

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!

October 2025



Late Reverend Richard Wurmband with wife, Sabina

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

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

“Unto you therefore which believe He is precious: but unto them which be disobedient the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner, and a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence...” (1st Peter 2:7-8)

From an unpublished Bible meditation by late Reverend Richard Wurmband

RICH TOWARD GOD

Jesus seems to be a cause of offense to many people in many ways, especially by His poverty and His advocating it. We read in the Gospel of Luke, chapter 12 that Jesus said, “Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.

“And he spake a parable unto them, saying, The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully: And he thought within himself, saying, What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits? And he said, This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods. And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry.

“But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided?

“So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God.”

The old Jewish writing of the 2nd century AD, the Jerusalem Talmud, concurs with the New Testament in relating the greed and the luxurious life style of the high clergy in the time of Jesus, yet He did not have a penny. If He wished to use a coin to illustrate one of His sayings, someone had to bring one to Him (Matt. 22:19); He had none of His own. This attitude scandalized the clergy.

Even today not many Christians would accept it as right. In poor countries today, some churches have refused to cooperate in the preparation of crusades for various American evangelists because of the high standard of living of their teams.

Mother Theresa, the nun who organized the renowned homes for starving children in India, relates how she once brought some rice to a Hindu family with eight hungry children. Their mother took half of it and left the room. When she returned she was asked what she had done with the food. She answered, "My neighbors are Muslims, and they have eight children. They are also hungry." She had given away the rice.

Many children of Christian martyrs are hungry, while we have more than a handful of rice. There is not one Westerner who does not live richly in comparison with those who suffer in Communist jails for their faith. Not only did Jesus have no money, but He did not even consider His body as property to be preserved. He gave it away at the age of 33, that we might receive eternal life through His sacrifice. It is not a stumbling block to our belief in Jesus that His disciples have to bear heavy crosses as He did. To us, He is like a precious stone for Whom we should be ready to sacrifice our lives.

Christians don't find their joy in possessing much, nor in keeping their comfort and their lives. They imitate Jesus, who, in His poverty, is precious unto them that believe.



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. Where possible, we try to obtain in order to help, names and addresses of their surviving children. Read their full testimonies in our past newsletters at <http://helpforrefugees.com> (third column!)



Ion TRIFU

Brother Trifu, a believer having 5 children was in a group of 8 other Pentecostals arrested in 1983, in former communist Romania.

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



Ilie NEAMTU

Neamtu, an active Pentecostal missionary in Romania of an indomitable courage under communism. He gave publicly his Christian testimony speaking to crowds on the street, in trains, in buses, places of work and so on. On the 1st of July 1985 he was kidnapped off the street by the Romanian communist secret police. His wife and seven children remained without subsistence.

After being beaten severely the communist officer shouted before slamming his prison cell-door shut, “here will rot your bones. Not even the God you trust in, will get you out of here.” To torture him more, he was informed how his sentence had been revised from two and a half years to be increased to seven and a half years of prison.

(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.



BODNARCHUK Ihor with wife Olesia, daughter Anna 15 and sons Timofii, 12 and David,8.

Brother Bodnarchuk wrote: “Precious mission, we left Ukraine because it was so dangerous there. Sirens and explosions and the roar of the Shahids rockets. Constant shelling of the city. I couldn't sleep at night because I was very scared. Because they shelled more at night we slept in the hallway. Because constantly going down and up to the 15th floor in the dark (they turned off the electricity and the elevator didn't work) to run to the shelter is very difficult, the children cry and want to sleep. They turned off the water, electricity

and heating. It's unbearable when you live in a tall building. It's very difficult to cook food. We have electric stoves for all the residents of our house in all the apartments, because we lived in a 21-story high-rise. It's very scary when it's completely dark at night because of the power outage. And you can hear explosions everywhere.

It was difficult for the children. The boys were constantly building bomb shelters at home - they did not feel safe, even in their apartment. When the children went to school, during the shelling - they ran to the shelter. Then the lessons were canceled. During the war, when they went to school in Kyiv, they were able to learn little from the school curriculum. The war really hurt the souls of our children, my daughter drew Ukraine in the form of a girl standing on her knees with a crown of thorns on her head and a cross next to her. My youngest son drew huge soldiers and small children and how the soldiers kill them. The drawings speak of the pain of children's hearts.

We went to the "Tent" Church, it was our only consolation during the war, we prayed together and it helped us a lot, yet, how difficult it was to return home again - with a feeling of anxiety, because again there were airstrikes in the city, again you could hear explosions.

We decided to take the children out of Ukraine. We drove to Romania for two days, stopped at a gas station and slept there at night. Because we had to wait until the curfew ended. We came to Romania to visit friends - they gave us the opportunity to live for three days, during which time we found an apartment. It is very expensive to live in Romania. We are given 256 ron per child and the expenses are very high for rent, utility bills, food and clothing for children. My husband works a lot. I also applied for a job. But we still need help. We sold a lot. It is very dangerous to return to Kiev - people die there, houses are destroyed and there are fires. We go to the Ukrainian Church made from refugees from Ukraine and Russia. We have a wonderful Pastor Oleksandr Tenyaev. My children and I actively serve in this Church in children's ministries. And we are very grateful to God that He created such a miracle, there is a Ukrainian Church in another country. I want to ask for help. This is a very big help for us and we will be grateful for the help.”



Sergii and Natalia Ribalka with their six children: Daniela, Christina, Veniamin, Alexander, Victoria and David

Sister Natalia **Ribalka** wrote (abbreviated): “We are from the city of Kramatorsk, Donetsk region. I myself grew up in a boarding school and even then, I promised myself that I would adopt when married at least one orphan child into the family. My husband wholeheartedly agreed with these goals.

The first 2 years we lived calmly and adopted four children. Our goal was to show them a model of family life. We taught English, read the Bible together and prayed to God.

Then in 2014, the 1st war began in our country. It all started in our city. I remember how we were simply running away from the invaders around the city by car. I am pregnant, my husband is driving a very old car at incredible speed. A car with Russian occupiers is chasing us. But, thank God, they did not catch us.

Our son Veniamin was born in Kramatorsk. He was diagnosed with cerebral palsy at the age of one year, and epilepsy at the age of 5! We spent 8 years on rehabilitation. We had incredible results.

Early in the morning of 02/24/2022, a full-scale war began. We packed everything that fit in the car and left. Three days of driving later went to the border to Romania. At that time, people stood at the border for 3 days. But we had a miracle and we crossed the border in half an hour. I don't know who the people were who led us past the queue and we crossed the border ahead of the convoy.

Our youngest son David was born here in Romania. In Oradea, we have been serving in the Ukrainian Church for 3 years.

Ukrainian Christian Refugees Helped with your Gifts

April 16, 2022 (see update below*)

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: Refugees still pour-in most days in 2024 at the rate of 8,000-10,000 and more than 6,000 daily at start of 2025.) Michael Wurmbrand

409	Власенко	Валентин	Мерфуревич	1958	Украина
410	Вольф	Андрей	Корнилевич	1958	Казахстан
411	Кураев	АЛЕКСЕЙ	ЯКОВЛЕВИЧ	1958	Россия
412	Леон	НИКОЛАЙ	ВИКТОРОВИЧ	1958	Казахстан
413	Романен	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	Богодимов	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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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.