

## **Funeral Conciliation Case Studies Bulletin Three: 11<sup>th</sup> October 2007**

### ***Case Study One:***

Funeral of young drug addict. C, mother, under influence of drugs or alcohol at funeral. Parish priest described it as most difficult funeral at which he had ever officiated. No response from C to the conciliator's summary of the dispute in which the conciliator suggested - in the light of pretty overwhelming evidence that F had exercised considerable restraint and done the best she could in fairly horrifying circumstances - that the complaint against F should not be pursued. Conciliation therefore unsuccessful.

### ***Case Study Two:***

C upset following problems with sister's funeral: desired plot not available and wrong age on coffin. F agreed to settlement proposed on basis of letter of apology and payment of sum of money as gesture of recognition of distress caused.

### ***Case Study Three:***

C complained of various distressing events, including inappropriate dress of one of F's employees, flowers left in boot of funeral car, and upsetting circumstances when viewing deceased. Settled on basis of letter of apology and payment of a sum which C would use to donate to a specified charity.

### ***Case Study Four:***

Fairly minor complaints put forward by "partner" of C. The conciliator proposed that F should write a letter of apology and offer a modest "discount" from cost of funeral. Partner demanded absurdly high compensation which F - quite understandably - rejected. Conciliation therefore unsuccessful.

### ***Case Study Five:***

C complained about the type of coffin and wording errors on headstone. F accepted the complaints and agreed a settlement on basis of payment of sum of money to be used for a specific purpose.

### ***Case Study Six:***

Grave collapsed during funeral, but it was generally accepted that this was not the fault of F. C demanded very high figure of compensation which F refused. Conciliation therefore failed.

### ***Case Study Seven:***

Complaints by C about mother's funeral: said F left funeral party in street while went back for flowers, and did not know where the grave was located - "like a black comedy".

Various offers by F to make small payments were rejected, F in turn rejecting demand to write off entire cost of funeral. Conciliator informed the parties that he considered that they were too far apart for any settlement to be reached. Conciliation failed.

**Case Study Eight:**

Yong man killed in industrial accident. C, his mother, complained that his coffin was too small and wrong date of death was on the coffin. F accepted criticisms, and proposed settlement of letter of apology and payment by F to a Football Memorial Tournament staged for the son was accepted by C.

**Case Study Nine:**

Fairly serious complaints by C following the funeral of her mother. C claimed that:

- The body was not properly looked after;
- An inferior coffin was used; and
- The standard of Chapel of Rest was unacceptable.

F agreed to send letter of apology and to make substantial payment by way of settlement. Conciliation successful.