

'Interchurch' New Kind of Newspaper

By MARJORIE HYER

Indianapolis — (NC) — One of the newest contributions to the ecumenical movement is a bright and lively statewide newspaper here called Interchurch.

Rapidly gaining the respect of Indiana's Protestant, Roman Catholic and Orthodox Christians, the 24-page, tabloid-sized monthly is packed with news of the world of religion; book, movie and TV reviews; several columns of opinion; religious radio and TV listings for the state; and a calendar of coming events of interest to the religious community.

Interchurch is the brainchild of Msgr. Raymond T. Bosler, editor of The Criterion, Indianapolis Catholic archdiocesan weekly newspaper. He is also pastor of St. Theresa of the Infant Jesus Church.

It was launched in June, mainly through his efforts, and is put together in large part by staff members of The Criterion whom Monsignor Bosler has made available for the ecumenical venture.

"I felt we needed something like this," he said, explaining the heavy involvement of the archdiocesan press operation in Interchurch.

"We decided we were the only people that could do it. We offered our whole staff — including advertising salesmen, composing room, everything. We felt we could start out on a modest scale and not have to ask for a big investment," he said.

In a day when many religious publications are finding it difficult to stay in business, the 54-year-old priest-editor seemed undaunted by the perils of starting a kind of paper that had never been tried before.

His formula seems to be a combination of faith and bottomless generosity.

As for advertising, Monsignor Bosler explained: "When our people are soliciting ads for The Criterion, they can just as easily sell ads for Interchurch too." He said that in the bookkeeping for the new publication, he charges against the paper only what goes over our normal expenses.

There are, of course, Protestant contributions to the paper too. When Interchurch was still in the planning stages, Monsignor Bosler asked for and got the cooperation of the public relations officers of those Protestant denominations that had them in the state.

Interchurch has as a regular columnist and consultant one of Protestantism's most respected journalists. He is Dr. Harold E. Fey, who has made his home in Indianapolis since his retirement as editor of The Christian Century.

A large advisory commission, which meets once a month, includes representatives from Episcopal, United Presbyterian, United Methodist, United Church of Christ, Greek Orthodox, Lutheran and Christian (Disciples of Christ) Churches, as well as from the Indiana and Indianapolis councils of Churches, the Indiana region of the National Conference of Christians and Jews, the Indiana Inter-religious Commission on Human Equality and the Indiana Catholic Conference.

One of the unique features of Interchurch is that it invites readers to provide the editorials. Each issue carries a feature called the Center Spread, in which experts offer opposing viewpoints on a current issue.

Conn. Suit Filed To Block Aid to Private Schools

Hartford, Conn. — (RNS) — A suit has been filed in the U.S. District Court in an attempt to block state aid to non-public schools.

Ten organizations and individuals have asked the federal court for an injunction to stop the allocation of \$8 million in direct aid to private schools in Connecticut. The money was provided under a bill passed by the State Legislature June 3.

The measure went into effect July 1 and was designed to pay 20 per cent of the salaries of teachers of secular subjects in non-public schools.

Plaintiffs include the Connecticut Civil Liberties Union, the Connecticut Council of Churches, the Connecticut Jewish Community Relations Council, National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, and Americans United for Separation of Church and State.

In their suit, the plaintiffs argue that such payments to teachers in parochial schools violates guarantees of religious liberty and the separation of church and state in both the U.S. and Connecticut Constitutions.

Under the law, teacher salary reimbursement would climb to 50 per cent for schools with one-third of its enrollment from lower income families, and to 60 per cent where two-thirds of the students are "educationally deprived."

rent moral or social question. Readers are invited to respond and their letters are published in subsequent months.

The news columns present matters of concern to Christians struggling to make their faith relevant to the world they live in.

Recent topics have been civil rights, a round-up of reactions to the Black Manifesto, the church's relation to politics, the Christian's responsibility to the migratory workers that harvest Indiana crops, a list of places alcoholics may go for help, and the generation gap.

Generous use of photographs, crisp headlines, attractive layout that includes restrained but effective use of color contribute to the highly readable quality of Interchurch.

A small foundation grant financed the mailing of 30,000 copies of the paper's first three issues to key lay members and clergy on the mailing lists of cooperating denominations and organizations. Beginning with the October issue, only those persons who have sent in a \$2 subscription fee will get it.

Monsignor Bosler estimates

that the paper needs 10,000 paid subscribers to survive. One hope is that the denominational papers, then to most Protestants.

With the exception of Southern Baptists, Protestant denominations put most of their religious journalism budgets into national denominational magazines.

Monsignor Bosler is aware that most of his Protestant neighbors are not accustomed to the kind of statewide paper that he and his associates are producing. "We're just groping our way," he emphasized. "It's still an experiment."

The idea of a monthly, statewide ecumenical newspaper will

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