

Pope to Meet With Putin Nov. 25, Vatican Says

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Pope Francis will meet President Vladimir Putin on Nov. 25 in their first encounter since the pontiff was elected, the Vatican said Thursday.

Relations between Russia and the Vatican have been strained since the breakup of the Soviet Union in 1991. Russia accuses the Catholic Church of trying to poach believers from the Russian Orthodox Church, a charge the Vatican denies.

The late Pope John Paul II held a historic meeting with former Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev in 1989 but was never able to fulfill his dream of visiting Russia because of opposition from the Russian Orthodox Church.

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