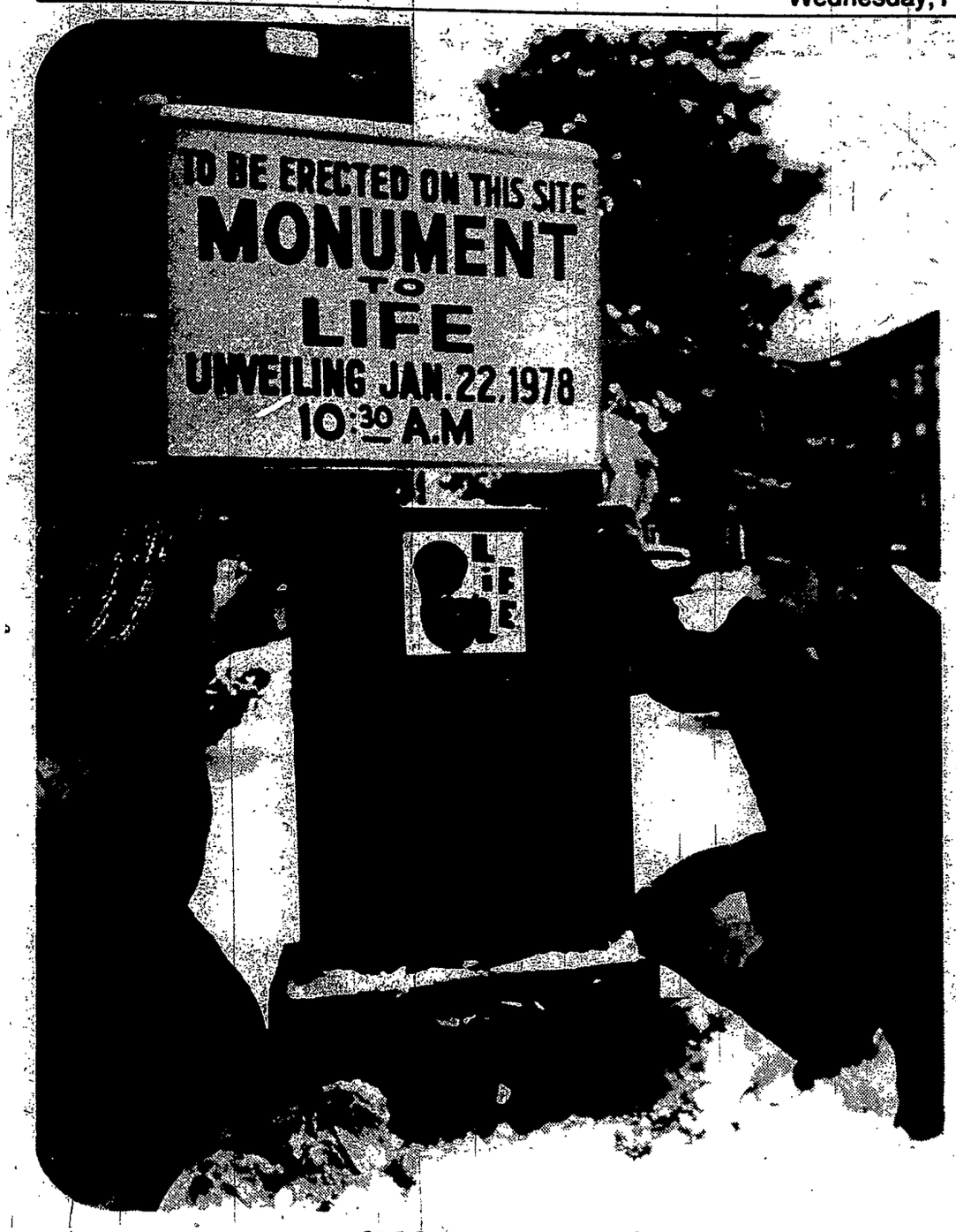

Children Mourned

Father Joseph A. Nugent of Our Lady of Victory Roman Catholic Church, Brooklyn, and Valerie Maxwell, parish representative to the diocesan Human Life Office, look at tombstone on the church grounds prior to its dedication "in memory of the unborn children murdered through the U. S. Supreme Court decision of Jan. 22, 1973." The monument was unveiled at a Mass on the fifth anniversary of the court ruling.

J.P. Stevens Charged With 'Anti Union Tactics'

New York (RNS)--The National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) has sought an injunction against the "anti-union" tactics of J.P. Stevens and Company in Federal District Court here.

The company, target of a boycott joined by several labor and religious organizations (including the Office of Human Development of the Rochester diocese), was charged with "flagrant and repeated violations" of the National Labor Relations Act.

NLRB officials and officers of the Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union (ACTWU), the union which has attempted to organize Stevens workers, said the injunction would speed the labor negotiation process with the company.

The union won the right to organize workers and negotiate for them in a representation election held in 1974, in seven of the company's plants in Roanoke Rapids, N.C. Since then the company has sought, in the NLRB's words, to "effectively stifle the statutory rights of the employees involved." The union charges that workers who have sought to organize in Stevens plants have been harassed and sometimes summarily fired.

The injunction is described as one of the broadest ever sought against any company. If granted it would short-cut proceedings against the company and would make violations of the court order essentially a contempt charge which would carry quickly administered fines and jail sentences.

The NLRB announced its authorization to seek the injunction in December, 1977. At that time Dara Thorpe, of the National Council of Churches-affiliated Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility, said she welcomed the action as a "confirmation" of ICCR shareholder actions which have been filed against the company.

The ICCR is acting as a coordinator for eight religious groups holding stock in the company. They are filing three joint resolutions with Stevens.

One resolution will ask for disclosure of the company's employment opportunities. A second will ask for disclosure of its labor policies. The third will seek a review board set up by the company to monitor and make recommendations on all Stevens policies which affect employees.

The Governing Board of the National Council of Churches, along with five other religious agencies have joined the ACTWU boycott against the company's products, chiefly sheets and towels.

J.P. Stevens was found in contempt of an injunction, similar to the broader one now being sought, earlier this month. If the contempt order is held up after its appeal, there could be heavy fines and possible jail terms for several officers in the Statesboro, Ga., plant.

CWC PROGRAM

Father Thomas F. Schmidt, CSSR, will lead members and friends of the Catholic Women's Club through a day of recollection on Ash Wednesday, Feb. 8, at the Cenacle Retreat House. The program opens at 9:30 a.m. and closes after a 2:30 p.m. Mass. Reservations and further information are available by calling the CWC clubhouse during weekdays at 275-9173.

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Father Feeney Dies, Reconciled with Church

Ayer, Mass. (RNS)--Father Leonard Feeney died here Jan. 30 at the age of 80, reconciled with the Roman Catholic Church from which he had been alienated for almost 20 years.

The former Jesuit, who once preached that outside Catholicism there was no salvation, had been failing in health for the last two years. He was admitted to the Nasoba Community Hospital here Jan 29. He died the next day.

He and 29 of his followers, called the Slaves of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, returned to the Church in 1972; but splinter groups remain unreconciled.

The priest, for many years superior of St. Benedict's Center in the Still River section of Harvard, Mass., wrote more than a dozen books, was an accomplished poet and a former literary editor of America, the national Jesuit weekly magazine. He also taught English at Boston College and was a former president of the Catholic Poetry Society.

It was in 1953 that Pope Pius XII excommunicated Father Feeney and his followers for refusing to stop preaching a literal interpretation of the doctrine that "there is not salvation outside the Catholic Church." For several years, in the late 1940's and early 1950's, the St. Benedict's Center near Harvard was the focal point of the famed "Boston Heresy Case."

Much of the credit for the priest's return to the Church was given to two prelates – Cardinal Humberto Medeiros of Boston and Cardinal John Wright, prefect of the Vatican Congregation for the Clergy. Both cardinals knew Father Feeney in the early days of St. Benedict's Center.

In 1976, it was announced that the St. Benedict community was joined to the benedictine order as a "pious union" of men and women at St. Therese House. Two members of the community were subsequently ordained priests to serve the larger community.

At the time of the priest's death, the factions were still involved in legal negotiations over the Still River farm property and its assets.

Area Pro-Lifers Face 15 Days in Jail

The seven "pro-life" activists who were arrested Jan. 6 at an aboriton clinic all pleaded innocent to trespassing charges at their arraignment last week.

Cheryl Battles, one of three Rochester area residents arrested, said that the trial date is March 13 and that they all will contend the trespassing was legal on the grounds that they were there to "save lives." The same defense was used successfully in a similar case in Fairfax, Va.

Ms. Battle, however, added that it would be "up to the judge's discretion whether to allow any defense to be given." She said that it "is not likely we'll get a sympathetic judge," but that either way they were "prepared to take the consequences."

Battles said that she and her six co-defendants, Dorothy Watson and William Lent of Rochester, Burke Balch, Jeanne Miller, Christopher Smith and Patrick Collier, face a maximum of 15 days or a fine.

She said the sit-in in New York was the "first of many" planned across the country and she felt that sympathy for the unborn was growing as a result of the protests.

She maintained that the morale of the defendants was "very high" and that they "are hopeful of good results" at the trial.

CORRECTION

The theme of Father Charles Lavery's Lenten talks at Christ the King Church was incorrectly printed in last week's Courier-Journal. Father Lavery will speak on the general theme "What a Catholic Should Be Today."

He will speak at the church on five consecutive Wednesdays beginning Feb. 15. Each service will consist of Mass and homily and will begin at 7:30 p.m.

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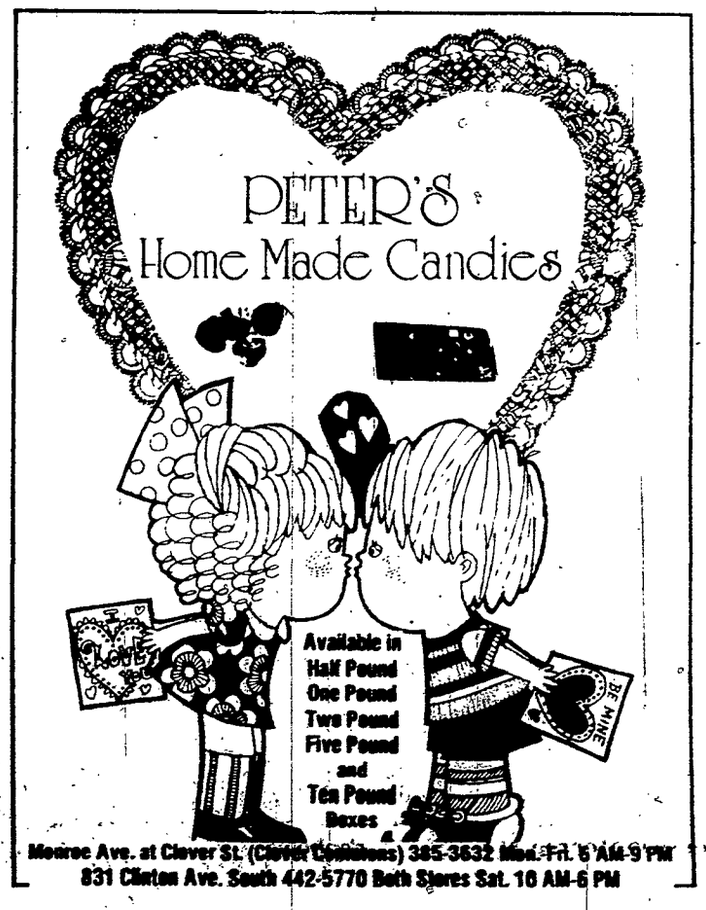
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