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Loyalists and republicans stand together at funeral

By Bimpe Fatogun

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Support: Kate Carroll, middle, is supported as she follows the coffin of her husband, murdered police constable

Stephen Carroll PICTURE: Mal McCann

REPUBLICANS and loyalists were among the mourners yesterday standing together at the funeral of murdered police officer Constable Stephen Carroll.

Last night it emerged that a third man had been arrested in connection with Monday's killing of the 48-year-old.

The man in his twenties was taken into custody yesterday, on the same day Mr Carroll was laid to rest after a service at St Therese's Catholic Church in Banbridge.

Police were also last night continuing to question former Sinn Fein councillor Brendan McConville (37) and a 17-year-old.

Both can be held without charge for seven days after police were granted an extension by a magistrates court.

McConville walked free from court last year after admitting to possessing ammunition in suspicious circumstances.

Alex Maskey and John O'Dowd were representing his former party at the funeral – the first time Sinn Fein politicians have attended such a service for a policeman murdered in the Troubles.

Also there was Jackie McDonald, recognised as the leader of the UDA, who said he had "come to show support for the Carroll family and to let everybody know that loyalism is against this sort of thing".

The hearse arrived at the church, flanked by a guard of honour of 18 officers, with six grim-faced colleagues of Mr Carroll carrying his coffin into the church behind a lone piper.

His widow, Kate, supported by family members, walked behind.

Canon Liam Stevenson told mourners: "Our prayer today is that Stephen's horrendous killing, whatever its intention or desired effect, will galvanise us in our pursuit of mutual understanding, tolerance and respect for one another."

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