



Archdiocese
of Toronto

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MEMORANDUM

To: All Parish, All Clergy
From: Mark Brosens, Communications Manager, OPRC
Date: January 28, 2021
Re: Email Impersonation Scam Targets Our Parishioners

In recent days, the Archdiocese of Toronto has been made aware of suspicious emails supposedly being sent by our clergy and staff. These emails attempt to start an online conversation or they have a suspicious document attached to the message.

Unfortunately, these emails are not from the Archdiocese of Toronto. Online fraudsters are impersonating members of the archdiocese, so we ask you to be on the lookout for online security threats.

To minimize your risk while this fraud campaign continues, it is helpful to look at the sender's information to determine whether an email is legitimate or not. The fraudster is using other email services to impersonate archdiocesan clergy and employees. For instance, the name in the "from" line will seem familiar, but the email address will not be that person's usual account. Or the "from" line will list a familiar person's regular email address (instead of their name), but if you try to reply to the message, the sender's actual email address will be another address entirely.

We have been made aware of one incident where the fraudster gained access to an old email that had actually been sent by a clergy member. The fraudster then took that old email, added a suspicious attachment and sent it to a number of people from an imposter email account.

If the sender information seems odd or if the message is out of character for the sender, do not reply to the message or download any of its attachments. Please report the email to the sender at a known email address or by phoning them. Please make MIS aware of any such email.

We encourage you to share this information with your parishioners however you are able. The following blog post was published on the Archdiocese of Toronto's last week, which you are welcome to share or repurpose: <http://bit.ly/AoTemailsafety>.

If we are vigilant with our online security, these fraud attempts should stop soon. Hopefully, as we transition to standard @archtoronto.org email addresses, these scam effort will be less fruitful and will be abandoned.