

HELP FOR REFUGEES, INC.

A tax-exempt, non-profit corporation

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We help orphans and elderly Christians (many in their 80s, even 90s) who had been imprisoned for their faith in present or former communist countries



Late Reverend Richard Wurmbrand with wife, Sabine

Late Reverend Richard Wurmbrand spent 14 years in Romanian communist prisons. Mrs. Wurmbrand was imprisoned for nearly three years, also for her Christian faith, in some of the same communist prisons.

October 2021

Announcement:

A free copy of the paperback book, "**Reaching Towards the Heights,**" A Book of Daily Meditations on the Word of God by Richard Wurmbrand, may be requested using the order form on the internet, at the <https://helpforrefugees.com> site. (See third column!)

"My Father ...is greater than all." (John 10:29)

From an unpublished Bible meditation by late Reverend Richard Wurmbrand

THE MIGHT OF LOVE!

Christ teaches that God is almighty and irresistible, but reality seems to contradict this teaching. God's Son was executed like a common criminal; then He suffered again in every Christian martyr throughout the centuries. Christians themselves "crucify Him and put Him to open shame" by their sins. (Hebrews 6:6) There is so much suffering in the world. People imagining God as resembling some human, think that if God were good and almighty, He would end it. I received a letter from a French girl; "am 15 and have greatly appreciated your book IN GOD'S UNDERGROUND. A few years ago, I believed firmly in God, but now I have doubts. If God really exists, why does He not stop wars and famines, the cold and the many sicknesses? Why would such an almighty God put us through physical and moral sufferings?"

I quote from a letter of an East German pastor: "I am ninety. I opposed Hitler and was imprisoned. I suffered also at the hands of the Communists. I am tempted daily to commit suicide. Thinking about the tens of millions of innocents killed by the Nazis and by the Reds, I cannot believe any more that an almighty God leads things well. The Iron Curtain and the Berlin Wall have brought me to despair. God seems to be powerless. Atheist rulers can chase Him from their countries.

In many dictatorships, children were taken away from believing parents. Will the souls of such children ever recover from what they have suffered? Why did Almighty God ordain or even

allow so much innocent suffering? Is He almighty? Is He not rather powerless? The sufferings which every one of us has to endure even in countries where there is no political dictatorship prompts us to put the same question.

Does God not have the necessary power to defeat the false teachers in His own church? A poll taken recently in France showed that 26% of the pastors do not believe in the bodily resurrection of Christ; among the young clergy the percentage of unbelievers is even greater. Thirty-one percent of the clergy say that the Devil and Hell are myths which cannot be accepted by contemporary men. If the clergy does not believe the teaching of the church, it is no wonder that in the last decade the number of worshipers in FRANCE has decreased by 25%. The unbelief among the clergy is at least the same in the USA and in other countries of the Free World.

We do not have the right notion of might. "Might" to us means the power to crush, to subdue, to suppress, to punish. There exists another might: it is "the might to love," to be patient and quiet, to suffer innocently and to be good to the wrongdoer. When we think about energy, we think about it as kinetic, a quality which makes all things move. There exists the huge reservoir of potential energy, of energy at rest. There exist the power of quietness, of serenity. A Communist officer told a Christian while beating him: "I am almighty, as you suppose your God to be. I can kill you." The Christian answered: "The power is all on my side. I can love you, while you torture me to death." Such is God's almightiness—it is reflected in the deep tranquility of the souls of saints. They do not ask the troublesome question "Why all the sorrow?" because they learned to love the Cross and to be rejected without comfort. Once you take this attitude, the perplexity ceases. What child is troubled when he receives a much-desired gift? The peak of holiness is never to ask anything for yourself and never to refuse a cross with which God honors you, and then to accept life meekly as it comes, without questions. We are not ready to understand the answers yet. Some day we will know as also we are known by God. (1 Corinthians 13:12) The saint is not a man who has much light from God. He is a nothing, through whom shines God's power to endure, to hope and to love even the worst of men. Who knows if the murderer of today will not be a future apostle, if today's loose woman will not be a Magdalene? And cannot God compensate in eternity the wrong suffered here for a little while?

We bless the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost. We say to the Lord, "Blessed is the womb that bare thee," (Luke 11:27) and advance on the path of faith, without tormenting ourselves with many "Whys" about suffering, which we welcome, because in them we can glorify Christ joyfully.

Suffering drives some to despair, to suicide. It torments many souls. There are others, grateful for it. I have seen faithful Christian prisoners dancing for joy. They have recognized God as almighty and in patience they show love toward the evil men who torture them. They know this love of God is irresistible. It will conquer.



The Communist Jilava Prison.
Entrance to the underground cells.



Prison cell with bunk-beds with no mattress, prisoners were obliged to sleep on. Stove for show only, never heated in cold winters.



Mug-shot of Late Reverend Richard Wurmbrand when held in the Jilava prison, in communist Romania.

“Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father are this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world.” (Apostle James Epistle 1:27)

Heroes of the Faith and their Families, Helped with your Gifts!
Some pictures of elderly Christians Imprisoned under Communism for the Faith
Read their full testimonies in our past newsletters at <http://helpforrefugees.com> (third column!)



**Razumovskii
 Alexander
 Now a Baptist Minister**

He was arrested in the former Soviet Union at the age of 24, while in charge of a printing press for the underground Christian publishing endeavor Krestianin (the Christian.) His father Evghenii, was also imprisoned for 4 years. **Read his testimony in the 11/2018 Newsletter.**



**Baptist
 Julia Andreevna
 Romanov (Now 85)**
 Was sentenced to 3 years imprisonment in the former Soviet Union for gathering and carrying secret help to families of imprisoned Christians. A communist prison-leadership officer claimed publicly having been blessed through sister Romanov’s Christian faith. **Read her testimony in the 11 & 12/2018 Newsletters.**



**Minister
 Filip CRACIUN**
 Was imprisoned a total of 9 years at first in the former Soviet Union and then also in communist Romania for holding underground Bible studies. He was kept a week in water to his knees and then a year in pitch darkness. (Now deceased.) **Read his testimony in the 12/2018 Newsletter.**



**Reverend
 Matei Boila
 (deceased)**
 Was sentenced to 10 years hard labor in former communist Romania for underground Christian activities. **The mission continues helping his surviving spouse, Maria. Read his full testimony in the 1/2019 Newsletter.**

**Heroes of the Faith!
 Persecuted Christians Helped with your Gifts**



Iakimenko Maria, when 32

“Peace! My name is Iakimenko Maria Afanasii and I was born in 1934. I was sentenced by the Soviet authorities to 3 years imprisonment for my faith in God and for the work I did in the “underground” church. I was investigated for 6 months at the well-known Moscow prison called Butyrka. And I spent 2.5 years in different prisons, having different jobs. Survival conditions in prison were extreme, especially for women. But faith and hope in God strengthened us to remain faithful to Him. The authorities constantly dispersed the services. The members of the church found out about the place of the meeting at the last moment, so that the KGB (Soviet secret police, N.T.) could not find out the place of service.
 (Continued on next page!)



Iakimenko Maria, now 87

In the 60s and 70s of the last century, in the Soviet legal system, there was a law that allowed people convicted under certain articles of the Criminal Code and having a positive behavior, to be released from prison halfway through the sentence. I was still presented to a special commission that had to decide whether I could be released or not. On the day of the meeting of this commission, I was asked one question: "Do you still believe in God or have you changed your mind?" I replied that I remained faithful to God, and they replied: "in that case you could not be released from prison." There were some hard times to endure morally. On the other hand, the words of the Lord Jesus resounded in my mind: "Blessed are you when you are mocked because of My name ...". In 1969 I was released and continued my work with children in the church. Now, in my old age, I feel happy because I have the Lord Jesus as my Savior. God bless you too!"

Persecuted Christians Helped with your Gifts



Olga Gontar and husband

I, Olga Germaniuk (married Gontar), was born in 1965 as the fourth child, in a large family. My father Stepan Germaniuk was a pastor of a Baptist church. The parents loved the Lord and the Church very much. We children saw this and learned from them. Dad was arrested for the first time when I was 7 years old. We loved mom and dad very much and knew that they loved us. But God was dearer to them than family life. The first term - 4½ years in the Soviet prison-camps, my father served in Ukraine. This imprisonment was followed by a 3 years banishment in the Far East, on the shores of the Sea of Okhotsk. Mom took us children with her joining our dad in exile in order to be able for a little bit brighten up his life of suffering. I was 13 years old when I came to join my dad in the faraway frozen Siberia.

Dad was arrested a second time in 1983 for his widespread underground Christian activities. Then I was already 18. We children took the suffering of our father for granted, because the Lord suffered, and we understood that we had to follow the same path. I got married when my dad was in prison, he could not even lay his hands on our heads and pray.

In 1985, our mother was arrested as well. Dad at this time was serving his second term of imprisonment. For us children, it was a severe blow. We prayed a lot for my mother, knowing her to be in very poor health. The sentencing trial of mom was very harsh and we heard a lot of lies and slander about mom, dad, the church. She was sentenced to 3 years imprisonment. Due to her illness and the fact that she was forced to work in two shifts (contrary to the law), she lost 40 kilograms of weight. There was no strength at all. All our requests to remove her from work, since she was at retirement age, were answered with a rude refusal. When we arrived on a date with mommy, we did not recognize her - she was so exhausted.

She served 2 years in prison and was allowed to go home to die. After her release, it was already impossible to help her. The cancer was eating away at her body, she could no longer walk, eat and sleep due to intense pains. But, as soon as the pains subsided even a little, she did not stop praising the Lord and talking about His love. We are very grateful to God for the faith, love and patience of our parents. We want to imitate them. Now I have seven children. Two sons and two daughters have their own families and live nearby. One of my sons is on a wheelchair.

(Continued on next page!)

Also, my husband has been in a disabled group for many years. We kept a cow for many years to feed our family. We have 18 grandchildren in total, we are waiting for more. My husband and I are not discouraged, we try to serve God as best we can.

There is very little free time, especially in summer, because I work in production and maintain also a large vegetable garden to feed my family and help those in need. God bless your work and ministry in His name! With prayer and love – from my whole family. We are very encouraged by the stories of people who suffered for the faith! And especially the story of your parents, dear brother Michael! God bless you!”

(Donors are encouraged to peruse the mission newsletters published March through June 2021 and read the moving testimony of Stepan Germaniuk who suffered for the faith 7½ years imprisonment and three years banishment in the far-out frozen Siberia. The mission continued help him and his children who joined the parents in their incredible suffering. See <https://helpforrefugees.com>, third column.)

Persecuted Christians Helped with your Gifts Two years Imprisonment for Publishing Christian Bulletins



Andrusenko (now Fomina) Lyudmila
and husband

“I was involved during the year 1986, in underground Christian work in the former Soviet Union, on behalf of the Council of Prisoners. We collected and systematized materials about the persecutions in our brotherhood, about the trials and accusations of Christians, about the situation of prisoners and their families, about repressions against our fellow believers who were being beaten and tortured in places of imprisonment. We also published about the existence of secret KGB surveillance. We prepared the layout of the "Bulletins" containing information and pictures of those arrested and sentenced to many years of prison for the faith. On April 29, 1986 our doorbell rang. The KGB police officers started a thorough house-search. The Soviet secret police probed the walls with a metal detector. They took 2 typewriters, printing paper, all documents, unfinished "Bulletins" of the Council of Prisoners' Relatives, issues #132 and #133. Only two of us workers were present in the home at that time - Olya Kryuchkova and myself - Lyuda Andrusenko. We were taken to the police station, interrogated and placed in the police-bulpen for 3 days. All these days I was in fasting, praying. Then we were assigned to a

special detention center for a month. Our investigator summoned us often for interrogation. We were charged under Art. 142 h. 2 and 190 of the Criminal Code of the Soviet Union. I need write just about one of the episodes during such interrogations. The warden-officer stopped me and looking into my eyes, asked: 'Do you know what Nikolai Ostrovsky wrote about life in the Caucasus and you are one of the good-looking (girls.)' (N.Ed. N. Ostrovsky was a well-known communist writer, describing in his "How the Steel Was Tempered" how communist authorities forged in a violent manner - rape included - uncivilized men into ideal men.) A few days later in the evening we heard the clanging of doors in other cells along the hallway, some kind of noise. The door to our cell opened, young men rushed in and grabbed some of the women and took them away. One male inmate rushed to me with a knife. I didn't have time to pray, only the thought flashed through, "Lord, do not allow evil." And jumped on the trestle bed. I saw horror in his eyes, he lowered his hand over his shoulder and looked towards the door, And I endlessly thanked God for He commanded the angels to guard me. Backing away, he went out. The next evening, the noise in the corridors was repeated. The women-prisoners shouted: "Lyuda, pray for us too!" I told them: "let's pray together." We are all on our knees near the door - "Lord, have mercy! Lord, help! Lord! Lord!" God showed us a miracle: no matter how much they pulled the door, they could not open it. We the women-inmates had a good conversation until late in the night. If not for the Lord, what would have happened to us! I recited verses from the Bible, poems of Christian poets. Since I knew to sing Christian songs, the fellow inmates sang along a bit. A month passed and we were transferred

to a pre-trial detention center. There, we lived also through hard experiences. We were summoned for interrogation. If it weren't for the Lord, how would have everyone endured? On September 22, our trial took place. We were judged in the Soviet Supreme Tribunal. Many young people came from Moldova. My sister somehow got into the courtroom before the trial began. Our trial took place in the club-house of a factory. We were brought up in a prison-wagon and we heard from afar some Christian singing about heaven! One of our sisters named Vera was accompanying on the piano. The prosecutor asked we should be sentenced to 3 years imprisonment. The court sentenced us to two years only and in February we were taken to the village of Dvubratsky - a village in the Ust-Labinsk district of the Krasnodar Territory of Russia. And there we were often summoned by KGB interrogators. After the Gorbachev instituted reform – the Perestroika, a large amnesty was announced over the loudspeaker. In the interrogation unit we were persuaded to write a statement asking for a pardon. I kept repeating: "I do not admit my guilt and will not write anything." If it were not for the Lord, only He gave us strength to resist. Over the course of my term, I convinced myself that if God sends difficulties, then he will give strength to resist. I said to myself: 'hold on to Christ! Hold on as long as you can! You are strong, God does send us His strength. The intensified prayer of relatives and friends can do a lot.' I received a lot of letters, gave them to read in the brigade. Vera, my younger sister, copied chapters from the Gospel. But time passed, and on October 1 the gates were thrown open for me too. Under the amnesty, I was released without an application for pardon. Outside the gate, my dear mother and friends met me. With great gratitude to the Lord and joy, I left this inhospitable place. Now years have passed, I often remember my relatives who have been in bonds and died in prison-camps. Daddy's father was shot in the 30s as a Christian, a preacher, daddy lost his father at an early age. When he was brought into the army, our dad refused to take weapons and he was threatened with execution. He suffered imprisonment in the Far North, in Norilsk. Dad served 5.5 years and was allowed to go home. My mother's father was arrested in the 1930s and also shot. Mom was very young. In the 1940s, two of my mother's brothers were arrested and each sentenced to 10 years of hard labor, and the husband of the older sister was also sentenced to 10 years. Later, in 1965, our mother was arrested for 3 years because she worked with children's groups. We were then four children. Now our dad and mom are with the Lord."

Our mission has sent help to as many of these faithful Christians we could locate and contact personally!

409	Власенко	Валентин	Мефодьевич	1958	Украина
410	Вольф	Андрей	Корнеевич	1958	Казахстан
411	Кудрин	АЛЕКСЕЙ	ЯКОВЛЕВИЧ	1958	Россия
412	Левин	НИКОЛАЙ	ВИКТОРОВИЧ	1958	Казахстан
413	Романюк	Владимир	Николаевич	1958	Украина
414	Тистен	Давид	Давидович	1958	Россия
415	ТУРКЕВИЧ	Василий	Тарасович	1959	Украина
416	Бычков	Степан	Павлович	1959	Украина
417	ДРИСВЯНИКОВ	АЛЕКСАНДР	АЛЕКСАНДРОВИЧ	1959	Россия
418	СКОРЦОВА	ЛЮБОВЬ	НИКОЛАЙВНА	1959	Россия
419	Варовин	Виталий	Федотович	1959	Россия
420	Дубицкий	СЕРГЕЙ	АДАМОВИЧ	1959	Россия
421	Лашенко	Борис	Владимирович	1959	Украина
422	Талченко	ИВАН	ИВАНОВИЧ	1959	Казахстан
423	МАРЧЕНКО	Станислав	Павлович	1960	Украина
424	Доиченко	Александр	Максимович	1960	Украина
425	Отмазов	Венедикт	Александрович (Валерианов)	1960	Узбекистан
426	Савинко	Михаил	Михайлович	1960	Эстония
427	Фудеева (ШВЕЦОВА)	ДИНА	ВЛАДИМИРОВНА	1961	Австрия
428	ШВЕЦОВА	АННА	ВЛАДИМИРОВНА	1962	Австрия
429	Богородице	Александр	Валерьевич	1962	Эстония
430	Миников	Павел	Дмитриевич	1962	Эстония

Above, a **sample only** of a long list, our mission was able to compile beside other lists, of over 480 elderly Baptist Christians most of them still alive, who suffered for the Christian faith in the former Soviet Union. The prison sentences amounted from 2 years, to as many as 18 years of communist prison. If considered together, their years of prison-sentences shown in our **abbreviated** table, would most likely add up to over 2,000 years of prison. The 4th and 5th column together, show year of birth and the most recent country they live in (like Ukraine, Russia, Kazakhstan, Belarus, etc.) We try obtain exact addresses, so we may be able to send encouraging help to those still alive. We were able to send repeated help to about 120 such elderly Russian-speaking Christians and over 110 of other languages. Many of their testimonies you can read in the monthly newsletter. Testimonies available also on the internet. **Look up third column at: website: <https://helpforrefugees.com>**

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