Sister Genevieve Sullivan came from a family of 12 children, four boys, and eight girls. She attended three elementary schools in Detroit and graduated from St. Cecilia High School. She joined the IHM Sisters when she was 18 and was received shortly before her 19th birthday.

Sister Gen earned a bachelor’s degree from Marygrove College and her master’s degree from Wayne State University. She began her ministerial life teaching third grade at St. Joseph School in Monroe. Except for teaching first grade for four years at St. Monica, Mobile, Ala, Sister Gen’s ministries kept her in Michigan. She taught in the primary grades at SS. Peter and Paul, Ionia; Our Lady of Help, Detroit; St. John, Benton Harbor; Holy Redeemer (kindergarten); St. Patrick, Wyandotte and Sacred Heart, Dearborn. She was missioned back to Holy Redeemer to teach grades four-eight and then to St. Thomas Aquinas, Detroit to teach sixth grade.

In all, Sister Gen taught for 29 years and then began serving in pastoral ministry, first at St. Thomas Aquinas Parish in Detroit, where she ministered for nine years, and then at St. Benedict Parish in Pontiac and Our Lady Queen of Heaven in Detroit.

In 1984, Sister Gen went to Our Lady of the Lake Parish in Holland, where for the next 21 years, she served as pastoral associate, in human promotion and evangelization.

“I arrived after a four-hour ride through torrential rain,” she recalls. “Waiting at the apartment for me were six parishioners. They were a welcome sight and spoke deeply to me of the type of community I would be ministering with, celebrating with.

“I was hopeful, but also fearful of being so far from the community, my family and friends. Somehow, however, I felt this was where the Lord was calling me at this time.”

In her new place of ministry, Sister Gen visited the sick and homebound, as well as senior citizens and those in nursing homes. She led Bible studies and prayer groups; coordinated baptism preparation and followed up with the newly baptized (or their parents); worked with those who had suffered a loss; and handled general parish work. She also served as staff for the Worship and the Social Concerns/Peace and Justice commissions.

“The people were a great resource,” she notes.

In November 2005, she retired to the IHM Motherhouse.

She writes in her IHM Book of Life page, “… Life – a dance like the seasons – and God leads. God’s ever-present faithfulness and love, like the sun, carries and nurtures me.