

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, Sabina

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.

August 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 by using the order form on the internet, at the <https://helpforrefugees.com> site.

(See third column!)

"And the gospel must first be published among all nations."

(Mark 13:10)

From an unpublished Bible meditation by late Reverend Richard Wurmbrand

ARE CHURCHES SPREADING THE GOSPEL?

Jesus never said that the Gospel must be published only in the nations where such preaching is not controversial. Christianity has never had such a baffling, formidable opponent as Communism. Lenin wrote: "All modern religions and churches are agencies of bourgeois reaction, which serve to protect exploitation and benumb the working class." Communists once having come in power, considered even pro-communist ministers as enemies, not just the anti-communist ones. When the Soviet regime was installed in Russia, the communists killed metropolitan Nikolay of Leningrad too, who had functioned during many years as their stooge. Priests and pastors who had embraced Communism whole-heartedly and propagated it, died in Romanian Communist prisons, jailed by those whom they had praised, together with those who had said "No" to Communism-from the beginning. There exists no possibility of coming to terms with Communism. Leftist ideology advances in the Free World churches, proposing peaceful dialogues between Marxists and Christians. The secretary of the British Council of Churches (the equivalent of the National Council of Churches in the US) said in a public debate he had with me over the radio in London that, "the communists have the Holy Spirit" and he agrees with the communists. The leftist decided to have on all fronts the victory, nothing less than that. The

Communists are on the very threshold of their ultimate conquest. They can taste victory already. Some communist propagandists in the USA claim communists have mellowed. Why should they mellow? The one which mellows is the United States. Christians though must decide to be the winners. We wish to win the Communists for Christ and it should not happen the other way! Work among the Communists in the East and in the West to bring them to Christ must have priority. If I don't win for Christ an aborigine from New-Guinea, I endanger his soul and have not fulfilled my duty. But supposing that he remains unsaved, he cannot destroy Christian life in USA. If we don't win the Communists for Christ, Communism will take over the Western world and will destroy the church and the whole Christian civilization, as they did in many countries in Eastern Europe, Asia, Africa and even in Latin America. Take a look at what has happened in Cuba for instance. To win the Communist world for Christ is the pivotal problem for world missionary strategy. Don't believe in liberalizations in the Communist camp. Do not believe in liberal trading with communist countries. Do not believe in leftist dialogue in American churches. These are liberalizations good enough to dupe Americans. The "liberal" Communists as well as the "conservative" ones may quarrel among themselves - gangsters have always quarreled not only with the police, but also with each other - but they are united. Communist ideology is introduced into American churches under the guise of a march against poverty, or a march against social inequality. Those who are taught in USA by pastors and priest to march against poverty should be told how poor the population ended up in every country where communists came to power. The poorest in America are much richer than their Christian brethren in any communist country. A street-sweeper in America has three times the income of any engineer in a country ruled by a communist regime. Pastors should teach the poor in America to give for their suffering brethren in communist countries like Cuba, Vietnam, instead of enticing the members of the church against their government. The Easter collection in that church equals approximately the salary for two years of a factory worker in a communist country. The Russian communist leaders Dmitriy Manuilski wrote: "To win we need the element of surprise. The bourgeoisie will have to be put to sleep..." Church and mission leaders are put to sleep. We have to awaken church leaders in the free democracies. David Paton wrote, "The best of us, missionaries, left China with many happy memories, but with a sense that we were wrong, that God found us wanting." We try to prevent American and European Christians and missionaries, from ending up in some communist prison in the near future, when leftist ideologies will have triumphed here and looking back to their past Christian life with same melancholic thoughts. We are not worried about the future of the church in Communist countries. It will suffer and come out victorious. We are rather worried about the future of the church in America. Ask your church leaders to lead you to "green pastures" and not to "red" ideologies! It is the Gospel that must be preached and not leftist social ideas!



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!)



**Pastor Nicolai
Varacsa**

His father, a baptist minister and his mother as well, both suffered 10 years imprisonment for the faith. Nicolai was also sentenced to 2½ years imprisonment for printing and distributing underground Christian literature. **Read his testimony in the 8/2018 Newsletter.**



**Baptist Didneak
Maria Vasilievna**

Was sentenced to 3 years imprisonment in the former Soviet Union for conducting underground children Sunday School. She wrote: “I want to say to the younger generation that did not suffer persecution yet, to keep close to Christ!” **Read her testimony in the 8/2018 Newsletter.**



**Minister Levtzeniuk
Anatolii**

Was sentenced to 3 years imprisonment in the former Soviet Union, for refusing to become an informer of the communist secret police (the KGB.) He has 9 children. **Read his full testimony in the 9/2018 Newsletter.**



**Minister Sergiu
Grosu (deceased)**

Was sentenced to 12 years hard labor imprisonment in communist Romania, for his Christian underground activity. **Read his full testimony in the 9/2018 Newsletter.**

Heroes of the Faith! Persecuted Christians Helped with your Gifts

A YEAR IMPRISONMENT FOR STORING BIBLES



Greetings. I am Kushnir Mykhail Georgievych. I was born on September 27, 1938, in the village of Davydeny, Bukovina Province (now in the Ukraine.) I was born in an Orthodox family. For many years I sang in a church choir. I got married in 1962 and became a Baptist believer. God gave me and my wife eight children. At the end of 1979, our brotherhood received an offer to print the Gospel and collections of Christian songs. After consulting with my wife, we offered our house for this ministry. God gave us the opportunity also to print Bibles. In 1980, we moved our family to live in Chernivtsi. 284 BIBLES were well hidden in our house. The Soviet secret police (KGB) came to our house with a search warrant and took away all the Bibles. I was sentenced to one year of

prison, for keeping these Bibles.

I am grateful to the Lord for everything and that I could serve Him together with my entire family. I am now 82 years old. I am a very happy and blessed person.

Heroes of the Faith!
Persecuted Christians Helped with your Gifts

**5 YEARS IMPRISONMENT, 3 YEARS BANISHMENT TO FROZEN SIBERIA,
FOR HANDING OUT POSTCARDS WITH BIBLE VERSES!**



Myself, Olga Georgievna Pantiukhova (Nikora) was born on Mar. 15, 1950 in a family of Christian believers. At age nineteen I came to faith and covenanted with the Lord. At that time, there was an established group of Independent (unregistered) Baptists, which I then promptly joined.

From those days, I had a deep-seated desire to evangelize for Jesus, my Savior, disregarding the fact that in that atheistic period, adherents to the Gospel were heavily persecuted. The Lord prompted not only my heart to evangelize, but the hearts of my friends as well - sisters in the youth circle. We prayed and fasted over this for a long time, for God to show us how to take the Gospel-light to unbelieving people. We could not invite them to church, as due to the persecution we would meet wherever we could, even in random forest clearings. So, having received from the Lord such grace, we came to a decision to distribute postcards. On the reverse side of some cards, we would write:” Dear friend, God loves you and wants

you be saved. Repent of your sins and you will possess eternal life! If you want to know more of the personal salvation of your soul, we suggest listening in to the (Christian) programs on shortwave from Monte Carlo.” - and in conclusion we would add a cherished quatrain: “Tomorrow’s Day may not glow, and the sun may no shine! The time is now- oh be wise, come now to be saved.”

In our initial print runs, we would produce approximately fifty of these cards and distribute them in the various neighborhoods of the city. We would hand them to some personally, others we would drop in mail slots. In doing this, we risked being arrested, but the Lord enabled us to cover the whole city seven or eight times - the exact number I no longer recall, and with each sortie we would expand the size and quality of the cards. When the brethren in neighboring Moldavia heard of our evangelism, they sent us pocket-sized Gospels of Luke and John to distribute. To place God’s Word in peoples’ hands was a great joy for us. Subsequently, the brothers taught us how to replicate on mimeograph machines, and together with our sister Zina Kazakova we wrote more substantive sermons in a more advanced format and immediately printed them by the hundreds. Eventually, someone having received such a broadside and listened to the program emanating from Monte Carlo, reported us to the KGB (the communist secret police, N. Ed.) As a result, we were often summoned for interrogation by the KGB, but along with the absence of prime witnesses, we kept silent and did not acknowledge that this was our doing. We were then placed under enhanced surveillance. Thus, we were under the direct oversight of the authorities. If I was at home, a spotter would be seen posted. Upon leaving for work, I would be tailed all the way to the factory and at the end of my shift, back home as well. It became very difficult to get together with anyone or do anything. However, we decided to do another round in the city. We met in the home of a brother to divide the material amongst ourselves. We prayed and then decided to move to another location. (Continued on next page!)

However, as we were leaving, we noticed a sentry and agents. The sisters dispersed, but two brothers who were carrying the briefcase with the material were arrested. They were confined in cells for three days. One brother was released unconditionally, but the other, Anatoli Rublenko (also helped by this mission. Read his testimony in the December 2019 newsletter! N. Ed.) was released on his own recognizance and ordered not to leave before the trial.

Soon after this happened, drawing conclusions from the frequent searches and interrogations, we gathered that the three of us, Anatoli Rublenko, Zina Kazakova, and myself, Olga Nikora would face charges. As soon as we learned of this from the investigator, sister Zina left to complete an illegal assignment at the underground publishing house named Khrestianin (The Christian, N.T.) where she had been working all along. She was at the same time completing her institute studies where she wasn't allowed to be awarded her diploma as she had declared her belief in God and turned in her Komsomol (communist youth organization, N.T.) card.

Thus, in January of 1974, a search of my home was conducted, Christian literature was taken and I was placed under arrest. What can be said to a girl from a Christian family, having seen and faced all the filth of a sinful world? The Lord, however, has been my Protector everywhere and in everything. Upon crossing the cell threshold, I fell to my knees and thanked God. I testified to the women there of Jesus Christ, as God granted me grace in doing so. Some would listen and others would snicker. Almost every day, we would be summoned for interrogation in which we were enticed to renounce our faith, threatened with lengthy sentences and in addition to which the prosecutor declared: "We'll make you rot here!" Only through God's mercy were we not killed. Where did this prosecutor end up? I don't know.

Our trial was open and demonstrative, and the Palace of Culture was packed with students to give the said "criminals" the widest exposure. The audience was coached to shout all kinds of slurs at us. In their outbursts, they would yell that people like us should be stoned. There were many false witnesses - people we had never seen. They testified that I bribed them to attend our services. The trial lasted for two days and the prosecutor requested for us all, A. Rublenko as well, 10-year sentences- 5 years in a Correctional Labor Colony and 5 years of Siberian exile.

Truthfully speaking, I was not expecting such a sentence, as I had just turned twenty-four. But on the second day of the trial, the verdict was issued for eight years of imprisonment, 5 years in the Labor Colony, and only 3 years of banishment in Kolyma (a frigid, infamous site in NE Siberia.) So began the trials of our faith. After the trial, we were transferred to a different cell where there were women being held for murder who were conducting fortunetelling. They threatened to knife me if I prayed. It's possible that some of them had been placed on purpose to provoke me to anger. Yes, I feared them. Even after the trial, the KGB orderlies did not let up on me and continually hectoring me to betray my associates. However, when by God's grace they didn't succeed, they would pound on the table with their fists and violently shout terrible oaths and curses.

In the zone where I served the 5-year term, my case was handled by the operational unit of the KGB. They would intercept any letters which contained the word "God", would shadow me to ensure that I did not speak to anyone about God and deprived me of access to visitors as well as access to the prison commissary that I was entitled-to on a monthly basis. The continual hard labor combined with poor nutrition led to exhaustion. It was forbidden for one to take even a small piece of black bread from the dining room. If discovered, such bread would be thrown out and definitely not allowed to be consumed. In all of their hatred for believers, God never forsook me but sent relief. (Continued on next page!)

In the month of January, in 1979, following the completion of my 5-year prison-term in the penal colony in Odessa, we were processed into the exile stage of our sentence. This turned out to be a return to the prison system, renewed searches, insults, and humiliations on the way to our destination in the far-reaches of Siberia which entailed our passing through 8 harsh relocation prisons. This month-long journey was undertaken in severe cold, constantly hungry in a cell with bedbugs. This was the experience of many who loved God more than their own souls. But even here, God did not forsake His children. I spent my exile in the Yakut Autonomous Soviet Republic. Here again as well, God did not abandon His children. Yes, I was like a child weaned from the mother's breast, without friends, a church body, but surrounded by enemies lying in wait for me to trip up. Even there, I could not be left to myself by the KGB collaborators. They would hold me for many hours in their offices attempting to persuade me with threats and berating to cooperate with them. But only God granted me the victory. I thought that I wouldn't be able to withstand the pressure. I would weep day and night seeking protection. Toward the end of my term, another case was fabricated against me for the purpose of sentencing me to another term instead of granting me freedom. But due to the intercession of my brothers and sisters, by God's grace I was freed. Afterward, even in freedom, the KGB operatives would not let me be, again re-emerging with threats. The Lord empowered me to say to them: "Don't come around and look for a traitor in me." After the next round of threats, I firmly stated: "What can you do to me? Imprison me? - I've been there! Throw me to polar bears? - I've been there! Execute me? - to that I'll say 'Amen!' - the end of my journey!" For everything, glory be given to my beloved Lord Jesus Christ.



Sister Pantiukhova when 24 (front and left) before imprisonment, with the "postcard-delivering-group."

This mission continues to help hundreds such elderly believers who suffered imprisonment under communist regimes for the faith.

409	Власенко	Валентин	Мефодьевич	1958	Украина
410	Вольф	Андрей	Корнеевич	1958	Казакстан
411	Куркин	АЛЕКСЕЙ	ЯКОВЛЕВИЧ	1958	Россия
412	Левен	НИКОЛАЙ	ВИКТОРОВИЧ	1958	Казакстан
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	Казакстан
423	МАРЧЕНКО	Станислав	Павлович	1960	Украина
424	Доиченко	Александр	Максимович	1960	Украина
425	Отмаков	Венедикт	Александрович (Валерианов)	1960	Узбекистан
426	Савинко	Михаил	Михайлович	1960	Эстония
427	Фудеева (ШВЕЦОВА)	ДИНА	ВЛАДИМИРОВНА	1961	Латвия
428	ШВЕЦОВА	АННА	ВЛАДИМИРОВНА	1962	Алания
429	Богородице	Александр	Валереевич	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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