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(Frank Leddin) 59



Gemma Leddin, wife of Frank Leddin, with her daughter, Marguerite, share a moment together as the funeral of the former Mayor leaves St Joseph's Church and, centre, former Mayor Frank Leddin, and right, Marguerite Leddin is comforted by rugby player Shane Horgan

# Former Mayor Frank is laid to rest

By IAIN DEMPSEY

FRANK Leddin, twice former Mayor of Limerick, was laid to rest this Monday following a funeral Mass where hundreds of people

of Limerick, Dr Donal Murray, and the Labour Party's deputy leader, Deputy Brendan Howlan. Mr Leddin, described as a "father figure" of the Leddin family, died in St John's Hospital last Thursday following an illness.

A special meeting of Limerick City Council







Irish rugby international, Brian O Driscoll at the funeral (LL)

FRANK Leddin, twice former Mayor of Limerick, was laid to rest this Monday following a funeral Mass where hundreds of people turned up to pay their respects.

The former Labour party councillor's funeral was attended by Irish rugby internationals Brian O'Driscoll and Shane Horgan; the Bishop

Murray, and Labour Party's deputy leader, Deputy Brendan Howlan.

Mr Leddin, described as a "father figure" of the Leddin family, died in St John's Hospital last Thursday following an illness.

A special meeting of Limerick City Council was held on Monday morning to pass a vote of sympathy, as was a meeting of Limerick City VEC, of which Mr Leddin was chairman for over 30 years.

Hundreds of mourners gathered at St Joseph's Church for the funeral, where respects were paid to the former Telecom Eireann employee.

Cllr Joe Leddin, nephew, spoke of how Mr Leddin dedicated most of his life to Limerick city.

"Frank was a committed politician and a kind, gentle man," said Cllr Leddin.

"He lent his abilities to helping make Limerick a better place, especially in the role of education.

"He was actively involved in VEC developments including the formation of the Limerick Adult Education College, the formation of what is now Limerick Institute of Technology, the formation of the school of music, the development of St Nessian's Community College and the transformation of the School of Commerce to Limerick Senior College.

"Frank will be greatly missed by his family, colleagues and many, many friends."

Mr Leddin was elected to the City Council in 1960 as a member of the Labour Party and was elected Mayor in 1965 and again in 1997.

He retired from the Council in 1999.

He was described at the special meeting at the Council as "a father figure" of the Leddin and Keyes family, who have had a representative on the City Council since the foundation of the State.

Mayor John Cronin said of Mr Leddin: "Frank was always a gentleman and made his views clear in a quiet and effective manner. He dedicated a lifetime for the people of Limerick and Limerick is a sadder place without him."

On behalf of the Labour Party in Limerick, Deputy Jan O'Sullivan said: "He was a warm and caring human being, both privately and publicly.

"The VEC under him made extraordinary steps in the development of education in the city. He was a public servant and gave a huge level of commitment."

Cllr Kieran O'Hanlon, chairman of the VEC, said: "Over the 42 years Frank represented the city of Limerick VEC, both at home and abroad, with honour and distinc-



The scene outside St Joseph's Church following the funeral Mass (LL)



Mayor John Cronin at the funeral with Cllr Maria Byrne (LL)

tion and, until his death, represented the VEC on the city's adult education board, and on the governing body of the Limerick Institute of Technology.

"On behalf of the members of the VEC and its staff, we express our sympathy to Gemma and Marguerite and the extended Leddin family."

Former Mayor and colleague on the City Council, Frank Prendergast, expressed deep regret at Mr Leddin's passing.

"Frank was a very kind, gentle man," said Mr Prendergast.

"He was very shrewd in dealing with difficult problems and he was strict, but fair and even handed, in political life. He had a great knowledge and I think his best contribution was to Limerick city VEC.

"We were lifelong colleagues and between us we contributed over 100 years to the Labour Party. I had a lot of deep conversations with him at the recent general election and I am deeply saddened to learn of his death.

"He will be very sadly missed and my deepest sympathies go out to his wife Gemma and his daughter Marguerite. I am deeply saddened."

Mr Leddin is survived by his wife Gemma; daughter Marguerite, brothers and sister, grandfathers, nieces, nephews and cousins.



The coffin of former Mayor of Limerick Frank Leddin is carried from St Joseph's Church (LL)