

60-year-old Catholic priest dies in parish church fire

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Scene of a fire incident. File photo

Tony Okafor, Awka

A 60-year old Catholic priest, Rv Fr. Edmond Nwagbal, was on Saturday reportedly burnt beyond recognition in a fire outbreak at St. Peter Claver Catholic Parish Nnewichi in Nnewi North Local Government Area of Anambra State.

It was gathered that the inferno, which occurred at about 4:00 a.m., affected parts of the church's residential building.

The deceased, it was learnt, was engulfed by the fire in his sleep.

The Police spokesperson, Haruna Mohammed, confirmed the incident.

He said the cause of the fire was yet to be ascertained.

He said, “At about 04:00am, there was a fire outbreak at St. Peter Claver Catholic Parish, Nnewichi, in Nnewi North LGA of Anambra State.

“The inferno, whose cause is yet to be ascertained, affected part of the church residential building.

“As a result, the parish priest, one Rev. Fr. Edmond Nwagbala, aged about 60 years, was burnt beyond recognition inside his room at same premises.

“Police patrol teams attached to Otolo Division, led by the DPO, visited the scene; and fire service department was also alerted. They responded promptly and put off the fire before it escalated.

“Meanwhile, the victim was rushed to the hospital for medical attention, but he was certified dead on arrival by the medical doctor and corpse deposited at the mortuary for postmortem examination.

“The Commissioner of Police, John Abang, has ordered a discreet investigation to ascertain the circumstances surrounding the incident.”

The Chief Fire fighter in the state, Martin Agbili, also confirmed the incident.

He said, “Our men were deployed immediately to the fire scene and we have contained the situation.”