

More Russians Seek Baptism Amid Floods, Church Leader Says

By [The Moscow Times](#)

August 17, 2013

The  Moscow Times

Head of the Russian Orthodox Church, Patriarch Kirill, on Sunday praised Russians in the country's Far East for the increased interest in baptism amid the region's biggest floods for 120 years.

"What especially touched me is that many get baptized there, those who had never been baptized," Kirill said Sunday while visiting the Solovetsky Monastery on an island in the White Sea, according to the Moscow Patriarchate.

He praised the Russians who "find hope" in baptism as the disaster caused by a month of unusually heavy rains has already affected some 28,000 people in the country's Khabarovsk, Amur and Jewish Autonomous regions.

Kirill, who leads the influential church, called on more believers to pray for the floods to end in the area and for the authorities to compensate the damages.

On Saturday, the head of Russia's hydrometeorology monitoring service said the floods were not to start receding until early September.

Thousands of residents have been evacuated from 113 towns and villages as the water level in the Amur River keeps on rising.

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