



# IRTC

INTERNATIONAL REFORMED THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE

## Theological Support for Dedicated Pastor's Wives

*She opens her mouth with wisdom, and the teaching of kindness is on her tongue. She looks well to the ways of her household and does not eat the bread of idleness.*

– Proverbs 31.26-27

*Practically since its inception in 2000, the IRTC has been providing scholarships for the spouses of our students. With this initiative, we aim to enhance the ministerial efforts of these families. We invited missionary Márcia Gomes, who recently obtained her Bachelor's degree in Biblical Studies from the IRTC, to share her experience and the benefits of her education.*



Since my conversion at the age of nine, I had the desire to serve the Lord. Although I didn't know exactly how, where, or in what way, I completely surrendered to my Savior and was willing to obey His calls. However, throughout my adolescence, this passion diminished, and my thoughts scattered in various directions. It was only in 1995, during a missionary conference at my church, that the calling resurfaced, and I began my studies at the Central Brazil Presbyterian Seminary the following year. In 1998, after getting married, I paused my education to dedicate myself exclusively to my family. Almost 15 years passed, including two children, moving cities and churches in rural and urban areas, making it difficult to resume formal studies. In 2011, I chose a course that allowed me to stay close to my children, and while they were in class, I studied Agribusiness, the only alternative available at that time. Later, I completed a degree in Education, necessary for the position I took at the school where my children studied.

Being a wife, mother, and full-time teacher means not having time to waste. In 2020, I became a student at the IRTC. Having heard about its confessional identity and qualified faculty, I didn't hesitate to enroll to complete the theology course I had interrupted long ago, which would be of great use in family ministry. I missed learning and applying Christian ideas and conclusions in my life formally, being assessed by teachers and tested by competent people. Although I had studied at other online institutions and was grateful to them, I remained at the IRTC due to their genuine dedication to propagating the



*Márcia, Ruth and Rev. Dr. Daniel Gomes*

Reformed faith, without a high cost to the student. This vision of advancing with confidence in divine providence to fulfill the Great Commission is inspiring.

Obviously, the task of shepherding the church and proclaiming the Word belongs to my husband, a pastor since our youth. However, theological preparation is crucial to face challenges with firmness and confidence as a pastor's wife in ministry, especially in cross-cultural fields. Serving in counseling and in everyday conversations allows us to reaffirm what is taught from the pulpit. Theology also enriches family conversations, providing deep dialogues about the Christian faith and joint growth in our spiritual journey.

The fully online nature and affordable cost of the course, including full scholarships for pastors' wives (and teachers), were perfect for me, as they allow me to balance studies with other responsibilities and organize my schedule



according to the scarcity of time. I learned to organize myself and create reminders not to miss deadlines.

Still, persevering in studies with so many other activities was not easy. In difficult moments, I relied on the support of my husband, Dr. Daniel Charles Gomes, also a professor and tutor, who guided and encouraged me. I also thank Student Affairs VP David Portela, who always encouraged and assisted me in various matters.

Thus, in 2022, I completed the theological studies I began in 1996. During this time, I took other courses, but only the IRTC allowed me to complete what I started at 19 years old. In addition to the Old Testament courses, which were impactful and challenging, the Marriage and Family course, taught by Professor Fernando de Almeida, was so relevant that we encouraged all the couples in our church to enroll as visiting students. The Contemporary Theology classes, taught by Rev. Allen Porto, significantly contributed to my career as a history teacher, providing practical examples I could use with

my students. Rev. Frans Leonard Schalkwijk inspired me with his example of spirituality and simplicity.

To my fellow students who, like me, have the privilege of participating in this Reformed institution committed to the quality of teaching and based on infallible and immutable biblical principles, I recommend dedication, diligence, and effort to make the most of what each professor has to offer. Actively participate in forums and interact with colleagues, as this greatly enriches learning.

I am immensely grateful to everyone who donates time, money, and efforts for the growth of the IRTC, not only in quantity but also in the quality of teaching. Our college reaches people like me, who love the Lord, want to learn to serve better, but are far from Brazil and immersed in their daily routines. Without the IRTC, I would not have the opportunity to continue my studies and pursue a Master's in Divinity.

*Márcia Maria Lélis de Freitas Gomes, B.B.S.*

*Christ is Life Presbyterian Church in Tahara, Japan*



\$208,890  
2023 Budget

**32%**

\$68,747  
Raised



## Your support reaches around the world

In Canada (online or by cheque):  
<https://irtcsociety.ca/donate>

International Reformed  
Theological College Society  
PO Box 838 Stn A  
Abbotsford, BC V2T 7A2 Canada

US & International (online or by check):  
<https://irtc.online/donations>

International Reformed  
Theological College  
210 Pace Dr.  
Bristol, VA 24201 USA



E-mail: [contact@irtc.online](mailto:contact@irtc.online)