

counterparts: Brazil

Bruna Proença has just completed medical school at the Federal University of São Carlos, Brazil



A few weeks ago, I finished my sixth year of medical school in Brazil. I am still in the midst of evaluations and tests, but hopefully I'll be able to get a residence in clinical neurology. Looking back, I can't put into words how great has been the faithfulness of God during my university years.

My country is mostly Catholic, so I see crosses and chapels all over the hospitals which are mostly known as holy houses. Pain and suffering is usually the way people rethink their lives and start thinking about eternity. In Brazil, I see a vast field to spread the gospel, but I see other religions gaining space: new age theories and spiritualism mixed together – a fake solution for our mortality. In the midst of a religious culture, the medical environment here is filled with apathy, competition, pride and financial interests. In Brazil, few are the states that have a good health service and that are accessible to most people.

Around that background, I started studying medicine in 2014 in the state of São Paulo, one of the most well-developed states here, with no strong conviction in my life. By God's grace and mercy, I got saved during an exchange program to the USA in my third year. I saw myself as small and lost and met the immeasurable and powerful love of Christ. My life was suddenly changed and I understood I was part of his great plan and finally gave up control. The things that happened from that moment on are a sequence of supernatural and unexplainable miracles.

I met a CMF group during that exchange trip.

When I came back home, I got connected with CMF Brazil. Being part of conferences and training encouraged and equipped me to start a CMF group in my university, in parallel with an evangelism and discipleship girls' group supported by my home church. In the midst of a busy life of a medical student, I saw God's faithfulness in multiplying the time and effort we gave to his work; I saw the word of God changing and encouraging many lives. I had the great joy to see my parents and some classmates baptised.

At the beginning of 2018, I had the opportunity to participate in the Sydenham Conference in London where I met amazing people, received high quality and Bible orientated teaching and practical material to read and share with groups. I also received wisdom from doctors who were part of CMF UK. I had to make huge decisions regarding my next steps. I have come to understand medicine as a way to serve: each patient is highly valuable to God. I am humbled by the privilege to impact people's lives. Equipped by courses supported by CMF, such as Saline, I can apply comprehensive care and approach patient's spirituality in my practice.

Christ has turned chaos and hopelessness into beautiful things in my life. It doesn't matter about the pressure and busyness of our lives as students and health professionals. If we keep our eyes on Jesus, he is the source and perfecter of our faith.¹

'I keep my eyes always on the LORD. With him at my right hand, I will not be shaken.' (Psalm 16:8) ■