Betty Leon

Sister Betty Leon was born in Detroit and has an older and a younger brother. She attended an IHM grade school and then Immaculata High School. “I have been with the IHMs since I was six years old,” she notes. She took piano lessons from IHM Sisters as well; music and dancing have always been a part of her life.

The IHM Sisters were inspiring, especially her eighth grade teacher, Sister Margaret Sullivan (who would have celebrated her 85th Jubilee in 2018 and died June 2, 2018).

“That was a great experience,” she recalls. “I got to know people I would never have known.”

Once her term was completed, Sister Betty took a two-year program of CPE and Marriage and Family Therapy. That led to work at a Tulsa, Okla., parish counseling center while she completed her master’s degree in social work. After 10 years, she returned to Michigan to be near her elderly mother. She worked part time in both counseling and as pastoral associate at Sacred Heart Parish in Grosse Ile, Mich. She interned in spiritual direction and currently offers spirituality programs and spiritual direction.

Sister Betty is most grateful that the congregation accepted her from the beginning.

“The congregation has given me models, mentors, friends and sisters,” she says. She is also grateful for all her education, which she calls “an ongoing gifting.” Her ministries have called her to serve in ways beyond the expected. Challenges to her skills led to further educational preparation.

The high points of Sister Betty’s life have been her annual retreats. “I’m quite an extrovert,” she laughs, “so what this does is help me to refocus, to center, to reclaim God’s ever-present energy and care.” The retreats provide time to just listen and find “that something inside that can be freed up. That is a real blessing.”