

Mystery: Priest, wife, maid die in Abia

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Archdeacon of St. Paul's Anglican Church, Abayi-Ariaria, Aba, Abia State, Venerable Julius Dike, his wife, Blessing, and their maid died yesterday under mysterious circumstances.

It was learnt that Dike, his wife and the maid held a crusade on the church premises on Sunday, attended a gathering on Monday but did not come out yesterday for morning worship.

Worried by the absence of their priest and family yesterday morning, some members of the church decided to visit his apartment to know what was wrong, as there was no single person from his household to answer any question.

The church members who became apprehensive, wondering what was stopping them from coming out even after the morning worship, broke into Dike's residence only to find him, his wife and maid dead.

Sources in the church said the circumstances surrounding their deaths had thrown the Anglican community in Aba into confu-



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sion, as no one seemed to know what really happened to them.

One of the sources said the couple ate and retired to bed together with their house maid, said to be a relation of the priest's wife.

Although the source of their death was still yet to be ascertained, members of the church suspected that their food might have been poisoned because all the victims ate the same food on Monday night.

The source said that the trag-

edy would have been worse had the children of the Archdeacon in a boarding school were at home.

The source said the Archdeacon, his wife or maid did not complain of ill health on Monday.

The police in the state were yet to react to the death of the Dikes and their maid.

The state Police Commissioner Janet Agbede, didn't pick her calls to get her reaction to the mysterious deaths.