Reaching the Great Northeast!

This past “summer” (for us in the southern hemisphere, that is - Jan. 5-16) 31 people from Niterói and Rio de Janeiro made an eternal investment by taking the gospel to one of Brazil’s “least-reached” regions, the Great Northeast. (Our target town has less than 3% Evangelicals.) Six of the participants were students involved in our campus ministry, The 8-32 Movement, or M8-32. (The mother of one of our students participated as well.) Despite having classes in January due to a professors’s strike last year at Universidade Federal Fluminense (UFF), our students went by faith, and God honored that faith. Nobody missed anything that they were unable to make up upon their return. The others participants were either on summer vacation (high school & college students, teachers) or took vacation (e.g., a dentist, a foot specialist, etc.) in order to bless this region primarily with the preaching of the biblical gospel. I want to emphasize “biblical” because the predominant “Christian” presence in this region is that which motivated the Protestant Reformation in the 16th century! Little is known of the biblical Jesus, while dependence on man-made dogmas and intermediaries takes priority over the clear teaching of Scripture (e.g., Eph. 2:8-9).
In partnership with a little Baptist church (i.e., 35 members) led by a Brazilian missionary couple from São Paulo, we’d “storm” the local neighborhoods - house by house - each afternoon after preaching open air and approaching local residents in the market section of Farias Brito in the morning (when local residents, especially from the rural parts of this 62 square-mile municipality, would “come to town” to buy what they needed for their ranches and homes). Each evening we’d put on an evangelistic program in the more heavily-populated neighborhoods.

Basically our main purpose was to preach the gospel to this town so caught up in its religious traditions and superstitions. There is a also a lot of ugliness going on behind closed doors, including incest, abuse, alcoholism, unemployment, etc. Many men in town get more from the federal government for not working, so there’s a lot of time to drink and abuse the family at home. Jesus wasn't kidding when he said in Mark 7:20-23, “That which proceeds out of the man, that is what defiles the man. For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed the evil thoughts, fornications, thefts, murders, adulteries, deeds of coveting and wickedness, as well as deceit, sensuality, envy, slander, pride and foolishness. All these evil things proceed from within and defile the man.” The Good News is that, after talking about the above bad news, sinners can receive new hearts (Ezekiel 36:26) that produce repentance and faith (in the biblical Jesus), resulting in salvation!

TO THE ENDS...

Brunna Barros Freire, a senior in International Relations, explains our evangelistic Easter banner/presentation “Where’s the Body?” to students waiting in the long cafeteria lines.