Gratitude at Marian

Featuring: Miss Monika Hess ‘18, *English Teacher*
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For my interview, I spoke with Ms. Hess about gratitude and what it means to her. One thing she mentioned was how important time is because it is the only resource we can never get back. She explained that we can share our time with people we love and do things we enjoy, but busy schedules can make us overlook the value of spending time together or even having free time. Her answer reminded me that we should appreciate the time we have and make room for the people and activities that matter to us.

Ms. Hess explained that her former Marian teachers shaped her when she was younger and continue to influence her as an adult. She described mentors as a luxury because, without them, learning would take much longer. Her answer shows how important teachers and mentors can be throughout our lives. They can guide us, share their experiences, and help us grow. Even after we leave a classroom, their lessons and encouragement can continue to make a difference.

When I asked about kindness, Ms. Hess explained that she appreciates when people notice she is struggling, even when she does not show it clearly, and take the time to help her slow down and reconsider her perspective. This shows that kindness does not always have to involve doing something big. Sometimes, noticing that someone needs support and taking the time to listen can make a meaningful difference. Her answer reminded me to pay attention to the people around me because someone may need understanding or encouragement.

Ms. Hess also explained that life is a balance of positive and negative experiences. She believes we should reach for the positive whenever we can while remembering that difficult experiences are a natural part of being human. Her answer helped me understand that gratitude does not mean everything has to be perfect or that we should ignore difficult moments. Instead, it means recognizing the good things we have, even when things do not go as planned.

Finally, when discussing gratitude at Marian, Ms. Hess described the school community as fortunate because of its culture of unity and shared belonging. She mentioned that she has worked at other schools that did not have the same sense of community, and that the difference is something people can feel. She believes we should not take Marian's opportunities for granted and should appreciate its students, faculty, and shared accomplishments. Her answer shows that gratitude also means recognizing what makes our school a special place to learn and grow. When people support one another and feel they belong, it can make the school community stronger.

Overall, interviewing Ms. Hess helped me see gratitude in a different way. Her answers reminded me to appreciate my time, the people who help me grow, the kindness others show, and the community I am part of. I learned that gratitude can be found in everyday moments, not just big accomplishments.