

HELP FOR REFUGEES, INC.

A tax-exempt, non-profit corporation

Michael Wurmbbrand, President

Tel. (310) 544-0814, Fax: (310) 377-0511.

PO Box 5161, Torrance, Ca. 90510, USA.

Email: hfr@helpforrefugees.com; Website: <http://helpforrefugees.com>

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



March 2021

"When the ruler of the feast had tasted the water that was made wine, and knew not whence it was: (but the servants which drew the water knew;) the governor of the feast called the bridegroom,

And saith unto him, Every man at the beginning doth set forth good wine; and when men have well drunk, then that which is worse: but thou hast kept the good wine until now." (John 2:9-10)

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

From an unpublished Bible meditation by late Reverend Richard Wurmbbrand

BEST THINGS ARE YET TO COME!

The devil gives sometimes good things first, beautiful promises, selfish pleasures. After having drunk much of these, follows a worse wine: a wrecked life, remorse, spiritual blindness, and in the end, the worst, eternal damnation. Love knows that the best things are yet to come. It has already now the joy of obeying God's commands, the fellowship with Christ, with His holy angels and the great communion of saints. This joy is for the present mingled with the bitterness of the cross. Now it is a glory in tribulations, distress, persecution and nakedness. But amidst tears and shedding of blood, the bride of Christ never ceases to hope. She knows her bridegroom has stored up in His banqueting house the best of wines for the age to come. She is not in a hurry as those who believe that they have only this short life. Love does not haste to obtain results. She can bear with transitory failures, sufferings and defeats. The last victory is hers.

Far from being daunted by the drama of the situation of the underground church in Communist countries, but positively inspired by it, our fight goes ahead. Our adversaries don't know the unspeakable joys reserved by Christ to those who are on His side when He is in prisons and

chains. We love and believe that love will win. Therefore the headlines of "Telegraph," Brisbane (Australia), put over an interview with me, "Love - way to beat the Reds."

I was asked by an interviewer on the TV, "Is there a Communist threat for the church in Australia?" He received the answer, "not the church of Christ, is endangered by Communism. Even the gates of hell cannot prevail against her. It is Communism which is rather endangered by the existence of the church, because the last victory is ours. We have won for Christ the daughter of Stalin, the greatest mass-murderer of Christians, Mrs. Kosygin, the wife of the president of the Soviet Union, Pasternak, Solzhenitsyn, Sinyavsky Andrei, and other first-rank Soviet writers, formerly members of the Communist Party. We don't tremble before Communism. They should be in panic because of us. The best of 'wines' is stored up for the children of God."

It is easy to write "millions." Just try to visualize all the suffering, all the grief, all the tears, all the cries, and all the blood included in this simple word. And the blood-thirstiness of Communism is not satisfied yet. At one of the yearly first of May parade, Brezhnev expressed again his "decision to go on the way of Lenin towards the victory of Communism in the whole world." Mass slaughtering of innocent men in the whole world is the aim of these criminals, as well as poisoning of souls with hatred toward God.

We have not the slightest illusion about the wickedness of Communism, which kills bodies and distorts souls. But we have the proofs that quiet and patient love is victorious over atheist hatred. The Communists had bullets and Christians gave their necks. The Communists had whips and the Christians gave their backs. A traveler wearing a funny overcoat walked along a road. The sun and the wind made a bet who will succeed to make him take off his coat. The wind tried first. It blew as fiercely as it could. It was an icy wind. The more it blew, the more the wanderer wrapped himself in his coat. Then the sun began to shine first mildly, then warmer and warmer. The traveler took off the overcoat, folded it and put it on his arm. Warm love succeeds where anti-Communist attacks do not. Show love to the Communists in USA and abroad. Tell them the Gospel here. Help that the Gospel may reach them in distant lands.

Be careful in the election of church leaders in the free world! Ask yourselves what is their attitude towards Communism and how they would behave in the case of a Communist takeover. Denounced, betrayed by its own church leaders or lead astray by them, persecuted by the Communists, the Underground Church goes ahead. She knows. The Bridegroom has kept for the end, the best of 'wines.' All tears will we wiped away. She will be forever with the Lord. So will be the children of God of the Free World, who are on her side.



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 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!)



Savelieva Valentina Ivanovna

She was engaged in the printing of underground Christian literature. She was sentenced to 5 years of communist prison, was held by Lake Baikal where in winter temperatures dropped sometimes to -47 degrees Fahrenheit. Read her full testimony in the 2/2018 Newsletter.



Galina Ivanovna Iudintseva

3 years of prison for working secretly in closed rooms for periods of 5-6 months to print the New Testament. The equipment used for printing contained lead and zinc. In the period of 5-6 months, they were able to print about 12,000 copies. Read her testimony in the 3/2018 Newsletter.



Dina Vladimirovna Fadeeva

Sentenced at age 22 to 3 years of prison in the Soviet Union for teaching Sunday school classes. She wrote: "The gates of hell will not be able overcome the church." Read her full testimony in the 3/2018 Newsletter.



Muhin Alexander

A Baptist minister who was sentenced twice to five-years imprisonment terms. In court his son threw flowers toward him and shouted; "the father's place will be taken by his sons!" Read his full testimony in the 3/2018 Newsletter.

Heroes of the Faith Persecuted Christians Helped with your Gifts



7½ Years of Jail and 3 Years Banishment in Siberia Stepan Germaniuk

A Baptist Minister who Suffered for the faith

Writing about his Christian spiritual mentor:

“At one of the meetings, shortly before my first arrest, Nikolai Petrovich Khrapov spoke with an ardent sermon. He read the text from the Epistle to Timothy: "May the man of God be perfect, prepared for every good work." Released from long-term imprisonment (suffered 25 years in Soviet prisons and was imprisoned again after a short stint of freedom, N. Ed.) this minister remained alert, full of strength and determination to faithfully serve God, proclaiming His commandments to everyone, small and large.

My first wife Asya, came to join me voluntarily during my three years of Siberian exile.

After that memorable meeting, I also did not see Nikolai Petrovich again. Ten years later, the Lord took him from the prison bunks to a better world, where he rests with all the saints, waiting for us too. I was lucky to attend the funeral of Nikolai Petrovich in Tashkent. This was a

minister blessed by God. His book 'The Happiness of a Lost Life' has not lost its relevance to this day, encouraging young people to a sacrificial and holy life for the glory of God, shown for His Name in serving the saints as you still do.



Stepan Germaniuk when arrested for the first time

My First Arrest

We were in the Lysychansk (in Ukraine, formerly part of the Soviet Union) police basement for nine days. In the end, most likely on the instructions of the KGB (Soviet Secret Police N. Ed.) they decided to mock me. They threw some perverted person into our cell. He endlessly told all sorts of absurdities, shuddered from some kind of fear: it seemed to him that a train was coming at him, and he began to shout in horror, then the police attacked him, and he began to defend himself. There were eight of us in the cell, he was brought in as the ninth. He was a tough, tall guy. By evening, everyone was called from the cell, except for me and this abnormal individual. As soon as everyone was taken out of the cell, he stripped naked and began to engage in trying to physically abuse me! When he walked towards me

and I understood for what purpose, I immediately exclaimed: "In the name of Jesus Christ I command you to leave me!" The Lord truly hears the cry of the saints! The wicked man immediately went limp, exhausted, and withdrew to the corner where we had a latrine. However, after a while he returned again. Yet the Lord did not allow him to harm me. It was a frightful experience. I prayed and did not take my eyes off this ugly person, watching that he did nothing vile to me. From outside the cell the guards closely watched us. When all attempts to harm me were unsuccessful, the door opened and my perverted cellmate, completely naked, was taken out of the cell. Instead, another prisoner was immediately brought-in, in a hat, in chrome boots, with a cloak thrown over his arm. As soon as he crossed the threshold, he began to scold the Soviet government and soon came close to me: - 'Why are you silent?' - 'I am a Christian, I know the Holy Scripture, which does not allow me to curse the authorities' - I answered. - 'All power is from God, so we respect it.' Until three in the morning, he still could not calm down, tried to challenge me to criticize the existing government. I would not wish anyone to be alone with such an evil spirit of such strength. Only the Lord could protect me and deliver me, which He did according to His mercy.

After this KGB experiment against myself, Yaroslav, my brother who had been arrested at the same time, and I, were taken to the Luhansk pre-trial detention center. There I learned what a prison is. At first, we were placed in a common cell. Yaroslav and I prayed and began to answer the innumerable questions of the prisoners: what they had been imprisoned for, in what God do we believe, what is heaven and hell, what kind of family we have. A few days later, we were transferred from the common cell to the basement, to the so-called cells for repeat offenders. They housed mainly three people. There the inmates asked us the same questions. Yaroslav and I did not stop talking about our Lord and faith in Him. In prison, I decided to fast not only on Fridays, together with the church, but also on Wednesdays - to pray to the Lord for the salvation of my children. Yaroslav supported me, and we fasted and prayed together. I adhered to this decision in all subsequent years both in the camp and in exile. It was much easier for me to go to prison the

second time, because by that time all my children turned to God and knew the Lord as their Savior. For me it was a great joy, consolation and joy.

Our trial was demonstrative and took place in the building of the regional court, its largest hall. It was filled-in by atheistic lecturers, directors of schools and colleges. Many believers were also present. We were not allowed to defend ourselves. Still, I spoke, showed that I was falsely accused. I said, 'I will only do what is in accordance with the teachings of the Bible!' The judge, without investigating anything, announced a break. At this time, a militia detachment joined the militarized guard. After the break, none of the believers were allowed into the hall, except for our wives. We rejected our lawyers. The court confirmed that the defendants' refusal was legitimate, since "their education allows them to defend themselves well." When the lawyers left, I made another request: to let go 'the religious expert.' – 'Why?' - asked the judge. - 'Because he has no proper education.' Looking at me in bewilderment, the judge asked the expert what was his education? He replied cheerfully that he had graduated with a degree in atheism in 1924! The hall froze. 'Citizen judges,' I said breaking the court deep silence, 'could you not have graduated more competent specialists during the (long) years of Soviet power? This expert called the Bible Anti-Soviet literature! The Soviet Union has existed for some fifty or sixty years, and the Bible - recognized throughout the world as the Holy Book - has existed for almost twenty centuries! What kind of specialist is this? What kind of expert is he?' There was laughter in the hall. The prosecutor still ordered the expert to remain. The trial took place on Thursday and Friday during Holy Week, when God's people remembered the suffering and death of our Lord Jesus Christ. Yaroslav and I were fasting. On Friday, late afternoon, the sentence was read to us: Myself was sentenced to four and a half years in camps and three years in exile, Yaroslav - four years in camps and two years in exile. As soon as the judge announced the verdict, flowers from friends who were admitted to the reading of the verdict were thrown toward us behind bars. I wanted to take at least a few flowers with me, but the guard snatched them out of my hands. They grabbed me by the collar and led me through the back door into the prison vans. To prevent believers from seeing us being taken away and not seeing us off, one of the policemen locked the courthouse. Finding themselves behind a closed door, the brothers and sisters enthusiastically sang the hymn 'To live for Jesus, to die with Him - can you wish for a better life?'. It was wonderful!

Employees of the State Security Committee did everything possible so I will get a long prison term. They wanted to punish me to the fullest extent of the law, as an obstinate adversary who did not do what they demanded. It was very hard on Asya, my wife, just the thought that for seven and a half years she would have to raise five children alone. From time to time, in the prison-colony, were held lectures on atheistic topics. Prisoners were gathered in the courtyard and were told that there was no God. I went and sometimes invited other Pentecostal prisoners: 'you consider yourself spiritual, let's go, we will proclaim the truth.' I liked to ask lecturers questions that they didn't have an answer to. I wanted everyone to think that Lord Jesus appeared on earth not by accident, that there really is a God in heaven - alive, all-seeing and omniscient, He is the Creator of heaven and earth. The atheistic lecturers didn't want to give me usually the microphone. I tried not to miss opportunities and told the lecturer: 'You have splashed out on all this society a bucket of dirt, so let me say at least a few words for their soul, which languishes in sin, wanting happiness, wanting the good that only God can give!' 'Give Grigorievich an opportunity

to speak!’ shouted the prisoners.

‘Give him the microphone!’ I had time to say just a few sentences, and the speaker took away the microphone saying: ‘I’m going to get fired from my job!’ These were interesting moments in the gray, everyday life of the Soviet prisoners. One of the political prisoners accepted from us the teachings of Jesus Christ. He had been imprisoned for criticizing the government. He was a disabled hunchback who had read a lot. We talked a lot, and he took the path of faith. It was a great joy for us. When he repented for the first time, we thought that he had done it formally, only realizing intellectually that God was holly and he was a sinner. But after a while this man sincerely turned to God. One day he met me near the barracks and asked: ‘Stepan Grigoriewicz, open the door, I want to pray!’ When I let him into my room, he fell to his knees and began to lament with tears his sinfulness. It was well felt that his repentance was real, sincere. Unfortunately, I subsequently lost sight of him and I don't know if he resisted in the faith. The KGB-sts oppressed him a lot. He was persecuted now, both for being a political prisoner and also for being a Christian. For four and a half years, the KGB-sts were constantly looking for me to be compromised. Once called to the head of the colony, I quickly looked around: I.A. Romashko, the commandant, is sitting there. He is wearing the lieutenant colonel's uniform. I've never seen him in uniform. Next to him was a half-open bag, in which you could see sausage, condensed milk, cookies. ‘Sit down, Stepan, tell me how you live,’ Romashko began at ease. After some dialogue.... I answered, ‘you want to see if I ask you for mercy. You gave me a solid prison term, and now you came with a handbag, as a benefactor, - will Stepan reach out to you? It's not going to happen! Cover your bag, I won't take any crumbs from there. I'm happy with everything, I'd rather die in prison than compromise!’ “

(To be continued in the April 2021 newsletter! Adapted from a published autobiography in Russian sent to the mission by brother Stepan Germaniuk.)

409	Власенко	Валентин	Медведевич	1958	Украина
410	Вольф	Андрей	Корнеевич	1958	Казакстан
411	Курбан	АЛЕКСЕЙ	ЯКОВЛЕВИЧ	1958	Россия
412	Левен	НИКОЛАЙ	ВИКТОРОВИЧ	1958	Казакстан
413	Ромашко	Владимир	Николаевич	1958	Украина
414	Тиссен	Даянд	Давидович	1958	Россия
415	ТУРКЕВИЧ	Василий	Тарасович	1959	Украина
416	Барнов	Степан	Павлович	1959	Украина
417	ДРИСВЯННИКОВ	АЛЕКСАНДР	АЛЕКСАНДРОВИЧ	1959	Россия
418	СВЕРЦОВА	ЛЮБОВЬ	НИКОЛАЕВНА	1959	Россия
419	Варовин	Виталий	Федотович	1959	Россия
420	Дубицкий	СЕРГЕЙ	АДАМОВИЧ	1959	Россия
421	Лашенко	Борис	Владимирович	1959	Украина
422	Тяченко	ИВАН	ИВАНОВИЧ	1959	Казакстан
423	МАРЧЕНКО	Станислав	Павлович	1960	Украина
424	Донченко	Александр	Максимович	1960	Украина
425	Озмекко	Венедикт	Александрович (Валерианов)	1960	Узбекистан
426	Савченко	Михаил	Михайлович	1960	Эстония
427	Федеева (ШВЕЦОВА)	ДИНА	ВЛАДИМИРОВНА	1961	Алания
428	ШВЕЦОВА	Анна	ВЛАДИМИРОВНА	1962	Алания
429	Богодимова	Александр	Валериевич	1962	Эстония
430	Миньков	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>**

Help for Refugees, Inc.
PO Box 5161, Torrance, Ca. 90510, USA.

Email: hfr@helpforrefugees.com,
 Gifts are US tax-deductible. Help for Refugees is listed in Publication 78, Cumulative List of Nonprofit Organizations described in Section 170(c) of the Internal Revenue Service. For IRS nonprofit status you may use this link: <https://apps.irs.gov/app/eos/allSearch> and enter EIN: 953064521.