The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Gerard Depardieu Converts to Orthodox Christianity

September 07, 2020



Gerard Depardieu was granted Russian citizenship in 2013. **Andrei Nikerichev / Moskva News Agency**

French actor and naturalized Russian citizen Gerard Depardieu has continued his religious journey by converting to Orthodox Christianity, the Valeurs Actuelles weekly news magazine reported Saturday.

One of France's most prolific actors and a popular figure in Russia, Depardieu was granted Russian citizenship in 2013 as he sought to avoid tax hikes in his native country. President Vladimir Putin personally presented Depardieu with his Russian passport at a meeting in the southern Russian resort city of Sochi.

Related article: Gerard Depardieu 'Ready to Die' for New Homeland Russia

Depardieu, 71, said his spiritual adviser is Putin's rumored confessor, Father Tikhon Shevkunov, according to Valeurs Actuelles, which said its reporters attended the actor's baptism in Paris.

The conversion ceremony was reported to have taken place at a Russian Orthodox church in the French capital, the Alexander Nevsky Cathedral.

“Under the solemn chants of the choir and the prayers of the officiants, Gérard Depardieu had his body and head sprayed abundantly with water, failing however to be fully submerged, as is the custom,” Valeurs Actuelles reported.

Embed:

> L'attore francese Gérard Depardieu è stato battezzato oggi nella Cattedrale di Sant'Alessandro Nevskij a Parigi. Nella foto con il metropolita (arcivescovo) delle chiese ortodosse russe in Europa Occidentale Giovanni Renneteau. pic.twitter.com/ScZJZiALxt
>
> — Detti dei Padri (@DettiDeiPadri) September 5, 2020

Depardieu said he was driven to convert by his “links” with the Orthodox clergy and taste for “Orthodox liturgy.”

Valeurs Actuelles reported that Depardieu was surrounded by a small circle of around 30 people.

The outlet said the actor expressed wishes to convert to Judaism “soon,” citing its “proximity” to Islam, which Depardieu converted to in 1967. He has since converted to Buddhism and Hinduism, Valeurs Actuelles reported.

Original url:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2020/09/07/gerard-depardieu-converts-to-russian-orthodoxy-a71364