



FINANCE

DIOCESE OF SACRAMENTO

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Memo

To: Pastors, Parochial Administrators, Parish Stewards
From: Glen Faulkner – Security Coordinator
Date: August 8, 2022
Re: Scam Donation Requests

It's been over 18 months since I last sent out a message about email-based attempts to lure parishioners into buying gift cards for fraudulent purposes. Unfortunately, this scam has appeared again in the Sacramento Diocese.

An individual established an email address resembling one used by a parish priest and falsely represented themselves as that priest in email conversations with a parishioner. In these emails, as in previous incidents, the bad actor asked the parishioner to buy gift cards to benefit others. The scammer engaged in very convincing dialogue with the victim, making that person believe the requestor was the parish priest.

Again, like previous scams of this nature, the suspect may have obtained the victim's email address and name from a church bulletin or website.

Please alert parishioners to these scam attempts in church bulletins and remind them that pastors or other clergy members will not typically solicit donations via emails or texts.

Any parishioner who receives a request like this should verify its authenticity personally with the purported sender before making any contribution. If a parishioner believes they have been victimized, they should report the incident to local law enforcement and to the FBI's Internet Crime Complaint Center (<https://www.ic3.gov/>).

I have included the Diocese Information Technology Unit's warnings about these scams for your review.

Don't Feed the Phish! Email and Text Scams on the Rise" May 2019

<https://www.scd.org/news/dont-feed-phish-email-and-texting-scam-rise>

"Be Vigilant: Email Phishing and Texting Scams on the Rise" October 2020

<https://www.scd.org/news/be-vigilant-email-phishing-and-text-scams-rise>

Please call or email if you have any questions.