



ISTL 3D Conference, Graduation and a Fresh Academic Year

We were reminded that God is always in control, even in the chaos, with the hardships we have faced as a school in 2019 and 2020. As we begin the school year of 2021, many things will go back to their normal flow in Albania even though every country is still impacted by the pandemic and we still pray for healing. As far as ISTL is concerned, this year offers more freedom to proceed with the teachings physically. Last year, the contact between the students and the teachers continued mostly online, so we

decided to create the opportunity of the ISTL 3D conference to meet together, to be encouraged, and to have heartwarming conversations. We titled it 3D because ISTL functions as a 3D movement. The three D-s in Albanian stand for (Listen, Lead and Delegate as in 2 Timothy 2:2). The conference was held at the end of September 2021 and during it we were blessed by the word that Stefan von Rütli (Director of ISTL Switzerland), Mande Chapman (Director of Epos International), Paulo Pascoal



(International Program Director at Equip Leadership Canada), and Hervin Fushekati (Director of ISTL Albania) shared. What they shared, during the conference sessions, was not only encouraging, but also led the students and the staff to think on a very practical level of how they can do better in the very wide process of discipleship – to make disciples that make disciples. These sessions also included times of prayer - the teachers, the staff, and the students were praying for each other and God to do His will within them.



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Sponsor a Student

The conference lasted two days and on the third day, October 2, 2021, we celebrated the graduation of 30 students. It was thrilling because last year we didn't celebrate any graduation since the covid-related rules didn't allow it. We had missed the feeling of sending ministers to the field, spiritually and theologically matured. The most thrilling moment was the one when some of the students were sharing their testimonies of how ISTL has helped them and their ministry to grow spiritually. For many of them, even their way of thinking had changed during their time at ISTL – indeed the perspectives that teachers bring to some classes throughout the years challenge their ways of thinking. One of the students, Erion Xhaibra, couldn't keep his tears from falling while testifying how great God had been during the time he attended ISTL – and we are sure God will continue to show His goodness to him.

After this great time, the ISTL team headed back to start the first week of the 2021-2022 academic year. This year we welcomed 35 new students of differ-



ent ages. Three classes continue to meet simultaneously during a course week. The students were all ears to learn more and obviously, the most excited ones were the first-year students. In the second month of this academic year, we held an open class so that everyone could have a taste of how ISTL serves their needs to study the Bible better and around 10 people joined physically and online – some of them asked for more information on how to register to the school and

how it functions. This is what one of the visitors messaged us when we asked her about her short experience at ISTL: “As someone seeking to grow in faith and be strengthened in the Word of God, attending ISTL has shown many ways of thinking about Bible stories. I realized that the Bible should not only be read but also studied in as many details as possible. With present interactivity and good friends, this short but very fruitful experience makes me consider to be a student of it soon.”

Finally, as always, we are expecting a lot from this academic year that has already made us happy with the freedom to have more students physically in class (only the ones who live outside Tirana, will continue to join via Zoom). We praise God for everything that He is doing through ISTL Albania and we pray for more leaders and ministers that preach, teach and counsel faithfully from the Word of God.



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