



Rejected life...Adrian Dunne

So fitting that his life ends on a sour note



By GERALDINE COMISKEY

NO ONE knew how to dress for Adrian Dunne's funeral.

But then there is no right way to dress for a goodbye to commemorate the life of a man who had rejected life - not only for himself but on behalf of his wife and two children.

People wore everything from brightly-coloured anoraks and jerseys to funeral black. Striped sweaters rubbed shoulder with Sunday-best suits, and black T-shirts with jeans and studded belts.

The three priests conducting the ceremony at St Cormac's church in Boolavogue mingled with the crowd, swapping polite smiles and rueful nods. There was no small talk, no one knew what to say.

As neighbours of the Dunes came in to say a few early prayers, a girl soprano and organist practised On Eagle's Wing and other hymns suited to a Christian funeral.

A few even wondered if the priest had forbidden the family to play Stairway to Heaven - as Adrian had requested.

Two little altar girls, older than Dunne's dead ones, stood at the side of the aisle with an altar boy as his mother and sisters arrived.

As the soprano trilled 'My love for you is only a shadow of His Love', a shadow crossed the faces of the mourners.

Throughout the mass, all eyes wandered to Mary Dunne, matriarch of a family that has been rocked by the killings.

After her sons and daughters had given readings, she bravely tried to read a prayer but she stalled, her voice choked.

Fr Redmond told her it was all right and she finished her brief reading before stumbling off the pulpit, a broken woman.

When Dunne's coffin was lowered into the family plot - beside his brother James who had killed himself less than a month before - a friend with a ghetto blaster played the version of Stairway to Heaven by Led Zeppelin.

However, Dunne's last wish was impossible - because he had insisted on a version of the song by Guns and Roses, which did not exist.

Suddenly, the CD skipped. Everyone's heart missed a beat. The crowd looked around nervously. The disk stopped again, before playing on.

It was the perfect epitaph for the broken melody of a life ended on such a sour note.

SUNDAY MIRROR

(29-APRIL-2007)