

## ARCHAEOLOGISTS UNEARTH 14TH-CENTURY SEAL OF ST. THEOKTIST OF NOVOGOROD



Archaeologists from the Moscow State University have discovered a 700-year-old treasure belonging to St. Theoktist, the early 14th-century Archbishop of Novgorod.

The seal of the sainted Archbishop was unearthed at the Troitsky (Trinity) excavation site near the Veliky Novgorod Kremlin, representatives of the expedition reported to Interfax-Religion yesterday.

Scholars have dated the find to 1300 to 1308, the years of St. Theoktist's reign. Such lead seals were used to secure the most important documents in ancient Russia.

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Prior to becoming the Archbishop of Novgorod, St. Theoktist was abbot of the Annunciation Monastery in Novgorod. After the death of Archbishop Clement in 1300, the people chose St. Theoktist, and he was subsequently consecrated as a bishop.

Among his labors was the renovation and building of churches. He consecrated cathedrals in the name of Sts. Boris and Gleb and in the name of the Fathers of the 1st Ecumenical Council.

In 1307, his health forced him to withdraw once again to the Annunciation Monastery, where he lived until his death, devoting himself to the ascetic feat of silence.

He was glorified three centuries later, in 1664, because of the miraculous healings at his relics. In 1786, his relics were transferred to St. George Monastery in Novgorod, where Archimandrite Photius built a chapel in his honor at the local cathedral.

During the soviet era, the precise location of his relics was lost. In 2015, Moscow archaeologists discovered a sarcophagus with relics in the St. George Cathedral of the St. George Monastery.

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