



# Public Service Announcement

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION



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## **SPAMMERS USING THE PASSING OF THE POPE TO DEFRAUD PEOPLE**

A new spam campaign is exploiting people's interest in the death of Pope John Paul II. "In the greedy world of spam e-mail and electronic fraud, nothing is sacred-not even the death of the Pope John Paul II." [1] "The use of the Pope's death as a hook to defraud unsuspecting consumers is part of a trend linking spam to news of national or international interest, prompting people to open e-mail they ordinarily might delete." [2]

Spammers are attempting to capitalize on the popularity of the Pope to promote a moneymaking scheme. The spam attempts to lure users to a website with an offer of free books about the Pope. Other characteristics of this spam include:

- Unsolicited emails offering a free collection of books about Pope John Paul II.
- The message "Honour His Legacy" appears, urging individuals to click on this message.
- Once the individual clicks on this message, they are redirected to a site that apologizes that the books are not available. The individual is then automatically redirected to another site.
- The new site offers advice on money making secrets and mentions nothing about the Pope.

This document is issued in keeping with IC3's goal to keep the public informed about new trends observed in recent complaints received.

1. [www.bizreport.com/print/8829](http://www.bizreport.com/print/8829)
2. Ibid