



Sister George Ellen Brannick grew up in Jackson, Mich., where she attended St. John School along with her three siblings. Her father worked in maintenance at the Jackson State Prison and occasionally ex-convicts would show up at the door hoping for some assistance to get back on their feet.

Sister George Ellen always pretended to be a teacher when she was a child. With the encouragement of Sister Emily Joseph, she attended a weekend in Monroe at the Motherhouse. The friend who attended with her had just met a boy the night before they left for Monroe, so she was no longer interested in joining the community. However, another one of her classmates *did* join with her.

Joining the community was initially scary, and her parents were less than thrilled with her decision. In fact, her dad left the room when she walked in displaying some of her postulant attire before she came to Monroe. After she'd joined, her father would ask her if she was coming home with them at the end of their family visits. Sister George Ellen would go to a bathroom at the end of the hall after they left and have "the big cry." Her good friendships with the other sisters got her through the difficult times.

She began teaching second and third grades at St. Hugo of the Hills in Bloomfield Hills, Mich., before being sent to St. Michael in Flint, Mich., for two years. From there, Sister George Ellen went to St. Mary in Mount Clemens and taught first grade for four years, followed by five years teaching first and second grades at St. Thomas in Ann Arbor. She loved teaching first-graders: "The joy of them all of a sudden reading ... it was just a thrill to see them blossom."

She flew on a plane for the first time when she was sent to California to teach first grade at St. Alphonsus Liguori in San Leandro. There were complications with her scheduled flight, but she finally got on a mail plane that stopped seven times between Utah and California. After California, Sister George Ellen came home to be closer to her ailing father. She taught for 36 years at St. John in Jackson, her old school. She enjoyed being home and close to her mother after her father passed away. During her career, she completed a master's degree in English at the University of Detroit. Currently, she works in the Motherhouse mailroom, assists with the wheelchairs during services and maintains the plants in Chapel.

Sister George Ellen's greatest joy since joining the community has been "the friendship of the sisters and Vatican II. The changes were real refreshing." She is most grateful for the support of the sisters. "I find God in the sisters," she says.

