COURIER-OURNAL

Wednesday, June 14, 1978

Abortion in Italy Draws Objections from Doctors

Rome (RNS)-Legalizabortion officially ed went into effect on June 6 in Italian hospitals and health clinics, but it faces an uneasy future.

As the Roman Catholic Church continues its denunciation of the new law, which provides for free abortion to women over 18 within their third month of pregnancy, health care specialists warned that Italian hospitals are not ready to 1. 1.

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deal with expected demands for abortion.

Cardinal Hugo Poletti, Pope Paul's vicar for the Diocese of Rome, issued a statement denouncing implementation of the new law. He reminded Catholics that abortion is still considered "a grave sin by the Church, one with special sanctions, namely excommunication."

He called on workers in

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the health field "to demonstrate their conscientious objection" to the new law.

The Italian lay organization, Catholic Action, reaffirmed its opposition to the law.

Those upholding abortion, meanwhile, are fearful that there is not enough room in hospitals and gynecological clinics to meet the demand and that there will not be enough doctors willing to perform the operation.

Under the law, doctors have until July 6 to tell the government that they refuse to perform abortions for moral reasons. (If a mother's life is in danger from pregnancy, however, any Italian doctor is still required to perform abortion.)

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A survey by Il Messaggero, a leading Rome daily, revealed that in one Rome hospital 49 doctors have said they will refuse to perform abortions, three have said they will carry out the operations and 80 remain undecided. According to Catholic: Canon Law; anyone involved in an abortion is liable to excommunication.

The Italian Association of Catholic Hospitals announced last week that its hospitals will not

perform abortions.

In Florence, Dr. Franco Gasparri, director of the city's obstetrics clinic said, "About 70 percent of the doctors here have said they will be 'conscientious objectors' to abortion. And objections by the para-medical staff are almost unanimous."

Party for Father Biondi

Christ the King Parish will honor Father Michael Biondi, CSB, with a farwell party, Monday evening, June 26, at Valle's Steak House on East Ridge Road.

Father Biondi has been associate pastor at the parish for the past two years and is being assigned to Texas.

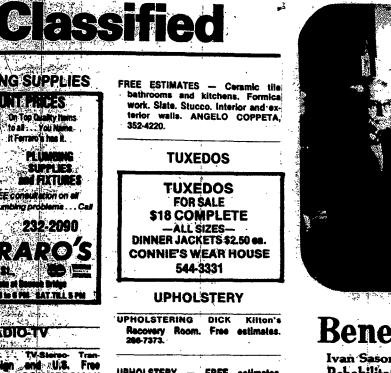
A native of Rochester, Father Biondi was on the faculty of Aquinas Institute for 22 years before his assignment to Christ the King.

All are invited to the party and ticket information may be obtained from George Galen, 266-2022, or Bob Flaherty, 342-1795.



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