



ISTL

International School of Theology and Leadership

Vol. 4

December 2019



Graduation 2019

ISTL had their graduation ceremony on October 25, 2019. It was a great moment for ISTL to see that another 8 students successfully had completed their studies and graduated. Those students were filled with joy and gratitude to the Lord and to the ISTL staff for guiding them on this important journey in their lives. We hereby congratulate Gjergji Kollumbi, Albana Kollumbi, Destemona Jani, Emi Levendi, Eduard Kovaci, Edi Morava, Genci Hyseni and Mimoza Shabanaj.

The graduation ceremony was a celebration of sending servant leaders throughout Albania to spread the Word of God and to build up churches.

Testimony of the Chairman

When I first met Hervin Fushekati, almost four years ago, I sensed God's hand on the ministry of ISTL and I thought that this is a ministry that I want to support. Little did I know then how our Father would

lead me to get involved in this way.

My dad was a pastor and Bible School teacher while my mom stayed at home to look after my two brothers and me, so from the beginning of my life I was taught the stories in the Bible. At a very early age I also learned how churches work, especially the desire to tell lost people about Jesus Christ. I was very young when I first committed my life to Jesus and was baptized when I was 15.

From a career perspective, I started out as a teacher and spent about 25 years in education being a classroom teacher, building principal, university and college professor of education, and a policy analyst in government. Then I became the executive pastor in a local church in Canada, after which I worked for a manufacturer of a soil amendment product.

During my life I have served on various Boards: our church, a Bible college and seminary, a Christian literature distribution ministry and the denomination's district executive committee.

Through personal friendships with the leaders of Equip Leadership Canada (ELC) I heard about ISTL in Albania so I accepted an invitation to accompany some of the ELC people to Albania to meet with the ISTL team. Hervin and I had some wonderful conversations so when the invitation came to join the new Board of Directors, I prayed about it and soon I found myself part of this Board. In all of these volunteer board roles my focus has been on ways we could be more effective for Him.

Jim Thiessen

Chairman of the ISTL Board



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Followers of Christ



Christmas Message of A Student

All around the world December's attention is on Christmas. It is definitely the most popular, cheerful and joyous family holiday. It is impossible for a Christian believer to celebrate Christmas and not meditate on it's meaning: Why did He come into the world? What is the Christmas message and why do we celebrate it today, after more than 2000 years?

Jesus came into the world through spiritual conception in the womb of the virgin Mary, which was promised to Joseph. Mary and Joseph were simple people, without a high position in society, without wealth, but God chose them. Could He not have chosen some other people? Of course, yes! But the Lord God chose two humble people who had found favour in his eyes. A righteous man, Joseph (Matt.1:19), and a gracious woman, Mary.

The Firstborn and the only Son of the Almighty God was not born in a royal palace; no trumpets sounded for him; they did not fill his bed with feathers; He was not wrapped in expensive robes like kings, nor was He covered with gold and precious stones. The King of Kings was born in a simple stable.

The birth of Jesus in the most unimaginable circumstances made the news of the Saviour's coming into the world completely unbeliev-

able. The Israelites were certainly expecting a King in splendour and accompanied by a troop of horses and cavalry. A star in the East leading the shepherds and a heavenly army (Luke 2: 8-12) were the first visitors to baby Jesus and to his mother, not without reason. He would, Himself, become the Chief Shepherd, destined to direct the lost and touching millions, becoming the sacrificial Lamb for salvation. This is the message of Christmas, the message of hope and salvation, because Jesus is the only hope for salvation. The tradition of the Christmas Tree, the lights, the brightness, the gifts, are all elements of this holiday, but not the real reason. He who was born that night in Bethlehem, Jesus Christ, is unique in all the history of the world, He is the real reason of Christmas. Christmas is the incarnation of the mighty God, who has

come to this earth in the flesh as Jesus and was later resurrected as the Christ. For this reason, He deserves all the attention and honour of this feast.

Mirella Rrumbullaku
1st Year's student ISTL

Number of Students

ISTL had 25 new registrations for the 2019-2020 Academic Year. In the second year there are now 33 students, while in the third year there are 20 students. This year ISTL offers 3 parallel lessons every month as well as a first year class to our Master's Program. It's an exciting time for ISTL and all of our supporters. Thank you for your continued prayers and financial support. We wish you a Merry Christmas and a blessed New Year in 2020!

