

# Credit card scam wholly unorthodox

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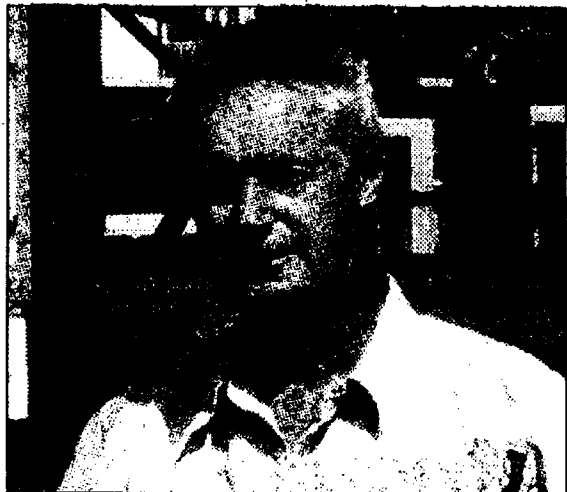
A NEW batch of con artists is using the Greek Orthodox Church's good name to lure the unsuspecting.

Chillagoe Guest House owner Eugene Miglas recently received an inquiry from a man to book four rooms for four newly ordained priests.

Mr Miglas said he responded to the email inquiry, which initially came from an MSN email account before it switched to a Yahoo account based in Hong Kong, confirming the availability of the rooms and the price.

But alarm bells sounded when the client confirmed the booking and requested Mr Miglas withdraw \$7550 from a credit card to pay an interpreter.

"Take 50 per cent deposit for the cost of your services plus \$7550 from the translator from my card," the suspicious email read. "Then deduct your deposit



**Targeted:** Eugene Miglas.

and send the balance of \$7550 to the translator.

"I really need you to make the charges for the translator as she does not have a POS (sic) machine to process her charge."

A shocked Mr Miglas suspects the email was attempting to trick him into stealing money from a credit card and forwarding it to the scammers, who would be undetectable.

"I'm sure they would have given me a stolen credit card and number," he said.

# **'Unholy' scam also targets Daintree Lodge**

SCAMMERS using the good name of the Greek Orthodox Church have also been playing on an inbuilt trust of doctors to get their hands on other people's money.

Daintree Wilderness Lodge owners Zoe Leadly and Nick Maguire came forward yesterday saying their business had also been targeted in the same manner as the Chillagoe Guest House.

This week, *The Cairns Post* revealed a scammer using multiple email addresses had tried to con Chillagoe's Eugene Miglas into withdrawing \$7750 from someone's credit card.

Mr Maguire said the Daintree resort had also had a recurring problem with these con artists.

"We have received several emails in the last month based on the same idea Mr Miglas is encountering," he said. "Ours have dealt with priests and doctors who were planning on working in our area and needed accommodation.

"Their emails are written with terrible grammar and based on their requests it is quite obvious the reservation inquiries are fake. They ask how much the accommodation is, offer credit card details and ask you forward money on to another account."

Mr Maguire said he and his partner, Ms Leadley, had recently contacted the Australian Federal Police but were told there was little police could do.

"We have not fallen for any of these scams but we are worried others may not be as lucky as us," he said. "We need more to be done to stop this illegal activity, it is threatening local business and I'm amazed nothing can be done to trace these criminals and have them punished."