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Russian Police Chief Solicits Priests in Fighting Criminal Cops

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A new police chief in southern Russia has reportedly ordered for his subordinates to visit churches in an effort to stamp out crime within the force's ranks.

The unorthodox orders came after Rostov-on-Don police officers were arrested for starting a drunken fight, causing a car accident and accepting a bribe in the past week, the local 161.ru news website reported Thursday.

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The police chief instructed his immediate subordinates to film themselves visiting the families of lower-ranking officers accompanied by members of the Russian Orthodox Church, according to a scanned and signed memo carried by the outlet.

"During these visits and talks, strongly discourage the [law enforcement officer] from visiting bars, nightclubs, restaurants and cafes on and off duty, especially while drunk," the memo reads.

The instruction asks visiting officers to ask the cops' parents or spouses about family conflicts or "deviant behavior in everyday life" and orders the footage to be submitted by Feb. 13.

The six-point memo signed by Vladimir Savchuk, the head of the Rostov-on-Don Interior Ministry, has been criticized as "idiotic" by rights activists on social media.

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