

Fire of Love – The Life of George E. Schulhoff

Founder of the Apostles of the Holy Spirit

(A portion of chapter 2)

Frank X. Mercurio – 1997

...As this business battle was being waged, a more difficult problem was unfolding for the young couple, Emy was ill. She contracted tuberculosis and was confined to bed rest for eighteen months.

In the thirties, medicine did not have at its disposal the great array of antibiotics available today. A collapsed lung and bed rest was the prescribed treatment and then there was no certainty of a cure. Death was often the result of this most contagious disease.

Young newlyweds, separated by some quirk of nature, are a common ingredient in high drama. This wasn't the stage, reflected George, it was real life and it was his and Emy's life together that was threatened. George tried to find relief from the stressful situation by plunging himself into his hardware business – it didn't work, the thought of his separation from Emy always came flooding back. George admits today that prayer, and especially prayer to the Holy Spirit, helped him weather this crisis.

To visit Emy in the sanitarium, George would catch a streetcar in front of his store at four in the afternoon and transfer twice to other streetcars before he arrived at the hospital – a two hour process. Once at the hospital, he would have to wait outside with all the other visitors until the staff opened the doors at six-thirty. After a few visits, he located Emy's room and would take up a position below her fifth floor window. From this vantage point the two would exchange greetings and messages with hand signals. After visiting for thirty minutes, George caught the returning streetcar for the homeward trip, arriving around nine in the evening. What a sacrifice and sorrow.

The months dragged by. In the year and a half at Dunham, Emy was healing and gaining strength. But as the time for her release approached, the doctor confirmed George's worse fear-- Emy would have to stay six more months for observation and convalescence. The news hit George like a well placed left hook. He was literally staggered by the blow. At the end of his endurance, and longing to be with Emy, he broke down and cried, pleading with the Holy Spirit

to figure a way that he and Emy could be reunited. His prayer was almost immediately answered. Visiting the doctor at the hospital, George begged the doctor to release Emy to his care pouring out all his frustrations, hopes, and dreams. Going against the common practice of the time, the doctor released Emy with the firm mandate that she must have complete rest till all vestiges of the disease was cleared up.

What a joy! The two were finally reunited. In short order they were able to rent a room in a local boarding house. But after two months the news leaked out that Emy had TB and the other guests complained to the landlord. The young couple was evicted.