



Banners represented each Mercy house at the Sunday Eucharist.

## 'The Energy in Us is Our Prayer Life'

By Sister Elaine Kolesnik, RSM

In Christ, We Are a New Creation was the motif for the Sisters of Mercy as they celebrated Renewal Days Aug. 15-18 at the Motherhouse.

More than 180 sisters of the congregation gathered for spiritual and personal renewal, prayer and relaxation, and also to fete their sisters celebrating golden and silver jubilees.

Through a symbolic pilgrimage from Old St. Mary's to Mount Carmel Church, the sisters were reminded of their roots in the diocese and their ongoing commitments to present needs.

A rain on Saturday held off for the early afternoon pilgrimage. Buses, supplied by St. Thomas the Apostle Parish, Good Shepherd School and St. Joseph's Villa, brought the Sisters to St. Mary's and the walk was made to Mount Carmel through downtown.

Sister Janet Wahl was chairman of the committees which planned each day's events, and Father Sebastian Falcone offered the spiritual theme for each day.

Bishop Joseph L. Hogan celebrated the Sunday Eucharistic liturgy which highlighted the renewal days. In the entrance procession to that Mass each religious house was represented by a sister carrying a banner.

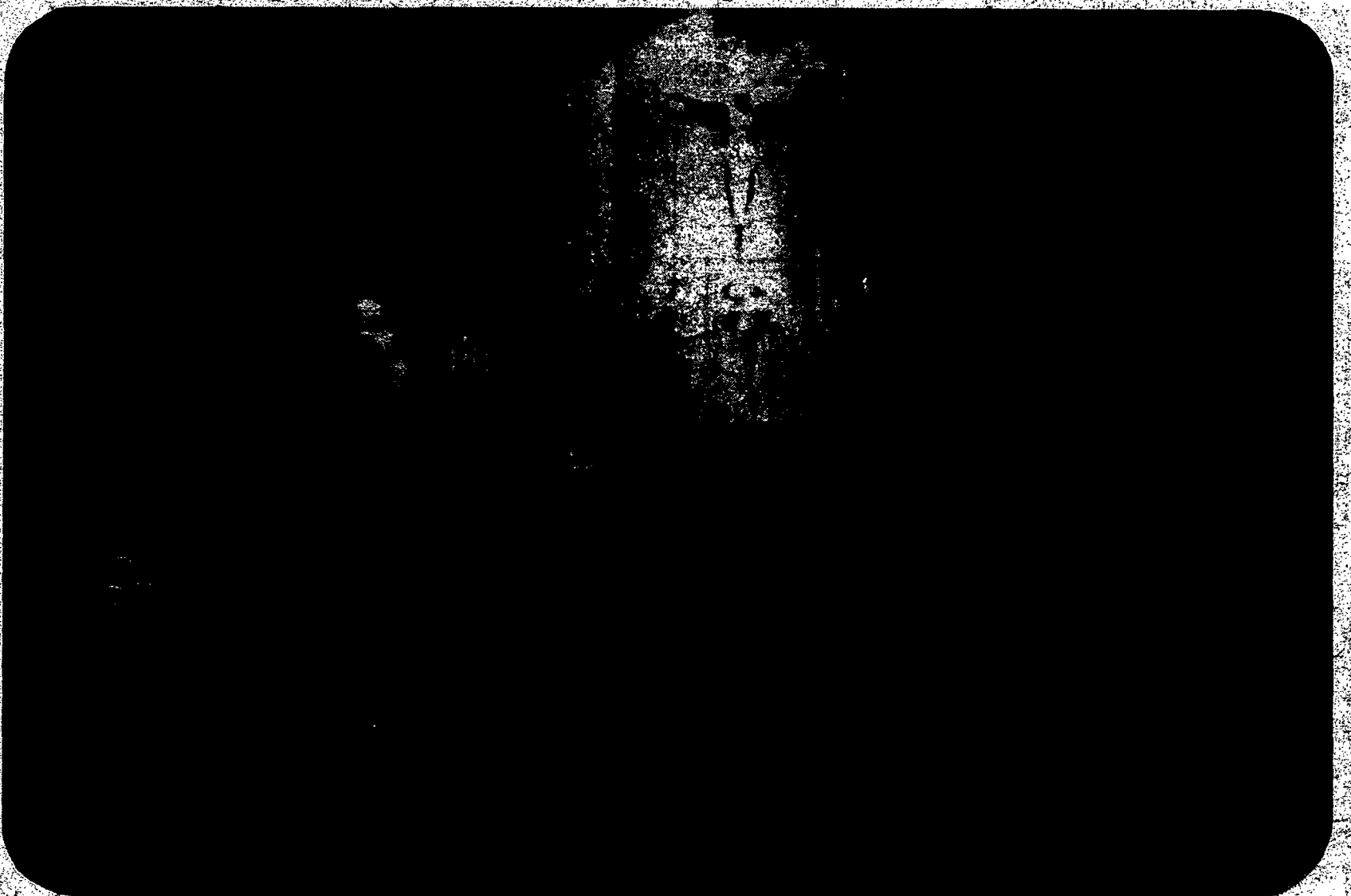
Friday was the major fun day and featured a ball game between the Black Beans and the Red Barons, cheerleading, a water ballet, a euchre tournament and an evening campfire songfest.

On Saturday, the day of pilgrimage, the past was recalled humorously and tearfully through skits, slides, songs and reminiscences, all drawn together by Sister Mary Bernard Butts.

Symbols of personal and congregational growth abounded, from a mustard seed distributed to each sister, to a Tree of Remembrance filled with the names of deceased Mercy Sisters, to a sheaf of wheat each nun received as a symbol of personal and apostolic fruitfulness.

In a talk on Saturday, Sister Mary Judith Héberle, superior general, encouraged each sister to become a clearer "Word" of the Gospel and stressed the importance of prayer, saying, "I believe the energy in us is our prayer life. It will make things happen when the paths of other persons touch ours and we will be there to let it happen."

Catherine McAuley, foundress of the congregation, once wrote "Let us consider ourselves as strangers and pilgrims on earth, and each new day prepare to enter our own country. We shall continue to step thus from day to day until we take the last step."



Sister Mary Florence, the congregation's archivist addressed her sisters on the history of the group.