

Russian Priest Investigated After Flaunting 'Gucci' Lifestyle on Instagram

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Russia's Orthodox Church is investigating one of its priests over a series of Instagram photographs in which he is seen flaunting luxury clothing brands, a church spokesman has said.

Vyacheslav Baskakov, a priest in the Tver region near Moscow, sparked controversy late last week with a series of photographs featuring expensive clothes including a Louis Vuitton signature handbag and Gucci shoes. The Instagram account that hosted the pictures has since been taken down, but not before social media users widely distributed the images.

Russian priests have in the past sparked controversy over luxurious lifestyles. Most notably, in 2012, the head of Russia's Orthodox Church Patriarch Kirill came under [fire](#) for wearing an expensive Breguet wristwatch.

Alexander Volkov, a spokesman for Patriarch Kirill, said on Sunday that a church disciplinary committee would investigate Baskakov's posts and attempt "to return him to his senses."

"Such an immodest and unrestrained lifestyle should not be characteristic of priests in the church," Volkov was [cited](#) as saying by the Govorit Moskva radio station.

"A clergyman cannot be a priest in the church in the morning and then be whoever he wants after lunchtime," he added.

The priest [apologized](#) for the photographs in a letter published on Sunday and said he had been following doctor's orders and "fighting for freedom."

Related article: [Russian Priest Apologizes for Gucci Photos, Says He Was Fighting for Freedom](#)

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