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PRESS RELEASE

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Grieving Mother Files Lawsuit Against Archdiocese of Detroit, Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Parish & Father Don LaCuesta For Pastor's Conduct During Her Son's Funeral Service

Lawsuit alleges Father LaCuesta of Mt. Carmel Parish caused irreparable harm and pain to a grieving mother after a funeral homily he delivered by violating the family's privacy and turning the homily into his own personal message on suicide.

Toledo, Ohio - On November 14, 2019, the law firm of Charles E. Boyk Law Offices, LLC announced that it has filed a lawsuit on behalf of Linda Hullibarger against The Archdiocese of Detroit, Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Parish, and Father Don LaCuesta for injuries caused by Father LaCuesta's conduct during the funeral services of her son Maison. The lawsuit is filed in the Wayne County Circuit Court of Michigan.

According to the Complaint, Mrs. Hullibarger and her husband met with Father LaCuesta to plan the funeral service for their son Maison. During this meeting, the Hullibargers made clear that they wanted Father LaCuesta to deliver a positive, uplifting and loving message that celebrated the life of their son. Mrs. Hullibarger says they asked "for it to be uplifting, to talk about show[ing] kindness to one another, to be there for one another, just to love one another, to lift people up—that's what we asked for. That was so important to us, there's so much sadness." However, the lawsuit claims that is not the funeral service Father LaCuesta delivered on December 8, 2018.

Instead of adhering to the family's wishes, the lawsuit alleges that Father LaCuesta turned the homily into a message regarding suicide, questioning whether the Hullibarger's son would be admitted into heaven. What made this more shocking to the family was that the Hullibargers had not disclosed, revealed, or discussed the nature of Maison's death to Father LaCuesta or the community. As Mrs. Hullibarger explains, "[A]t our own child's funeral, we were taken down yet again when it was a place that we were supposed to be lifted up. And we had no idea, no indication that was going to happen."

Mrs. Hullibarger says, “No parent, no sibling, no family member should ever, ever have to sit through what we sat through. And it’s happened before. When you’re already beyond devastation, why would you make it even worse? No words can describe that [be]cause you don’t think you could feel any worse.”

“Father LaCuesta’s conduct at Maison’s funeral service was intentional,” noted Andrea Young, an attorney at Charles Boyk Law. “It was apparent to those in attendance that Father LaCuesta had a message he wanted to relay. That message was not previously disclosed to the Hullibarger family and it did not conform to homily that Father LaCuesta previously agreed to deliver. At a time of tragedy, the Hullibarger family turned to their church for peace and comfort but instead Father’s LaCuesta’s actions caused them irreparable harm and pain.”

Following Maison’s funeral service, Mrs. Hullibarger sought removal of Father LaCuesta. According to the Complaint, a call with Bishop Battersby confirmed the church believed what Father LaCuesta did was wrong but would not remove him. Further, Mrs. Hullibarger was told to “let it go and get some help”. Mrs. Hullibarger sought the assistance of Charles E. Boyk Law Offices and believes by bringing this action it will bring healing to the family, church and surrounding community.

For more information, [read the official file-stamped complaint against the Archdiocese of Detroit, Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Parish and Father Don LaCuesta.](#)

The lawsuit seeks to hold Father LaCuesta, Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Parish, and The Archdiocese of Detroit accountable for the actions of Father LaCuesta and to ensure no further harm to the parish and local community.

About Charles Boyk Law Offices, LLC

Charles Boyk Law Offices is a sophisticated plaintiff injury firm that has successfully represented thousands of injured individuals in complex injury litigation in Ohio, Michigan, as well as across the United States. Our experienced attorneys and staff are united in their commitment to excellence and dedication in personally serving the interests of all our clients.