

Russian Patriarch Kirill Appeals for Less Bling-Bling Croziers

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Patriarch Kirill **Sergei Fadeichev** / TASS

Head of the Russian Orthodox Church Patriarch Kirill has called on churchmen to cast off their ornately decorated croziers in favor of simple wooden staffs, the Kommersant newspaper [reported Thursday](#).

While Kirill defended the giving of croziers as a symbol of spiritual authority, he denounced the way they had become “patriarchal rods.”

“They have been decorated lavishly, with attached crosses,” he said, adding that he would not bless such bejeweled croziers.

Kirill addressed his comments to 400 monastery heads and vicars at a meeting in honor of the millennial anniversary of the Russian presence on Greece’s Mount Athos, a holy site for the Russian Orthodox Church.

Kirill told those assembled to obtain simple wooden staffs as soon as possible. “We should have simple staffs without any jewels or trinkets and without a cross,” he said. “It is the symbol of pontifical authority.”

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