

Obama may attend several churches in Washington: Concern about security procedures for churches

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President Obama said he may attend “a number of different churches” in Washington rather than just one and is receiving a daily devotional message from a key staffer.

“How we handle church when we’re here in D.C. is something that we’re still figuring out,” the president said during a roundtable with Catholic press reporters on July 2 ahead of his first visit with Pope Benedict XVI.

“And I think that in the second half of the year we will have made a decision. We may choose, rather than to join just one church, to rotate and attend a number of different churches.”

Obama expressed concern about the security procedures any Washington church he visits would endure. He also noted that his experience with his former pastor—Jeremiah Wright of Chicago, with whom he broke ties—made him “very sensitive to the fact that as president the church we attend can end up being interpreted as speaking for us at all times.”

He said that he has attended services at Camp David when he is at the presidential retreat and that the chaplain there “delivers as powerful a sermon as I’ve heard in a while.”

The president added that he misses attending church and gets “a little note of sustenance” from daily devotionals he receives on his BlackBerry from Joshua DuBois, executive director of the White House Office of Faith-based and Neighborhood Partnerships. “Every morning I get something to reflect on, which I very much appreciate,” he said.

Obama also said he had asked DuBois during his presidential campaign to gather a “pretty eclectic” group of pastors to pray for him, and may again. -*Religion News Service*