



## DIOCESE OF SACRAMENTO

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# Memo

Date: November 01, 2021  
To: Pastors and Parochial Administrators  
From: Glen Faulkner, Security Coordinator  
RE: Scam Donation Requests

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Parishes in the Sacramento Diocese have reported recent texting and email attempts to scam parishioners into making purchases of gift cards.

Individuals falsely representing themselves as members of our clergy have texted or emailed parishioners asking those parishioners to buy gift cards for the sick or to make contributions to a special cause. Some of these bad actors will make a strong effort to make these messages appear to originate from the pastor. The scammer will write messages using very personal greetings and indicate there is a need to get the cards or funds quickly to create a sense of urgency.

In more than one of these instances, the parishioner targeted in the scam had their name and contact information published in church bulletins or in the parish's website.

These types of scams are not new. The Diocese Information Technology Unit has sent out warnings about other similar recent events.

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 alert parishioners to these scams in your bulletins and remind them that pastors or clergy members will not typically solicit donations via emails or texts.

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

Call or email if you have any questions.