

Obama phones pope to thank him for congratulatory message

VATICAN CITY - U.S. President-elect Barack Obama telephoned Pope Benedict XVI to thank the pope for his message of congratulations on his election victory.

The pope was one of the many world leaders Obama has been contacting since his Nov. 4 win.

The Vatican spokesman, Jesuit Father Federico Lombardi, confirmed to Catholic News Service Nov. 12 that the president-elect telephoned the pope Nov. 11 "to thank the pope for his telegram, his congratulations" on winning the U.S. presidential election.

Further details about the call were not known, Father Lombardi said.

Pope Benedict sent his congratulations Nov. 5, referring to the "historic occasion" of the election, marking the first time a black man has been elected president of the United States.

Father Lombardi said Nov. 5 the pope prayed that "the blessing of God would sustain him (Obama) and the American people so that with all people of good will they could build a world of peace, solidarity and justice."