



FINANCE

## DIOCESE OF SACRAMENTO

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# Memo

To: Pastors, Parochial Administrators, Parish Stewards, Bookkeepers, School Administrators  
From: Glen Faulkner – Parish Security Coordinator  
Date: May 28, 2024  
Re: Scam Alert – Typosquatting incident

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A Sacramento parish reported being the victim of a version of a cybercrime known as “typosquatting”, resulting in a significant loss to the parish. Typosquatting typically involves a bad actor misusing a domain name or email address to falsely represent themselves as a legitimate business to obtain money or information from an unsuspecting message recipient.

In this case, a parish was working with a contractor to make repairs to the facility. It appears that a suspect may have hacked into email messages between the contractor and the parish and learned of the repair project. The parish received an email message they believed was from the project contractor requesting an electronic payment via ACH. The parish made that payment only to later learn the contractor did not request or receive the ACH payment.

To avoid becoming a victim of this type of typosquatting cybercrime, parish staff should always carefully examine the entire email address of any correspondence in which the sender is requesting payment or information that is sensitive or confidential. These crimes succeed only when victims don’t spot the single character difference between the legitimate sender’s address and that of the fraudster. Staff should also consider contacting the “legitimate” sender using an alternate form of communication (phone call, etc.) to confirm that payment or confidential information requests originated from that entity.