

HELP FOR REFUGEES, INC.

A tax-exempt, non-profit corporation

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We help orphans and elderly Christians (many in their eighties, even 90s) who had been imprisoned for their faith in present or former communist countries. At this critical moment, we also help many Christian refugees from Ukraine!



Late Reverend Richard Wurmland with wife, Sabina

August 2025

Announcement:

Free copies of the paperback books written by Pastor Richard Wurmland: "Reaching Towards the Heights"; "Tortured For Christ"; "Was Karl Marx a Satanist?"; and "The Pastor's Wife" by Sabina Wurmland, may be requested using the order form at the <https://helpforrefugees.com> internet site. (See request form at top of the third column!)

"The flesh is weak" (Matthew 26:41)

Late Reverend Richard Wurmland suffered 14 years in Romanian communist prisons. Mrs. Wurmland, Sabina, was imprisoned for nearly three years, also for her Christian testimony, in some of the same communist prisons.

From a published Bible meditation by late Reverend Richard Wurmland

FAITH CONQUERS!

It was in the times of Lenin and Stalin in the former Soviet Union. Eighty thousand Orthodox priests had been killed. Tens of thousands of churches had been demolished or desecrated and used as warehouses. Father Mikhail, an Orthodox priest was among the very few who had not yet been arrested.

This young priest had lost his faith. The loss came suddenly. He had just said during the long liturgy, "Blessed be God," when he believed hearing a voice in his mind whispering, "There is no God."

He looked questioningly at the crosses, the elaborate church ornaments, the many icons, images of saints hanging on the wall. What did their friendship with God mean? Does such a mighty Friend allow His believers to be thrown to the wild beasts, burned at the stake, tortured?

He tried to repress the thought. He repeated to himself the words of the psalm, "The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God." He thought of all the religious texts he studied in order to become a priest. It did not help.

After that moment, he continued to act as a priest out of duty, out of desire to obtain his meager income, but he no longer believed. The sorrow around him had been too great.

He had to restrain himself to keep from crying out to the peasants who filled the church, "Go home, poor people. There is no God. God would not have permitted this bloody chaos."

Drunk Communists arrested him on an Easter eve. Among them was the music director, (called a cantor) of his church whom he had expelled because of immoral behavior. Now he too was a communist Bolshevik.

The head of the gang told the priest, "We have decided to kill you. What have you to say?" Life was worthless for Father Mikhail. He answered, "As you like." But he was given a chance. "If you renounce Christ and trample on a cross, you will be freed." The thought passed through his mind, "I don't believe. What does a cross mean to me? Let me save my life." But when he opened his mouth, he said, to his own astonishment, "I believe in one God."

It was Good Friday. In remembrance of the crown of thorns, they put his fur cap on his head, with the linen on the outside; they put a sack upon his shoulders as a royal garment, and the cantor knelt saying, "Hail, king of the Jews," and they all beat him.

He prayed to the One in whom he did not believe any more, "If You exist, save me." With a loud voice, he repeated, "I believe in one God." This made such an impression upon the drunk murderers that they freed him. He went home, prostrated himself to the earth in his prayer corner, and said with tears, "I believe."

When assailed by doubts, don't seek an intellectual solution. Take some burden upon yourself for Jesus' sake. Where reason fails, faith will conquer!



The Communist Jilava Prison.
Entrance to the underground cells.



Prison cell with bunkbeds 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!)



Pentecostal brother **Ion TRIFU** was arrested in 1983, together with eight other Christians in former communist Romania leaving five children at home.

The communist secret police accused these Christians of holding Bible study house-meetings not registered with the communist authorities. He was declared by the present government a former political prisoner.

(Read his testimony in our online October 2016 Newsletter.)

Pentecostal believer **Costache CODREANU** was imprisoned for over 10 years in former communist Romania. To obtain from him information on secret church activities **he was tortured inside a “beating robot.”**

(Read his testimony in our online newsletter of 10/2016.)



Apartment house destroyed through Russian bombing in Mariupol, Ukraine, where 40% of whole town has been close to obliterated.

Over six million refugees have escaped so far from Ukraine into different European countries.

The Rochev family has 8 children. **Irina ROCHEVA** wrote:

“At the beginning of the war, our whole family was at home. The very realization of the war was received with anxiety, but there was hope in God. Until March, we did not really see the war, but people's faces were filled with confusion and fear. After the active mobilization for the war, among the youth, the reality became more and more frightening. People with weapons appeared, rumors of shooting in neighboring villages. There were a lot of drones in the sky, and we didn't really know whose flying machines they were and what we should beware of. Then it was more difficult to accept reality. My husband insisted on staying at home and protecting his village, I supported him, but I felt that God had other plans for our family. Our pastor and brothers actively suggested that we leave for a safe place, but we were determined to stay. What happened next made me change my husband's decision and ours too. Our village is located in such a way that rockets flew through us in the direction of Cherkasy and Zolotonosh, and the Zolotonosh air defense shot down rockets directly above our village. This is where we saw two large rockets explode over our house, and they exploded so that we all sat down in fear. Thank God no one was hurt then. On the same day, a Russian landing party was in the village of Bucha, which is only 100 miles away from us. What happened there showed the whole essence of the terrible war. I could not allow this to happen in our family. We called the pastor and by God's grace there was the last free minivan for us. The next day, in the morning, we already drove with the whole family to Romania in a church car. The path was difficult. There are a lot of cars on the roads, constant traffic jams. I only had to dream about the comforts, I sat in the car on a small wooden chair, there were not enough places for me to sit in a normal chair. It is even difficult to remember all the other missing amenities. It seemed that these cars and this column would never end. But as soon as we crossed the border, it seemed like a huge stone fell off my soul.

We were met at the border by people with hot tea and coffee. They offered to eat, gave everything necessary for the children, and it was so necessary... Thank God! We cried, the stress turned out to be more than we could have imagined. Then again the road. We traveled by bus for another 12 hours. It was also not easy here, and although the bus was big and there were enough seats for everyone, there were still many other people traveling with us whom we did not know. There were adults and children who went to different cities and countries. The next day we arrived in Oradea, Romania. We were brought to the BBSO Christian Church, where we were offered hot food and rest for a few hours. It turned out that the church at that time was a center for the distribution of refugees. More than 3,000 people passed through this center. The situation was not simple. Several buses with children got lost on the road, so they never reached the city. These buses were never found. We were assigned to a small village not far from Oradea. When I think back, I wonder how we could even get there, but the Lord has his own plans. About 25 people, women and children, continued to live with us. Now we live in an apartment on the fourth floor.





Ukrainian brother **Sasha CHELAK** wrote:

“I greet you warmly, I heard about your mission from my friends, the Pokor family (Lyudmila and Anatoliy), with whom we are from the same city. We are a young family, Sasha and Olya, 26 and 21 years old, we have a little son, his name is Timofey, he is 1 year and 11 months old. Unfortunately, the war took away the opportunity for us to stay at home.

The first 2 years of the war we lived in Ukraine, but when I turned 25, they wanted to take me to the war, which contradicts my beliefs, I was born in a believing family from childhood and I cannot take up arms because I know that I have no right to kill anyone.

But no one was interested in my Christian beliefs, so I was forced to cross the border illegally, I swam across the Danube River, right where the border with Romania passes, almost drowning (because I had a seizure.)

Thank God He did not leave me and gave me a chance to get to a safe place. I was not so much worried about myself as about my wife and little son, because I did not want them to leave me. I do not justify my actions in any way, but I had no other choice. At the moment we are in Romania, in the city of Oradea. I have to work very hard to provide for my family, since my wife is currently unable to work because she is sitting with our little son. I earn very little, although I work 12 hours almost every day, and this is barely enough to rent an apartment and eat. Therefore, having heard about your mission, I decided to try to write to you, because at least some small help would help us a lot right now. If it is God's Will, of course. Thank you in advance for helping people and even when everything in life is very difficult, there is such a small hope that encourages and gives strength, because the Lord takes care of us. For everything, Praise be to our Savior, with Peace! we will be very grateful to you and the Lord!”

Ukrainian Christian Refugees Helped with your Gifts

April 16, 2022*

Dear contributors:

My gratitude to all who donated generously toward helping so many refugees from Ukraine, a true flood of displaced individuals. More than four million have escaped the current war and another three million are expected to come out. If one reads the daily news, one will be convinced easily these are not exaggerated figures. These are persons who flee from extensive bombing and continuing total destructions of whole towns.

It happens that my birth country, Romania, and the Republic of Moldova (also a Romanian language country) have together the longest common border with Ukraine. At the same time, Romania is one of the poorest countries in the European Union and Moldova is economically worse. Between Romania and Moldova so far, one million Ukrainians have sought asylum already. **Refugees come at times at the rate of 10,000 every 24 hours.** * Most of these refugees are women with 3 to 8 children. Fortunately, many other countries in Europe and North America are accepting to resettle these refugees if they can arrive there. Many churches outside Romania, have sent transportation means, like buses and even chartered flights. These refugees speak Ukrainian and Russian. Here and there, the communality of the Romanian language is of help, since some closer to the border localities like the university town of Czernowitz (name in German, Cernauti in Romanian) where my mother was born, used to be part of Romania before WWII. Some of the younger generation might have a little knowledge of English. Through many dependable contacts of many years in Romania, we concentrated on helping with local Romanian currency of US \$200 to \$2,000 per family of **Christian believers**-refugees. Many came out with hardly more than the shirt on their back. There were miles-long lines at the border. Through the local Christians who deserve all praise, we provide pocket money given in hand for food and believers' lodging for a few days, until there is a partial resolution as to near- future plans of settling some place somehow or moving-on further to other countries. \$2,000 seems to be a large sum for an elderly couple who could escape but most couples come out with larger groups of 10 to 15 children and grandchildren. Just as one example, we paid for a Victoria village home, \$6,000 for a one-month lodging and food for three adults and twelve children. Most of these refugees entertain the illusion of taking refuge out of their native country and their lodging and work, for a brief time but the way the news comes out on this prolonged war, I doubt this will be the case. I believe these refugees will remain refugees for many years to come. We publish in these newsletters a few testimonies and some receipts of scores more, documenting what I wrote above.

*(**Update February 2024:** Refugees still pour-in most days at the rate of 8,000-10,000!) Michael Wurmbrand

409	Власенко	Валентин	Мерфинович	1958	Украина
410	Вольф	Андрей	Корнилович	1958	Казахстан
411	Кураки	АЛЕКСЕЙ	ЯКОВЛЕВИЧ	1958	Россия
412	Леон	НИКОЛАЙ	ВИКТОРОВИЧ	1958	Казахстан
413	Романенко	Владимир	Николаевич	1958	Украина
414	Тиссен	Давид	Давидович	1958	Россия
415	ТУРКЕВИЧ	Василий	Тарасович	1959	Украина
416	Бычков	Степан	Павлович	1959	Украина
417	ДРИСВИННИКОВ	АЛЕКСАНДР	АЛЕКСАНДРОВИЧ	1959	Россия
418	СВЮРЦОВА	ЛЮБОВЬ	НИКОЛАЕВНА	1959	Россия
419	Варавин	Виталий	Федотович	1959	Россия
420	Дубицкий	СЕРГЕЙ	АДАМОВИЧ	1959	Россия
421	Лященко	Борис	Владимирович	1959	Украина
422	Ткаченко	ИВАН	ИВАНОВИЧ	1959	Казахстан
423	МАРЧЕНКО	Станислав	Павлович	1960	Украина
424	Донченко	Александр	Максимович	1960	Украина
425	Озмязов	Вениамин	Александрович (Валерианов)	1960	Узбекистан
426	Савченко	Михаил	Михайлович	1960	Эстония
427	Федюка (ШВЕЦОВА)	ДИНА	ВЛАДИМИРОВНА	1961	Алания
428	ШВЕЦОВА	АННА	ВЛАДИМИРОВНА	1962	Алания
429	Богодымова	Александр	Валерьевич	1962	Эстония

Above, a **sample only** of a lengthy 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 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 obtaining 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 speaking 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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and enter EIN: 953064521.