

## From Havergal to Marienschule

My name is Elena Vorvis. For the month of March, I have had the privilege of attending Marienschule Münster as a visiting exchange student. I have had an excellent time here and wanted to take this opportunity to share my experience and what I've learned.

I am 15 years old and my home is in Toronto, Ontario, Canada. I attend a girls' school called Havergal College. Although German is not taught at my school, I did have a little exposure to the language. It was just enough to open up my appetite and so I wanted to learn more. That's one of my main reasons for applying to an exchange with Marienschule.

I was a little nervous on my first day of classes at Marienschule, especially since I was the only student from my own school to come here. But I was very fortunate to have Friederike and the Altgelt family as my hosts. And everyone at the Marienschule was so welcoming. Students spoke slowly to make it easier for me to understand. Many were eager to try out their English. The classes were interesting. I especially enjoyed my history class because I learned a lot about German history.

I loved living in Münster this past month. I really enjoyed its architecture and history, the culture and the passionate fans at the Münster football game. Most of all, I really loved the fact that Münster has a bicycle culture. Bicycles and bike routes are everywhere! In Toronto, bicycles just don't get the same respect. Münster is so centrally located too. My host family took me to Holland for a day, and to Hamburg for a weekend. During my final week, we'll be going to a castle for an overnight school trip. In Canada, we are not so close to other countries. We have lots of open space and really only have one country as a neighbour –the USA!

I am very grateful for the hospitality here in Münster. My exchange hosts, Friederike and the Altgelt family, have been wonderful. They really took such great care of me and I know that we will always be friends. I also want to say a special "thank-you" to the principal of the Marienschule, Herr Fishedick, for permitting me to attend on this exchange. I also want to thank Herr Reick for his guidance and for helping out with all of my exchange needs at the Marienschule. Lastly, I thank all of the students and teachers at Marienschule for their guidance and their friendliness.

My experience here has been unforgettable. I'll leave Marienschule with so many things:

- friendships that I'll have for the rest of my life
- a better understanding of another culture
- an appetite to improve my knowledge of the German language

I look forward to sharing my home, school and culture with Friederike. And finally, I leave with a strong desire to encourage other Havergal students to come on exchange with Marienschule.

Marienschule and Münster, I thank you!