

CLARIFICATION OF FIRE OCCURRED AT THE CHAPEL OF THE BLOOD OF CHRIST

METROPOLITAN CATHEDRAL OF MANAGUA



**TRABAJANDO POR LA PAZ Y
SEGURIDAD DE NUESTRA COMUNIDAD**

HONOR - SECURITY - SERVICE





Police Investigation Results Clarification Fire in Chapel of the Blood of Christ



The National Police, in compliance with its constitutional missions, informs Nicaraguan families of the **Results of the Investigation and clarification** of the Fire occurred at the Chapel of the Blood of Christ, Metropolitan Cathedral of Managua on Friday, July 31, 2020, at 11:30 in the morning.



SYNTHESIS OF THE FACT



On Friday, July 31, 2020, at approximately 11:30 in the morning, the National Police learned of a fire that was occurring at the Chapel of the Blood of Christ, located in the western part of the Metropolitan Cathedral of Managua. Fire units immediately appeared at the scene and managed to extinguish the fire at 11:40 in the morning.

Technical teams made up of Police Investigating Officers, Criminalistics and Fire Experts, carried out inspection and photographic imaging of the scene, collected samples of debris to carry out Criminalistic surveys.



Expert Analysis



1. Expertise of AVEXI (Damages, Explosives and Fire), discarding:

- Short circuit and overheating of the electrical system, as a source of fire initiation.
- That the fire was caused by an explosion, no industrial or artisanal explosive device was found, nor fragments of glass, metal or paper (Molotov bomb and / or contact bomb).



Expert Analysis



2. Chemical Analysis:

- Isopropyl alcohol with a concentration of 96% was detected in an orange-white plastic spray, which is a highly flammable volatile solvent, which generates toxic nitrogen oxide vapors and explosive mixtures in the air during combustion. (Commonly the alcohol used for hand disinfection is 70% pure).
- The presence of explosive substances such as artisan gunpowder (molotov and / or contact bomb) or industrial (TNT, C-3 and C-4) was not detected.
- No presence of Hydrocarbons (Gasoline, diesel, kerosene and Thinner) was detected.



Expert Analysis



3. Experimental analysis at the site of the Fire (Chapel Blood of Christ),

Experts from Criminalistics and Firefighters carried out experimental analysis on Saturday, August 01, in environmental conditions similar to the day and time of the fire, in order to establish the way of fire spread based on the elements that intervened in it (Temperature, air and combustion accelerators), determining:

1. Measurement of environmental temperature (° C) inside the Chapel of the Blood of Christ, from 10:30 to 11:50 in the morning:
 - North: 36.1
 - South: 32.9
 - East: 32.1
 - West: 32.3



Expert Analysis



3. The only points where air enters are:

- West and East Gate of the Chapel of the Blood of Christ.
- Ventilation hole located at the top of the dome that protects the Blood of Christ.

4. Combustion accelerators (fire) in the Chapel of the Blood of Christ.

- Isopropyl alcohol with concentration of 96%, highly flammable and volatile, contained in a plastic container (orange with white atomizer) found in the first step of the platform of the dome of the Blood of Christ at a height of 80 centimeters, located in the West side of the chapel.



Expert Analysis

Materials that were in the Chapel of the Blood of Christ prior to the fire (easily combustion)

- Red carpet located on the platform of the dome of the Blood of Christ.
- Green plastic carpet located in front of the Blood of Christ.
- Artificial flowers located on the sides of the Blood of Christ.
- Holy robe of the Blood of Christ.
- Plastic material (polymethylmethacrylate) that makes up the Dome of the Blood of Christ.
- Candle resin. (incinerated transforming into carbon monoxide, carbon dioxide and water vapors)
- Glue that holds the base of the plastic structure that makes up the dome of the Blood of Christ.



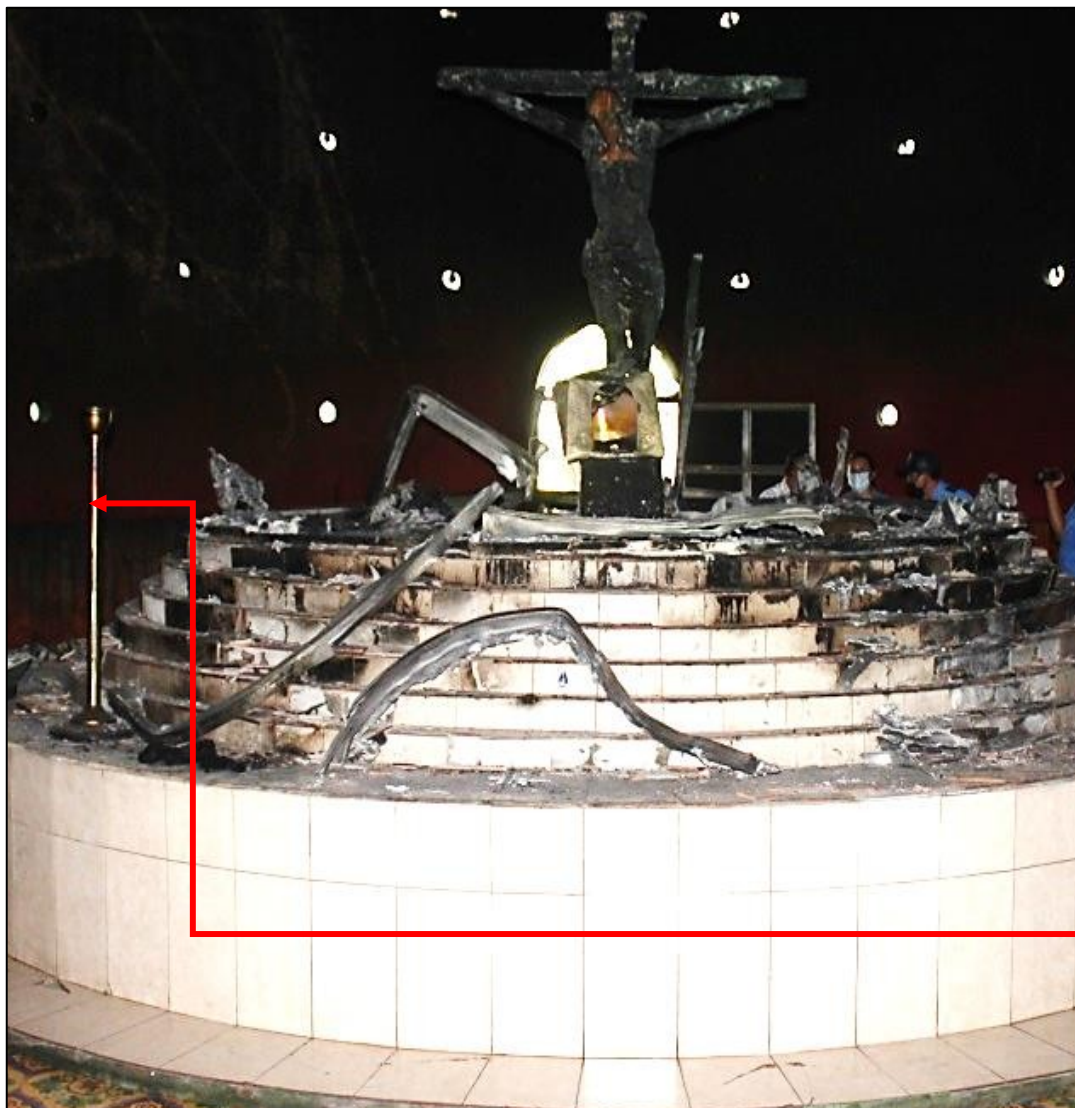
Expert Analysis

Open flame heat source located inside the Chapel of the Blood of Christ

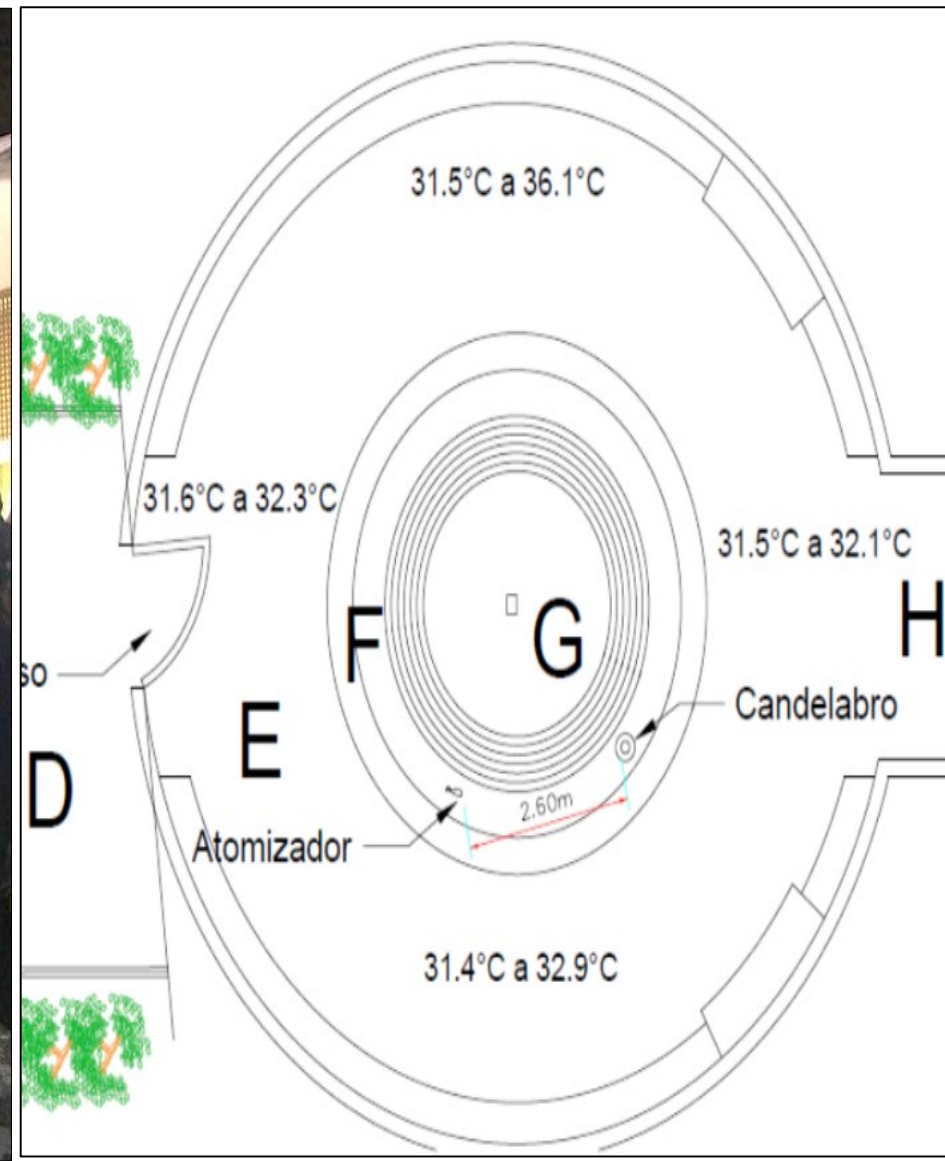
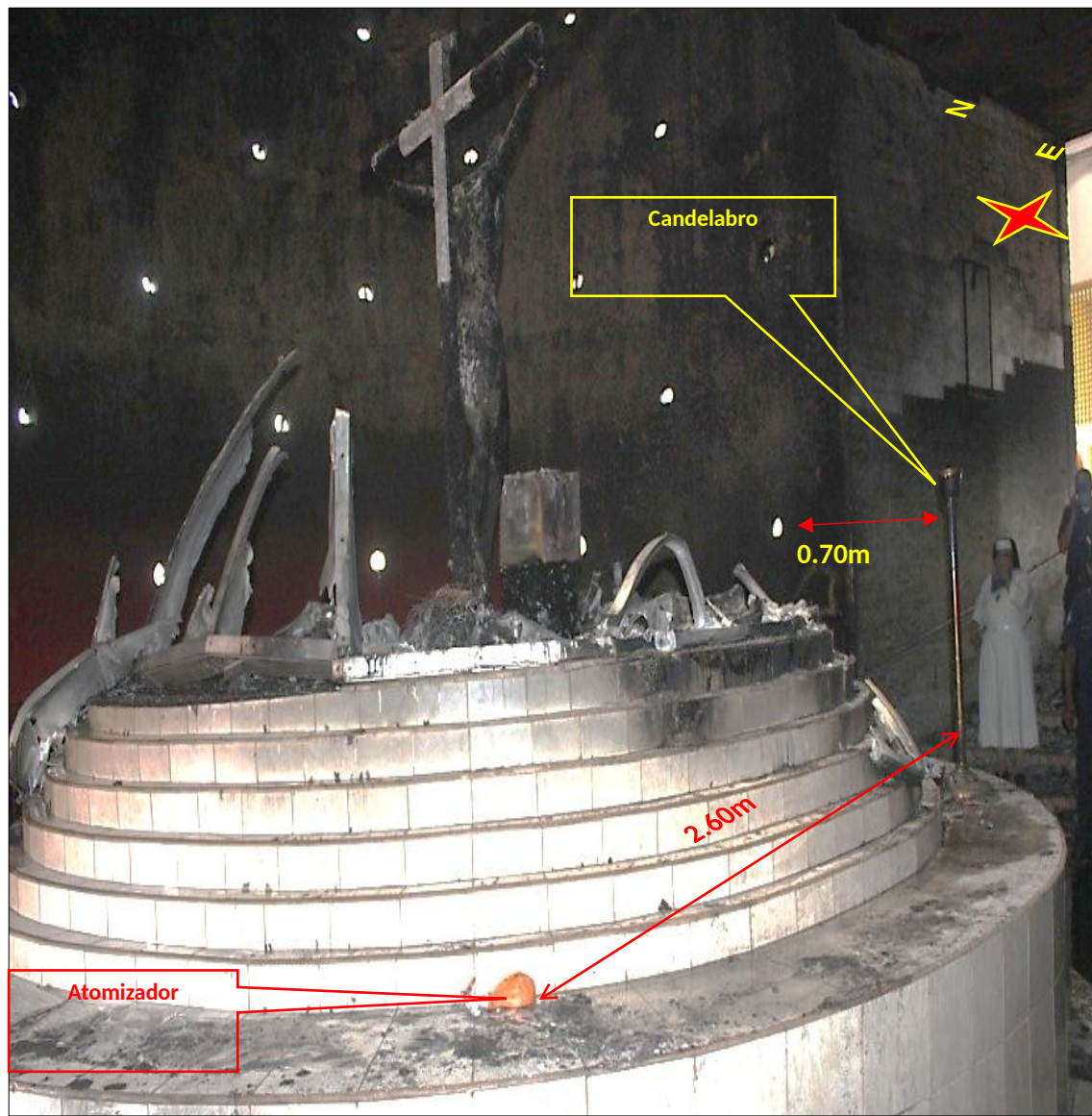
- Candlelight in a chandelier located in the first step of the platform of the Blood of Christ, located at a height of 80cm, on the east side of the dome of the Blood of Christ.

Vapor derived from alcohol, highly volatile and flammable, concentrated inside the dome of the Blood of Christ, by the use of the atomizer to disinfect the hands of dozens of parishioners, with 96% pure alcohol, highly volatile and flammable.

PHOTOGRAPHIC SETTING OF THE SCENE



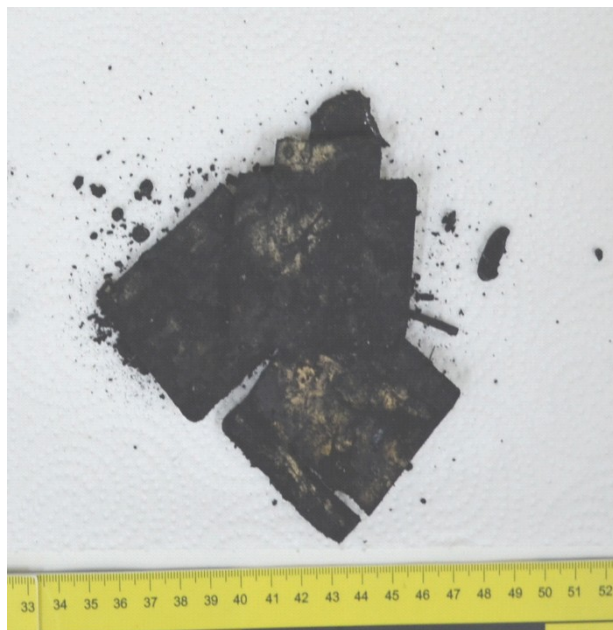
PHOTOGRAPHIC SETTING OF THE SCENE



EVIDENCE FOUND ON THE SCENE



Atomizer



Swabs on the floor



Combustion material



**Piece of metal with material residue
combusted**



WITNESSES INTERVIEWED



Only two Eyewitnesses:

Citizen **Xiomara de Jesús Castro**, 57 years old, merchant, (Sells candles in Cathedral for 27 years), 001-030263-0068C, said:

- On Friday July 31 from seven in the morning, she was inside the Chapel of the Blood of Christ.
- At approximately 11:20 in the morning, inside the Chapel, a parishioner was praying, while she was counting her money from the sale of the candles, at that moment she observed that there was a fire in the surroundings of the dome where the image of the Blood of Christ.



WITNESSES INTERVIEWED

- At the time of the fire, inside the Chapel of the Blood of Christ there was only her and a parishioner.
- Observing the fire, she warned the parishioners to leave the Chapel because it was burning.
- **Before the fire, he did not look at any other person and did not perceive anything suspicious.**



WITNESSES INTERVIEWED



- The sisters (Religious) give her an orange-white spray bottle (found in the scene) daily, which contains liquid alcohol, so that parishioners can use it to disinfect their hands.
- Inside the Chapel every day at 7:00 in the morning a sacristan lights a candle placed in a tall chandelier, about a meter high, which is in front of the dome of the Blood of Christ.



WITNESSES INTERVIEWED



Citizen (Parishioner) **Manuel Salvador Bravo Alvarado**, 70 years old, pensioner, ID number 201-190850-001T, states:

- On Friday, July 31, he arrived at the Chapel at 11:00 in the morning, to pray to the image of the Blood of Christ.
- While she was praying, at approximately 11:20 in the morning, the lady who sold candles, whom she had known for many years, warned her that the Blood of Christ was burning and that they should run.
- At the time of the fire in the Chapel, there was only him and the lady who sells candles, did not observe anyone who had thrown an object, nor heard an explosion.
- Inside the Chapel you have always observed a tall chandelier with a lit candle in front of the dome of the Blood of Christ.



Origin of the Fire in Chapel of the Blood of Christ



The fire was caused by a combination of physical and chemical elements that affected the platform where the Blood of Christ is located:

- Temperature in the North area of the Chapel of the Blood of Christ, with a maximum of 36.1 ° C, in hours between 10:30 and 11:50 in the morning.
- East and West door air intake of the Chapel of the Blood of Christ.
- Isopropyl alcohol with concentration of 96%, highly flammable and volatile, contained in a plastic container (orange-white spray), found in the first tier at a height of 80 cm, located on the south side of the chapel (constantly used by dozens of parishioners for hand disinfection).



Origin of the Fire in Chapel of the Blood of Christ



- Presence and accumulation of alcohol vapors in the chapel environment and inside the dome of the Blood of Christ, due to the constant use by dozens of parishioners for hand disinfection, using 96% alcohol (highly flammable and volatile).
- Materials of easy combustion (Red carpet, green plastic carpet, artificial flowers, Holy Robe, Plastic material that protects the Blood of Christ, easy to burn and flammable)
- Heat source (open flame) of the candle located on the east side of the first tier of the Blood of Christ Platform, which has been lit since 07:00 a.m. until 01:00 in the afternoon, causing an increase in temperature in the environment.



CONCLUSIONS

As a result of the police investigations, criminal investigations and witness interviews, it was determined that the **causes** of the fire:

1. The mechanism for starting and spreading the fire originated when the alcohol vapors ascended to the roof of the chapel, carried by the air currents that enter through the access doors, and its subsequent descent through a hole in the upper part of the dome of the Blood of Christ, where they accumulated.
2. The alcohol fumes accumulated inside the dome of the Blood of Christ, when mixed with the hot air (Temperature of 36.1 ° C), produced the fire, in a process scientifically known as **desolvation**. The fire spread in the environment setting lighting the carpets, clothing of the Blood of Christ, plastic dome, all these materials susceptible to combustion, in addition to the lighted candle located at a distance of 70 centimeters from the plastic dome that protected the Blood of Christ.
3. **The fire in the chapel of the Blood of Christ was not intentional, criminal action being ruled out.**



VIDEO PRESENTATION - INTERVIEWS WITH EYE WITNESSES:

- **Citizen Xiomara de Jesús Castro (Sell candles in Cathedral)** [See video](#)
- **Citizen Manuel Salvador Bravo Alvarado (Parishioner)** [See video](#)



!!!THANK YOU!!!