

How do you measure success

Here we are at the start of a new academic year with the honour, responsibility, challenge and pleasure of “shining out like bright stars among a warped and crooked generation, holding out the Word of life”!

Whether you are a seasoned student with a long list of successes and failures, or a freshman, feeling that mix of excitement and nervousness over the possibility of getting involved with the GBU, I want to ask you the question, “How do you measure the success of your evangelistic efforts?” How do you establish whether the effort made has achieved its goal or whether you have failed and so will have to adopt a completely different method and approach next time?

My answer has always been, consciously or unconsciously, to count the number of people who convert, or at least the number of people who have been touched by the message. Or, when I really want to hold on to the smallest acceptable result, I count how many have been “reached”, how many people were present at the event with whom I managed to talk about the Gospel.

Perhaps you could come up with a game of awarding points, three for converts, two for those interested and one for those reached.

I have been frustrated countless times because my score was too low.

There are certainly many reasons why an approach like this to evangelism is wrong. Rather than trying to list them, I invite you to look at the book of the prophet Jonah, as we have done recently in Naples together with some members of GBU Potenza.

Read the whole book – it only takes a few minutes – and afterwards ask yourselves, “Who was God’s work focused on?”

It is surprising to note that in a book that talks about the salvation of more than 120 thousand people, God’s attention seems to be mainly focused on the individual who had been chosen to deliver a message.

In contrast to the other prophetic books, the book of Jonah gives very little attention to the message the prophet was called to proclaim. And the receivers of the message themselves do little more than appear. Jonah, on the other hand is called, corrected, used, rebuked and accompanied by God throughout the whole story. The whole book is devoted to his transformation (we could also say conversion), albeit an incomplete one.

God does not need us to bring His message to the students in our universities, but He has chosen us because He wants to complete a work in us.

This year, try to evaluate what you have learned about God after every effort you’ve made to evangelise, and leave the rest faithfully in His hands!

Francesco Schiano
(GBU Staff, Napoli)

from the Groups

// GBU Catanzaro

I am overjoyed to tell you that GBU Catanzaro has been launched this year! We have every reason to praise God for this start up. Let us pray for this new academic year, that the Lord will guide everything and that we will have a strong witness in the university.

Praise:

- That the Lord’s grace has enabled us to begin holding meetings.
- That there were already twelve of us at the first meeting!

Prayer:

- For all the activities we carry out and that the Lord will provide us with a fixed room in the university.
- That more and more people will attend the meetings.

// GBU Napoli

Praise:

- Group retreat. We have just spent a lovely weekend together as a group (with delightful hosts who also came from GBU Potenza) to study the Word and be trained as well as encouraged in our witness. We saw in the book of Jonah the great plans that God has, not just to save the people of this city but also to work in our hearts as we grow in our knowledge of Christ. We are raring to go and we want to share the Gospel with the students of Naples!

Prayer:

- Pray for the Bible studies we carry out in the faculty. We now have four weekly studies in various locations and at various times to reach more students. Pray for the people who prepare the studies and guide us through them and for all the students present at the studies. The word of God is powerful, pray that God will work in the hearts of everyone present.
- Pray for the events we are organising over the coming months, we are thinking of organising a Christmas dinner with a brief evangelistic talk. Pray for the planning and organisation of this event and for all our friends who we want to invite.

// GBU Urbino

In the delay of starting up events this year, several students have expressed that they cannot wait for meetings to start again. Is that not a nice incentive and encouragement?!

Praise:

- Starting afresh with a GBU group is not a given! Despite some difficulties, the activities are about to begin again this year too, and this time with more support – the Lord has blessed us by bringing new student believers to the university of Urbino!
- We are grateful to God for the students who attended our meetings last year and who will continue to be part of this special journey today.

Prayer:

- On 12 November we will hold a conference at the university on the subject of creationism/evolutionism to make those who attend aware of a new approach which is different from the one which scientific secularism proposes as unappealing and undebatable dogmas, and which opens hearts to the truth of biblical creationism. Pray that everything will go smoothly and that a good number of students will be there who do not yet know the GBU.
- That there is always a harmonious and highly collaborative atmosphere among us, so that we might experience spiritual growth individually and as a group, and that Christ will flow out of the love we have for one another as a testimony to anyone who observes us.
- For the new students, that they will encounter new avenues in their genuine search for something which satisfies their hearts, and will come to know of the GBU and consequently Jesus. That God will give us the privilege of seeing some fruit from this too and being able to rejoice because of it!

// GBU Roma

ROMA TRE GROUP

Praise

- We had an excellent outcome at the Re-Party event we held in the lecture hall to start off the academic year at GBU Rome. Some GBU members demonstrated their talents at this evening and we were able to welcome new students who did not know of the GBU.
- For having as many as four new students attend the Roma Tre group. They are young believers who actively take part in the studies. Making six different timetables synchronise to find an hour in the week when all of us were free to meet really did seem im-

possible, but we managed in the end.

Prayer:

- One of the young women who attends GBU Roma Tre will be bringing two non-believing girl friends to the next meeting. Pray that God will touch the hearts of these two young women and that He will guide the whole meeting.
- For the big event that GBU Rome is organising. 21 November will be an Open Day, an event where we will present the GBU to the churches in Rome, saying what it is and does. Pray that as many churches as possible attend and decide to support the GBU and encourage the young people in their churches to take part.

ROMA LA SAPIENZA GROUP

This is a special year for our group because there is a change of team members. Nonetheless, we can see evidence of the Lord's work in the sizeable study group that has formed and we are thankful to Him for giving us this opportunity to grow together. Pray for us to be courageous when we are with our university colleagues. Our aim is to spread the good news and that God's name will be glorified.

// GBU Verona

The GBU Verona group met for the first time on 20 October! Against all odds, there were five of us! Pray for us that we really will be a witness in the university!

We thank the Lord in advance for every great thing He shows the group and for all the meetings He gives us the grace to hold!

// GBU Firenze

Praise:

- The young people who came to the groups last year are intending to come this year too.
- The Lord has provided two new coordinators, Benji and Martina.
- There are new students, both believers and non-believers.
- We have already organised an initial prayer meeting and two meals.

Prayer:

- For wisdom in how the coordinators lead and for mentors
- To find new venues for the activities
- To reach new students
- To involve and develop new student believers

// GBU Cosenza

The GBU COSENZA meetings began on 14 October! It is always a joy to see our brothers and sisters again, to pray together and share the message of the Word of God! We thank the Lord for how He is enabling us to talk about Him at the university too and to see new souls in need of God's intervention! During our meetings we have had the chance of seeing a non-believing young couple and an evangelical international young woman with a friend of hers... In the last meeting of the month, the Lord revealed Himself powerfully during the prayer! We believe this is only the start of the wonders the Lord has in preparation! Let us keep praying and God will certainly show His glory!

// GBU Bari

My name is Michele, I was born in Manfredonia and am in my second year in the Faculty of Information Technology at the University of Bari.

In 2014 I attended the GBU National Convention in Montesilvano because I had been invited by believers. [...] the Lord showed me the amazing work of the GBU (which I did not even know existed), and He put it on my heart to join a GBU group [...]

In October I was able to attend the Training for GBU Coordinators in Rome and now I am the new coordinator of GBU Bari.

At the moment there are only two of us, but [...] we were encouraged at the last meeting when reading the first chapter of John where it talks about John the Baptist and says that there was just one of him and yet he preached the Gospel without worrying about it.

But the Lord is great and on the same day news arrived of a new young woman believer who will be coming to study at Bari next month... We have also heard about another two young people who are studying here, and we will be able to meet them and show them the work of the GBU in the weeks to come, God willing.

Praise:

- For answered prayers in terms of the number of members
- For the Lord's guidance in showing us the friends we will be able to invite along to the next meetings

Prayer:

- That other believers will turn up with a desire to bring Christ from one student to another with the GBU.
- That we will manage to organise some special events
- That we can invite people to go to Christ as Andrew and Philip did (the

first disciples in the Gospel of John)

// GBU Foggia

Praise:

- Though it was late coming, we got a classroom until the end of February.
- For a new Erasmus girl student who would like to get involved with us.

Prayer:

- For our university studies which will begin on Thursday.
- For the film forum we will be organising this month.

// GBU Potenza

GBU Potenza is starting up again this year with a rich combination of experiences and projects: writing and putting on a Christian musical, a course in advanced photography for all students, a little newspaper comprising testimonies and a Christianity Explored course.

Thanks to GBU Naples we spent a lovely weekend sharing together and growing spiritually which recharged us to face a new GBU year.

Praise:

- For the new fresher believers we have this year
- That we are recognised by the University as an association
- For all the projects we manage to carry out

Prayer:

- For all those who show an interest in coming along to the GBU that they could be more involved
- For the projects we carry out that they could be a great testimony to this university
- For each GBU member and their individual lives in Christ at this university

// GBU Bologna

Praise:

- The Bible studies are very well attended even by some non-believers
- We found a study room very easily (a rare occurrence) where we can hold the training meetings in the university grounds.
- On Saturday 31 October we spent a day away from Bologna with a dozen or so students. We sang, prayed, studied and also went for a little walk.
- For the first time two local churches hosted Chris (GBU staff) with a few

students to do a presentation of the GBU.

Prayer

- That God would guide every study and every conversation we have with the non-believers who attend our meetings so that they would get to know Him, and that lots of other students from this university would approach us, especially those among our friends and acquaintances.
- That by the end of the year we would have weekly Bible studies running simultaneously in multiple locations in various different parts of the university.
- That the group will get used to carrying out surveys and evangelising in the university regardless of whether special events are happening, in order to maintain a constant witness among the students with the presence of the group.
- That God will move the hearts of other students to be actively involved in serving.

// GBU Siena

Praise:

- Prayer support and practical help from two local churches.
- Presence of the staff who support and encourage the GBU coordinators and students.
- A large group, full of talent.

Prayer:

- That the wealth of potential in the group can transform itself into an effective work of evangelisation at the University of Siena.
- That new group members would fit in easily and that a group would be formed which is all the more compact and tightknit.
- That we would be able to involve ourselves in the evangelisation work, prioritising prayer without which we find it hard to see the fruit of our efforts.

// GBU Staff



The end of the academic year 2014-2015 also marked the end of **Federica Grammiccia's** involvement on the GBU staff. She was officially working for us on the Rome staff since 2010, but her involve-

ment in this city started many years previously!

We will miss Federica not just because of her involvement in Rome, where together with Sarah, she facilitated and worked to create a GBU group in each of the three main universities, but also because of her involvement at a national level.

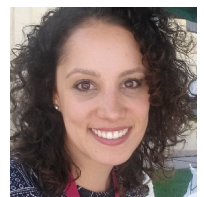
Today the situation with GBU Rome and the whole country is very different from how it was in 2010, thanks to her contribution and efforts.

I think that she and her husband Marco will find a way of carrying on staying around the GBU because I know that for them it was not "just" a job but a shared goal to share Jesus with the students!

Let us pray for Federica and Marco. Their life is going through a transition and they need the care and protection that only the Lord can give!

Thank you Federica!

Carol Rocha has served with the GBU as a coordinator for several years and now since September has been undergoing staff training in Bologna!



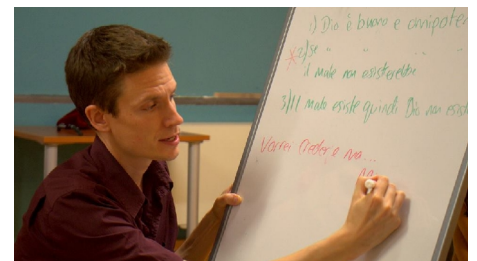
Fjorilda Kreku, former coordinator at GBU La Sapienza in Rome, is now serving the Lord for a year with the IFES Interaction Program in Latvia.

I am **Paul Chatfield**, a new staff member at GBU Turin.

I am an English missionary and elder in a church in the north of Turin, but I travel around preaching and teaching in various churches on the subject of persuasive evangelism.

I came to Christ while I was studying maths at university sixteen years ago. Blaise Pascal left me with the thought that, "you cannot live with God and you cannot live without God", which shook me. That was precisely where I was. I could not manage to live without God, but at the same time I knew I could not manage to live with Him. I was not doing good to others in order to look good, I was not capable of living by God's standards.

But of course there is someone who was capable of this, someone who was good enough and who managed to live this life and who gave His reward to me. From then on my life belonged to God and He gave me passion to share His message, a passion that still continues today.



News & Events

GBU NATIONAL CONVENTION (4-7 December 2015)

The Gospel of Jesus Christ

Speaker: Donald A. Carson

Venue: Montesilvano (Pescara)

The National Convention is open to everyone: students, families and churches

For information and to sign up, go to www.dirs.gbu.it

GBU NATIONAL STUDENT CONVENTION (22-25 April 2016)

Together!

Speaker: Stefano Molino (GBU graduate and associate)

Venue: Poggio Ubertini (Firenze)

The NSC is open to all university students and to former GBU graduates who would like to come participate as helpers.

Bookings will begin soon!!

Follow us on www.gbu.it

Would you like to invest in the future of Italy?

Professionals, politicians, teachers, professors and tomorrow's doctors are all at university. Do we want them to know Jesus Christ as their Saviour? Do we want their lives to be characterised by the will of God?

As a student you had the chance to witness, now you have the opportunity to support today's students in their witness. Your support will be used to pay the expenses of staff members and our office, to organise national training events and group meetings, and to support and help Italian staff to emerge who can continue the work of GBU.

What can I do?

Send us a gift made payable to Associazione Gruppo Biblici Universitari.

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As the beneficiary, you can write "Gift" and it will be used where most needed, or you can indicate "Gift for staff" or "Gift for the office"... or, you can become a regular supporter of GBU! A gift of €10, €20, €50 or €100 a month gives us the opportunity to plan our work more easily.

There are no strings attached, if you would like to know more about this, send us an email headed "gift-info" to ufficio@gbu.it. Thank you!

For more information go to www.gbu.it/sostienici/

We encourage students to be enterprising and autonomous. This is the context within which the GBU Association is structured, aiming to form new groups and support existing groups.

The GBU Association is assisted by people all over the national territory of Italy who collaborate with us and whom you can contact for information.

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The GBU Newsletter is a publication of the Gruppi Biblici Universitari with the intent of supporting the local student groups and update all those who wish to support the witness of the Gospel in the Italian University.

News and information requests about the GBU Newsletter can be sent to the address: ufficio@gbu.it

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