

## HELP FOR REFUGEES, INC.

A tax-exempt, non-profit corporation

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" Yea, brother, let me have joy of thee in the Lord"  
(Apostle Paul's Epistle to Philemon, verse 20)

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 prisons.

From an unpublished Bible meditation by late Reverend Richard Wurmbbrand

### **How to Obtain Joy in the Lord?**

During the communist regime in the Soviet Union, the underground church disregarding cruel danger from the KGB, published a book entitled "GOD IS WITH US" by a courageous Christian author S. LAVROV. He recounts how a communist atheist traveled on the shores of the Azov Sea. He saw fishermen at work. The thought came to him: If this sea contained no fish, no one would be fishing. If there were no God, nobody would pray or speak to Him. Nobody goes to a well that does not contain water. If there were no grace in the church, nobody would go there. A fool can enter a basement and proclaim that there is no sun in the world. Truly, there is none for those in basements. So, there is no God for those who are in the darkness of God-denial and evil. This communist became a believer."

You receive a letter...somebody comes to see you...the telephone rings. You can be sure, whatever the ostensible reason, that the other person's unexpressed desire is invariably, "Let me have joy from you. Give me joy!" Everyone suffers much. Everyone longs for someone to care about him. Everyone wants to be smiled at, hugged.

A former fellow-prisoner when myself was imprisoned for 14 years in Romanian Communist jails, asked me, "Why so much wickedness in the world? Why did God allow men to exist who oppress and terrorize millions?" Philosophizing about this problem will not help. But since there is so much wickedness in the world, make it your aim to bring joy to others. Let every letter, telephone call, or conversation of yours, endeavor to let men "have joy of thee." With such an attitude in life, you yourself will see the world in

brighter colors, and you will be convinced that it is ruled by a good God. If it were not, it would be impossible for you, a creature of His, to be inspired by Him to spread joy to others.

Forty percent of a florists' business goes to funerals; the rest covers social obligations like weddings and birthdays. Few flowers are bought for no special occasion, simply because one cares about another. Early one spring, I saw an old man ascending a steep hill still covered with snow. When I asked where he was going, he replied, "I wish to pluck the first lily of the valley for my beloved wife." How much better than to speculate, as to why God has allowed one's wife to have arthritis! Though Paul wrote many epistles, we know of no replies. "Out of much affliction and anguish of heart" (II Corinthians 2:4) he asked, "Let me have joy of thee."

Angels too seek joy from you, which you can easily bestow through repentance. It is written, "I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance." (Luke 15:7) Our heart-broken God Himself is anxious for you to give Him the occasion to "rejoice" as it is written: "The LORD thy God in the midst of thee is mighty; he will save, he will rejoice over thee with joy; he will rest in his love, he will joy over thee with singing." (Zephaniah 3:17) Since we cannot always be around those who await joy from us, we are wise to bring them to the limitless Source of joy, who is God. This means bringing them to salvation. Let the aim of our lives be to give joy to those around us. A smile, a kind word, a friendly gesture is so easy to share especially with our brethren who suffer for their faith.

One cannot bring joy by doing evil. The world brings no joy. The Bible writes, "know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God?" (James 4:4) What then is friendship with the devil? Communism is devilish. Its founder KARL MARX set forth the aim of his life and his movement: "to avenge myself against the One who rules above," to crush humanity and, when it goes down into darkness, to follow it laughing." (See all quotations and bibliography in my book "WAS K. MARX A SATANIST?" (Available online at <http://richardwurmbrandfoundation.com> NEd.) Marxism and Christianity are totally incompatible. Class struggle and revolution as taught by Marx are the opposite of Jesus' principle of love. Real Christian churches in communist China, in communist Cuba or Vietnam accept neither collaboration with, nor control by anti-God authorities. Likewise, we in free countries should have no friendship with the world.

Christians continue to show practical love to their brethren in need. In so many books and testimonies, suffering Christians describe how the steadfastness in faith of their fellow Christians brought them true joy! We need learn from them the way to bring true joy is to follow their example of sacrifice. Apostle Paul writes: "Join together in following my example, brothers and sisters, and just as you have us as a model, keep your eyes on those who live as we do. For, as I have often told you before and now tell you again even with tears, many live as enemies of the cross of Christ. Their destiny is destruction, their god is their stomach, and their glory is in their shame. Their mind is set on earthly things. But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ." (Philippians 3:17-20)



The Communist Jilava Prison.  
Entrance to the underground cells.



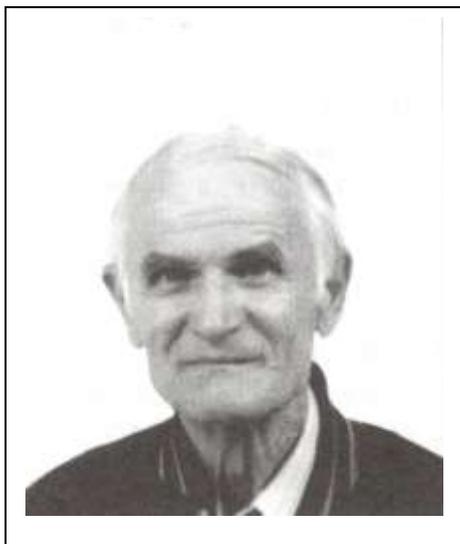
Prison cell with bunk-beds with no mattress, prisoners were obliged to sleep on. Stove for show only, never heated in cold winters.



Mug shot of Late Reverend Richard Wurmbrand when held in the Jilava prison.

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

**A Powerful Christian Witness!  
Sentenced to 20 Years Imprisonment  
for Taking Part in a Bible-Study Group**

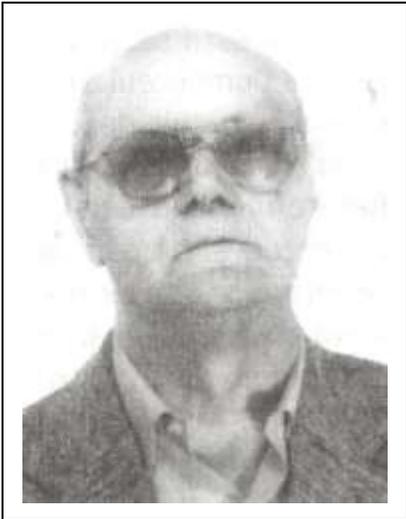


**Brother Traian Ban writes: "On November 28, 1958, our entire Bible-study group made out of 13 believers, was arrested by the communist secret police. They took and detained me right from the Romanian National Railways office I worked in. I was leaving behind my wife with five small children, the eldest being eight. The written charge against us: Being part of a mystical-religious organization, led by the preacher Vasile Moiescu from Arad. We were accused of trying through our Christian faith, overthrow the communist regime in our country". The trial and conviction took place at the Military Tribunal in Timisoara on February 18, 1959. Sentence Number 72, based on article 209, 2nd Paragraph, of the communist Romanian Penal Code, declared us having plotted against the communist country social order. Eventually after many petitions, our sentence was reduced. In my case from 20 years to 6 years,**

**of which I served 5½ years of prison. When arrested I was very frightened by what might happen, whether I would survive these years of prison. Then one verse of the Bible brought much peace in my heart. Apostle Paul wrote "But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God." (Acts 20:24) At our trial we were praising God. Even our enemies had to recognize our faith. One of the witnesses against us was asked by the prosecutor: "in which way did these accused try to overthrow the communist government?" The witness answered: "through prayer!"**

**Both my parents and grand-parents were Christians belonging to a local Baptist church. My mother had a sick heart. The doctor recommended she should not ever get emotional so she would not have a heart attack. My brother Mircea was afraid to bring my mother news of myself having been arrested. So, he asked her, "what would you say if they arrest Traian for his faith?" She replied, "I would rejoice!" My brother continued, "then do rejoice, since the communists have just imprisoned him!" My father also exclaimed, "Traian always talked about faith. Now he need live by faith!" My parents were unafraid to openly pray for me. Sometimes so loud, that the neighbors heard it in the street. The parents told me how they received from the Lord a confirmation I will be freed when reading in the Book of the Prophet Jeremiah the verses, "Thus saith the Lord; Refrain thy voice from weeping, and thine eyes from tears: for thy work shall be rewarded, saith the Lord; and they shall come again from the land of the enemy. And there is hope in thine end, saith the Lord, that thy children shall come again to their own border." (Jeremiah 31:16-17) Brother Ban concludes with the verses found in the Book of Revelation 1:5-6: "Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen."**

**Christians Helped with Your Gifts!**  
**Sentenced to 20 Years Imprisonment for Taking Part in a Bible-Study Group**



Brother Teodor (Relu) Babut wrote: "God ordained I suffer for my faith in Him. In theory we Christians believed that "all things work together for the good of those who love God." In practice though, when myself was subjected to deprivations and suffering tortures, when sentenced with a whole group of believers to 20 years hard labor, I need confess sincerely that I felt like the biblical Job's three friends reproached him, "Behold, thou hast instructed many, and thou hast strengthened the weak hands. Thy words have upheld him that was falling, and thou hast strengthened the feeble knees. But now it is come upon thee, and thou faintest; it toucheth thee, and thou art troubled." (Job 4:3-5) Very weak and extremely hungry, I was encouraged and comforted by the Lord's promise, "lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. (Matthew 28:20) and also was encouraged by the example of fellow believers, for instance a brother named Szilagyi. He was asked by the arresting

communist policeman, why he smiled. He answered: "While I am being taken to prison, Lord Jesus joined me bearing same chains, riding with me in the same car of the communist police." One time, we had to work long hours, in the scorching heat of the Baragan plains of Romania, not having even a proper drink of water. I said in my heart to God, "this is too much suffering for me." Right that moment, not a Christian but an imprisoned Jewish rabbi approached me unexpectedly with words from Psalm 145: "The LORD is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works. The LORD is nigh unto all them that call upon him, to all that call upon him in truth. He will fulfil the desire of them that fear him: he also will hear their cry and will save them." So, he concluded, "Keep strong, do fulfil God's will with all your heart." I also met another Christian prisoner who every time we were treated worst by our guards, would whisper, "Let us pray. Regardless of the circumstances we should not cease praying. Through prayer we direct God's attention on us."

I had the rare but very dangerous for me, opportunity to meet in one of the prison sections the famous Romanian Christian hymn-composer, Nicolae Moldoveanu. He had been sentenced to five years of prison. His guilt: His music with the Psalms of David was sung in all church groups. (Had I been caught contacting a prisoner in another section than the one I was held in, I would have been severely punished.) Brother Moldoveanu produced from under his cot a piece of dried soap, on which he had scribbled some musical notes. He told me, "God inspired me with these verses to make a new melody. "Listen!" he said. "Even I suffer in chains and am being humiliated, even all I hold dear were to be taken away, Even I remain poor and naked, I would not abandon Thee Lord. In the bitter end when I will arrive there to be with you Lord, I pray My Sweet Jesus, you also will not abandon me." How encouraged I was when in another section of the prison huts I spied brother Gheorghe Mladin preaching to a group of prisoners. He was telling them of the Love of Jesus who prepared for us all a place in His heavens. It downed on me, "How can I feel discouraged and whine in my thoughts of desperation while this Christian continued right-on bringing the Gospel message to those around him!"

The hardest for me was the Gherla prison (he was there with late Reverend Richard Wurmbrand. NEd) Many times in the dead of the night, one could hear prisoners howling again and again in pain, "Don't hit me, Stop beating!" The howling was followed by noise of hammers securing chains at the feet of the prisoner. We had no idea who the prisoner was. Many of the prisoners lost their mind, due to such psychological pressure. In the Gypsy language the word "grace" is translated with, "receiving alms." I regard all my suffering as God's dispensed alms to my soul.

## Christians Helped with Your Gifts! 20 Years imprisonment for Preaching the Gospel



Pastor Szilagi Sandor (now deceased) wrote: I was arrested on May 27, 1958. For over 22 years I had officiated as a minister in the reformed (Calvinist) church of the city of Pancota, Romania. The communist secret police searched my humble home for 4 hours and found nothing incriminating. During my first interrogation they asked me at length about my son Imre. Referring to my grown-up son, I answered: "he loves the Savior Jesus, exactly like his dad." One of the officers made a grim joke: "then let's arrest him as well." I answered, "If God gave His only Son to die for us, I am ready to sacrifice my son." The Officer howled, "Shut up!"

I was trying at every interrogation-session, talk as much as I could about Lord Jesus. Amazingly, on one occasion this police lieutenant put in front of me a Bible. When I opened it right in the Book of Ezekiel, he raised his fist shouting: "Do not look, read where you opened!" I stopped and read Ezekiel 34:16, where God speaks: "will seek that which was lost!" "I'm curious to see how God will look out for you, the lost one?" he muttered severely. "As to myself, I have been found already!" I answered. "Then who is the lost one?" he shouted. I pointed to him, "Through me, God is seeking you!" Without a reply I was sent back to the cell. All of a sudden I was feeling an unbelievable joy. I had found the true reason I had been imprisoned. God was seeking through me the lost souls of my torturers. My interrogations lasted two weeks. The accusation: "Religious Propaganda Endangering the Socialist Order." Though the accusation could not be proven by witnesses, the head of our Bible-studying group pastor Ferencz Vishky was sentenced to 22 years of forced labor, 10 years loss of any civil rights and the confiscation of his possessions. I, Dezsi Zoltan and Karczagi Sandor - all ministers - and simple farmers who had participated in our Bible-study group, Papp Antal, a lady Patocs Erzsebet were sentenced to 20, respectively 18 years of hard labor. The real reason was to intimidate the population from participating in religious life. The first two years I was held in the prison of the town of Oradea, another two years in Gherla (sometimes in same cell with pastor Richard Wurmbrand, NEd) and for two years I was taken to the Balta Brailei, to build dykes and do farm work. In the Oradea prison, the cells were extremely small, there was space only for two bunk beds on the corner, placed in an L-shape, with two prisoners in each bed. We were treated with much cruelty by all the guards being addressed all the time with "criminal" or "bandit" followed by our name.

In Gherla, there were larger cells jammed to capacity with 100-150 inmates. The guards here were even more brutal. Frequently we were compelled in winter, hours on end lay stretched on the cold cement. Though I was scared stiff of this communist jail, a Bible verse reminded me of the Jewish patriarch Jacob of whom it is written: "And he (Jacob) was afraid, and said, How dreadful is this place! this is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven." (Genesis 28:17) This encouraged me. By God's will I had been placed "in the House of God" and He had opened for me "the Gate of Heavens." I thought, how could I be scared being a child of God, residing in His home? While in prison, I was praying for all my brethren in the Free World and praising God for the place where I could witness the Christian faith. After the fall of communism in Romania, I was able to write a book with my recollections. It has been translated in several languages. I described how I praise God for the personal spiritual blessings I received inside this prison, blessings, I would not exchange for all the riches of American millionaires. When still under communism, after I had been freed from my sentence through a general amnesty, I was praying, "Dear Lord, out of love for you, if I need go back to prison, for the opportunity to witness even to one communist policemen, I am ready to listen to Your will." (In 1964, communist Romania was seeking loans from the United States and as a condition imposed of receiving such, released tens of thousands of political prisoners. Many of these former prisoners, the religious especially, were imprisoned right back by the cruel Ceausescu communist regime, after Romania had received the loans. NEd)

When freed, I was subjected to a stern interrogation. "Szilagyi Sandor" shouted the communist officer "What was your sentence?" "Twenty years" was my reply. "Why?" he asked. "For witnessing publicly my faith." "And do you still believe?" "Of course!" "Be careful," continued the officer, "we release you this time, but in this case, we might bring you right back!" I answered, "I have been imprisoned for more than six years. You deprived me of freedom, of my ministry, of my wife, my son, my possessions, but you could not take away my Savior, my Lord Jesus, who gave me each day, peace of mind and a spiritual happiness hard to describe. I bet, you could not find among the other unbelievers, also political prisoners you are freeing under this amnesty, a comparable testimony!" The officer argued with me, "but the Bible says, Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's! So, you should subject yourself to the (communist) authority!" "Yes," I replied, but it continues, "and unto God the things that are God's." My God, with all your atheistic communist propaganda, you were not able take away from me," I concluded. The officer, shouted, "Just go!" and so I was freed, without having to sign like many other political prisoners, any new statement of allegiance to the communist regime.

## Christians Helped with Your Gifts!

### Sentenced to 20 Years Imprisonment for Taking Part in a Bible-Study Group



Brother Mihai Iovin wrote: By the end of World War Two, starting from 1944 on, the Soviets formed out of the prisoners taken during the war, a number of divisions of the Romanian army, to fight the Nazis. (As a trained officer) I returned back to Romania in this hurriedly made-up part of the Soviet Army. I was already a Christian. Once WWII ended, many of the members of this particular Soviet-created regiments, were given high functions in the post-1947, newly-instalred-communist-regime in Romania. I was offered also a brilliant career but my answer was short: "you, the communists, promote an atheist ideology. I believe in God and I want God should lead my life. Since I cannot accept atheism, I need refuse all your enticing offers." The communist leaders threatened me, "you will suffer," yet nothing untoward happened until six years later, when all of a sudden, I was proposed in August of 1954 an inspection position of a large state enterprise finances (my civilian specialty) in another town. I was invited to be transported there by car, being assured of rank and importance. Instead the car suddenly entered the headquarters-yard of the communist secret police, I was obliged to wear dark-lenses glasses and suddenly was arrested and thrown into a prison-cell. This was an evil refined way to prevent me offering (as a former officer) any resistance. Then followed three days and nights of cruel interrogations asking me to confess to trumped-up charges of being a spy. One of our family-acquaintances, had been arrested and tortured to invent trumped-up accusatory material against me. He had been tortured with a specialized torture device: Aluminum gloves containing fine needles that would enter the finger of the wearer when pressed, giving extraordinary pains and injuries. In this way the communist former comrades in arms, tried punish me for having refused join their communist ranks, due to my Christian beliefs. For lack of any hard evidence, they let me free after only three days but two months later I was again called by the secret police. They asked me be an informer regarding our church activities. In the first meeting, the secret police officer said to me, "If you really believe Jesus Christ is the truth, then you will truly resist our enticements, but if you have doubts, why not switch your allegiance to us, the communists, and you will have it well!" When at a second meeting, he wondered how come I did not prepare a written information sheet regarding the Christian believers I had been supposed to inform on, I replied, "I believe Jesus Christ is the truth and (beyond this) I have no information to give you." I was called twice more at the secret police. Again, two officers tried convince me become an informer. I answered them, "now you wear high rank epaulets with stripes on your shoulders, but the day will come that we all stand in front of the judgment-throne of Christ. Then you will wear no stripes. Now is the moment to receive the Lord and Christ and accept His salvation. " Trying several more times recruit me, they threatened again I was going to suffer. Only a few months later, our whole Bible-study group, led by the Baptist minister Vasile Moisescu, a highly educated mathematician, was suddenly arrested. When we found ourselves in the box for the accused, the wife of brother Moisescu, Sinziana, entered the courtroom, turned to the accused-box and said in a loud voice, "Brethren, we all know that in the name of Lord Jesus Christ and for Him you are here." How greatly this encouraged us! The judge shouted, "Lady, don't you realize where you are? I could place you in a jiffy, in the same box (with the accused.) "She turned to the bench and replied, "So what, sir? No sacrifice is too big when it comes to the precious name of Jesus Christ." She was forcefully thrown out of court. Such heroes of faith as she was, will always exist. I remember when thrown into cell No. 129, how I was shouted-to by the communist guard: "We brought you here, to kill you. Here will rot your bones." When the heavy door was shut tight I thought I was buried like Lazarus of the Gospel in a tomb. Like it happened to Lazarus, the Lord resurrected us out of the communist tomb. Six years later, I was freed under a general amnesty.

Help for Refugees, PO Box 5161, Torrance, Ca. 90510, USA. Email: [hfr@helpforrefugees.com](mailto:hfr@helpforrefugees.com), website: <http://helpforrefugees.com> (EIN: 95-3064521) is listed in Publication 78, Cumulative List of Organizations described in Section 170(c) of the Internal Revenue Service.

For the past 40 years, HELP FOR REFUGEES, INC. has extended financial support to Christian refugees from communist countries, orphans and Christians who had been imprisoned for their faith in present and former communist countries. Also helped is the Richard Wurmbbrand College, a high school in Iasi, Romania where many children of disadvantaged families are able to study. See <http://helpforrefugees.com>. Anyone may use a "DONATE" button on site. Due to tax laws inside Romania and Eastern Europe, some help needs be sent through the local Romanian nonprofit Sabina Wurmbbrand Christian Association.