monastery in the Leningradsky region that houses the famous Tikhvin icon of the Mother of God, known as Russia's patron and defender and healer of sick and ailing people.

The president bowed by the icon and lit a candle.

Starting with Ivan the Terrible, all tsars throughout history came to the icon to ask for their reigns to be blessed, with the exception of Nicholas II.

In November 2011, the Virgin Mary's Cincture — a belt believed to have been worn by Jesus' mother — was brought to Russia from Greece, and Putin was first to venerate the shrine, RBC reported.

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