

Stop, Call and Confirm – Combating Email Spoofing

*Email spoofing is the process of **forging** an email to make it look like it comes from someone you might know. Of course the sender has less than your best interests at heart and wants you to take additional steps usually to your detriment. Recent incidents of spoofed email have attempted to perpetrate wire transfer scams.*

Be Aware:

A spoofed email looks harmless enough because it appears to come from an address you readily recognize. The contents of the email may contain anything from simple spam content, links to websites, or a message requesting assistance. In the first case the content will betray itself and the email can just be deleted. In the second case you should be cautious about clicking on any links as this could be the entryway for malware. It is best to use your browser to go to the website in question and to navigate to the appropriate page assuming all appears legitimate. In the last case where a message requests immediate assistance, some good judgement is in order.

Recently we have had reports from a number of parishes where emails addressed to a business manager, finance and operations manager or parish staff member request a **wire transfer**. These emails appear to come from the pastor. The recipient responds and with some back and forth the recipient is ready to make the transfer. **STOP – CALL – CONFIRM.**

There is little from a technological perspective that can be done to stop email spoofing. Knowledge and judicious judgement are the best defense.

Simple Steps:

- A transfer of funds should never be performed solely on the basis of an email exchange.
- Do not share bank account numbers or other banking information over email.
- If the tone of the email is urgent this should be a signal for additional caution.
- Do not publish staff emails on the parish or school website – use a ‘Contact Us’ form instead.
- Search for the term ‘email spoofing’ and become familiar with this tactic.



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