

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



May 2021

“And now the wise men, the astrologers, have been brought in before me, that they should read this writing, and make known unto me the interpretation thereof: but they could not shew the interpretation of the thing.”
(Daniel 5:15)

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From an unpublished Bible meditation by late Reverend Richard Wurmbbrand

IGNORING GOD’S MESSAGE

While King Belshazzar of Babylon once reveled with his lords and women, a writing in the Aramaic language appeared on the wall. He immediately called his counselors to tell him what is written and what the sense of the unusual happening would be. None of them could tell him. Then he summoned Daniel, a devout Jewish prophet, taken into slavery by the Babylonians. The writing was in Aramaic, a language spoken by the Jews, an important national minority of the Babylonian empire, a minority which had given to the country a prime-minister and many other dignitaries. But none of the wise men of Babylon had made the effort to learn the language, the religion, the mentality of this minority. The enemies of Babylon, the Medes and Persians, were already at the gates of Babylon. In the same night King Belshazzar was slain and the city fell into their hands. His wise men had no wisdom. They did not know the imminence of the danger and could not give any warning to the king. We see the tragic ignorance of wise men being repeated today. Important wise men in the leadership of the universal Christian church are really “wise,” only to secure for themselves the leadership, the benefits and the fame going with such positions. They do not know what happens among the peoples they are supposed to lead to Christ, neither do they know the destructive forces which threaten the church; they do not know the importance

of the danger of communism to Christianity. The warning to King Belshazzar had been written by a hand on the wall. The warning to the United States of America is written with the blood of so many persecuted Christians and still our “wise” men cannot read it. John F. Kennedy was killed by Moscow-trained Lee Harvey Oswald. Robert F. Kennedy was killed by Sirhan B. Sirhan, who by his own hand, inscribed these words in his notebook, "Long live Communism... I firmly support the communist cause and its people... American capitalism will fall and give way to the worker's dictatorship." Most of the “wise” men of the American churches cannot read this warning. Just ask your church leaders if they have studied Marxism and the philosophy of the new left. Ask them what they know of the hundreds of millions enslaved and killed by communist dictators like Stalin or Mao? Ask them also if these subjects are offered in any seminary or Bible school? You will find that most of them are ignorant of Marxism as much as the wise men of Babylon were ignorant of the Aramaean language. Therefore, they cannot read the warning written in blood. Therefore, they don't take adequate measures to win American Communists and the youth influenced by them for Christ.

It might look like boasting, but the simple fact is that when 60,000 leftist young men made their march on the Pentagon, two laymen, Mr. Licomb and Mr. Philbrick, hired a cherrypicker for me; hoisted 30 feet above the marchers. I preached to them through a bullhorn. I was the only clergyman present among 60,000 immortal souls led astray by the communists. The wise men of Washington, DC were not there. After my debate with leftist Professor Wilkinson, at the San Fernando Valley College, more than 20 radical students openly declared that they had accepted Christ. One of them said: "Yesterday I had my last kick with LSD. My next kick will be with Jesus." Communist youth of all race, language or color, can not only be criticized or approved, they can not only be opposed or arrested, they can be won for Christ.

Gus Hall, chairman of the Communist Party USA, was invited as a speaker at a Lutheran college in California. In his message, he stated that Christians must not be concerned that their American way of life in the US would be changed, if communists came to power. He continued, “you will still own your store, your business, will continue owning and driving two cars!” My son, who was in the audience, interrupted him on the spot asking: “Why lie? Why not tell these youngsters of the communist doctrine of “the instauration of the dictatorship by the proletariat! A communist doctrine of taking power by inflicting terror, imprisonment, torture and killing of untold thousands and thousands of innocent victims?” Without answering, Gus Hall, the communist, left abruptly the podium.



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!)



Kisvaradi Magdalena

Sentenced in communist Romania to 8 years imprisonment for witnessing the faith, she was kept at times in solitary confinement in a cell large enough for four steps. Read her testimony in the 5/2018 Newsletter.



Pastor Visky Ferencz

Was arrested by the Communist secret police on Pentecost Sunday, 1958, together with other 20 Christians of the (Calvinist) Reformed Church and placed in a show-trial in the Military Court, in Oradea, communist Romania. He was sentenced to 22 years of prison. Read his testimony in the 5/2018 Newsletter.



Baptist Gheorghe Mladin

Sentenced to 20 years of hard-labor prison in communist Romania, for participation in Bible-study classes. Asked who is “the leader” of the “anticommunist group”, he answered: “Lord Jesus Christ!” Read his full testimony in the 6/2018 Newsletter.



Pusok Miklos

A (Calvinist) Reformed-church minister who was sentenced in communist Romania to a five years imprisonment term. Asked not to share his faith, he answered his torturers, he does not want bury God’s treasure he received, in the ground. Read his full testimony in the 6/2018 Newsletter.

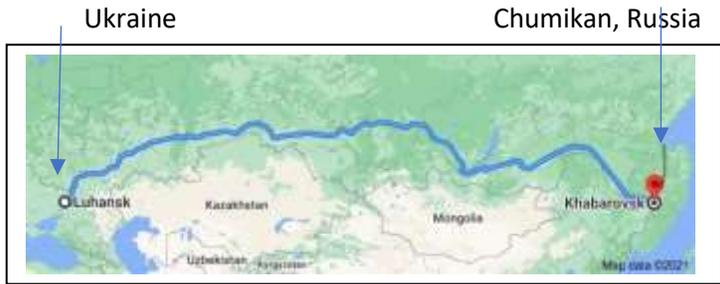
Heroes of the Faith Persecuted Christians Helped with your Gifts

Stepan Germaniuk, A Baptist Minister who Suffered for the faith 7½ Years of Jail and 3 Years Banishment in Siberia

Continued from the March and April 2021 newsletter!

My Banishment in Far-Eastern Siberia

My first sentence was over in September 1977. I still had three years of exile ahead. The closer the day of liberation was, the more anxiety in my heart grew about where I would be sent in banishment. I asked one of the other bosses about it several times, but no one could tell me anything. There were people in the special unit who respected me, but they didn't know anything yet. I had a farewell party with the prisoners. Many people treated me with great respect. It was the last time I reminded them of God. In the morning, I was taken from **Luhansk prison** to **Nikolaevsk-on-Amur** (a settlement in the extreme eastern Siberia N.Ed.) I had to go through ten transit prisons, being transported in a prison-wagon. Only on the sixtieth day I arrived at my destination - the village of Chumikan of the Khabarovsk region. In the compartment, which usually is made for four, prisoners, were placed seventeen-twenty people. In such impossible conditions we were transported during 60 days, in intervals of four days each. (This inhumane transportation was described in the previous newsletter! N. Ed.) In the Khabarovsk prison I helped prisoners write appeals. In the evenings until two o'clock in the morning I told them about Jesus Christ. During the thirteen evenings I was inside this cell, I had the opportunity to narrate the gospel in order. On the thirteenth day I reached the crucifixion of Christ and worried about what to tell tomorrow. But at three o'clock in the morning I was woken up by the attendant: Germaniuk, with your things, get out!



After being freed from 4½ years of prison, Baptist minister Germaniuk was banished by the Soviets, all the way from Luhansk, Ukraine, to Chumikan, a settlement in the far eastern reaches of Siberia, by the Sea of Okhotsk. He travelled more than 5,100 miles, for 60 days, in inhumane conditions, in a prison-wagon, 17-20 prisoners jammed into a 4-persons compartment! Subsequently, he was imprisoned again, for 3 years.

I almost didn't have any clothing. I took my half-empty bag and wanted to get out. But the prisoners all woke up and began to throw their clothes to me: one, a sweater, another, warm pants, one more, a fur hat. "Take it, father, it will come in handy!" That's how I was provided with everything I needed. I was handcuffed in the hallway. The guards consisted of four soldiers and a major. I was warned not to talk or turn. They brought me to the airport and put me in an An-24 passenger plane. Two soldiers sat in front, two in the back, and a major nearby. People looked at me with apprehension and condemnation. I was in their eyes a terrible criminal. We flew to Nikolaevsk-on-Amur.

Each prison conducted its own personal search. In Nikolaevsk, the petty officer seems to have been experienced, checking very carefully. I cried strenuously to the Lord that He would allow me keep a ten-ruble bill I had, because I would need it very much! He was probing a few inches away from where the money was hidden. Suddenly the captain comes up and says to the petty officer: "They've gone through more than one prison, what do you want to find there?" The Chief threw me my thing, and the money remained undetected. God made a miracle in response to my plea!

A few days later I was taken to the airport without handcuffs. All day long we waited for a flight to Chumikan. My guards were buying buns, drinking tea, and I was sitting hungry. I thought I'd swallow a bun without chewing, but no one gave me anything until we went back to prison. On the second day too, there was no flight. It wasn't until the third day that I got on the plane. Looking through the porthole at the vast expanses of the Far East, I thought: where am I? where do I have to live for three years? Only swamps and lakes could be seen below, and there was no vegetation. "Chumikan!" Announced the flight attendant. Going down the ladder, I looked around: not a single policeman. "Are you Germaniuk?" The dispatcher came up to me. "We have your documents. Don't worry, you cannot escape anywhere, even you want to. The village is two-and-a-half miles from the airport. Buses don't circulate here. Go to the police station." So, I found myself in Chumikan, in the north of Khabarovsk region, six thousand miles from home.

It is November. It's cold. Strong winds are blowing. Another prisoner, Michael, came to the exile with me. He served time under a political article. I took off my headdress and, in Michael's presence, said: "Lord's land and everything that fills it! If people live here, I will live in this land to bless you, Almighty, my Lord and my God!" I was very happy with the warm things that my cellmates in Khabarovsk gave me. My companion was permeated by the wind, and I gave him something to cover himself and a fur hat. We went to the village. It seemed to us very small, terrible, lost in the taiga. It seemed to have more dogs than people. I didn't expect to be sent to a good place. In smoke-filled, soiled clothes, unshaven, we went to the police chief. "Are you going to settle here?" He asked coldly, looking at my case-file. I had no particular desire to say anything to this man. But still I said: "I am a preacher of the gospel by calling." "We figured you out!" He waved. "In a week or two you will drink like everyone else. Everyone drinks here," he repeated quite convincingly. The police chief set us up for work. Michael, my political fellow-prisoner - for carpentry work and me, as menial bookkeeper, - in the district consumer union. I was so tired that I swayed from the wind and could hardly speak. I craved ordinary human conditions, I wanted to clean myself up and rest. But there was nowhere to lay down my head. When I came to the foreman, I said: "I was sent to your place of work. I am banished since I believe in God, for this 'crime' I found myself in your lands." Those present abandoning their tasks, looked up to me surprised by my statement.

None of them had ever seen a believer in this village. I was hired as a caretaker and allocated a room in the common dormitory. When I got there and saw that there was dirt, unspoken drunkenness, indescribable debauchery, I decided that I would not be there for a single night. The cashier from the work crew, Nadezhda Efimovna Vyushkova, volunteered to walk with me through the village and look for some quarter. I later learned that her husband's parents were believers. After talking to me a little, she said to her husband at home: "Ilyusha, a man who believes in God like your father did, has been exiled to Chumikan. He must have come here for us." For a long time, we walked with Nadezhda Efimovna in the village, but people did not agree to accept someone banished like me, saying: "No, that's enough, I'm sick of these brawlers and drunkards!" We went to an old lady. "No," she immediately refused. I begged her: "Grandma, I believe in God. You won't regret taking me into a room. I'll help you!" "Yes, he is a believer," confirmed Nadezhda Efimovna, "let him in, please!" "Well, if you're a 'god-ner,' (a believer, N. Ed.) I'll take you. Come back in two days." The same day I went to Michael's to see how he got settled. He sat on a bare bed and trembled with the cold. "We were brought here to die!" He said desperately. "In the dormitory, fear is as cold as it is! There is absolutely nothing. We're not going to make it!" "How much money did you get?" I asked. I took it to the store, bought an electric plate for four and a half rubles, and for the rest of the money we took powdered milk, pasta, potatoes and other trifles. Back in the dormitory, I cooked him milk soup, cooked borscht. He ate and came to life, smiled. I tried to convince him not to touch alcohol in any way: "Then you will survive and return to your family, otherwise you will die! God will not let us fall into an abyss," I said confidently.

On the appointed day, I went to see the old lady who promised to take me in. The hostess gave me a room in which she put a bed and a chair. I knelt there and prayed aloud, thanking God for the roof over my head, for the mistress who accepted me, asked for blessings for life in this room. Upon receiving my letter, my wife Asya upon the advice given, travelled to Kiev to Lidia Mihaelovna Vins:" Go see him immediately", said Lidia Mihaelovna. This dear sister, being the future chairwoman of the Unregistered Baptists, responsible for prisoners' families, related to the prisoners and their families in a motherly way. In this instance, she gave Asya funds for the journey and her own overcoat so that she wouldn't freeze, and requested that she make haste. Asya flew in to me on Dec. 25th, the day of Christ's birth. I received word from the airport that my wife had arrived. At this time of year in Chemikan, blizzards rage. The recent snowfall was so great that all that was visible of the telegraph poles, were the tips. I struggled, wondering how I would pick her up at the airport. But here the Lord performed a miracle. On board that flight happened to be the secretary of the district party committee. For him was dispatched a military, all-terrain vehicle. My wife was brought in this car, together with the secretary of the district committee! Seeing that an unusual car stopped near the office, I did not have time to think anything, as in the open hatch appeared my Asenka! I ran and helped her out. "Oh, where did you go?" Asia exclaimed, looking around. Snow - above a tall man's height, but so soft that one can just drown in it. Asi's heart was bursting with emotion: how to live here? In the evenings Asi and I sang a lot, finding solace in poetic lines. So, we sang with profound feeling. By the New Year, Asia had flown home with the firm intention of selling all our property and flying to Chumikan with our children in the spring. My life became monotonous and measured again. I lived in an apartment. Every day I went to work, then chopped wood, heated the stove, cleaned the house, often cooked Ukrainian borscht and dumplings. When it came time to pay the rent, the landlady categorically refused to take the money: "I can't take a penny! I'm the one who has to pay you!"

She herself worked in three places; guard in the district committee, handywoman in the same district committee and a loader in some warehouse. She drank everything she earned. I told her a lot about God, but it didn't come to her much. I begged her to stop drinking, but she didn't want to hear about it. One day my landlady brought a bottle of champagne and begged me: Grigoryevich, at least drink a gulp! It's a great holiday now, have a drink! But I firmly said: "Not a drop! I told you I don't drink and I never will!" For some reason I immediately felt that it was some kind of provocation. The old lady was very persistent. Later it became known that the bottle was given to her by the police chief. He wanted to prove that I was just like everyone else. But he didn't make it. My mistress returned him the champagne with the words: "He doesn't drink. He doesn't drink at all."

I never found out what the word "chumikan" means. The village was located on the very shore of the Sea of Okhotsk. There lived mainly Tungus, Evenki, Nanai and Yakuts. It was only possible to get to Chumikan by plane. In the season of navigation, there were cargo barges: clothes and food were delivered to the village. From Khabarovsk to Chumikan – close to one thousand miles. There was always a wind, and its speed sometimes reached 115 feet per second. The wind often ripped roofs off the houses. "The Supreme" – a dry wind, cold, very dangerous in winter. There are no bees in Chumikan, plants do not secrete nectar, because even in the summer at night there is frost. Flowers there do not emit any smell. It is warm for about a month, in July-August. Fruit trees in Chumikan do not grow. But there is a lot of fish. I didn't work for long in the district consumer union. I began to ask the Lord to spare me the unbearable work. Soon the accountant became ill and died suddenly. I was invited to this institution as chief accountant. I agreed, seeing this invitation as the Lord's answer to my prayers. In April 1978, my family came to me: Asya, Lilia, Olga and Slava. Two older children remained in Ukraine: Galya had already left for Luhansk to study, and Fisha was drafted into the army. Asia sold her house in Lysychansk and came to Chumikan, as if forever. The first time the family lived with me in the apartment. Asha got a job as a nurse in the hospital, in the TB department. We were happy to settle down. In the evenings we all sang from the bottom of our hearts, glorifying the great God. The children brought a guitar with them, which was a great joy for me and we could spend time in sweet communion - we sang a lot, read the Bible together. I planted a small vegetable garden near the house. I planted potatoes in stones, because this was the only way they could grow in the Far East, where summer lasts only two months. The sun heats up the stones and the potatoes grow, albeit slightly deformed. We had enough of it for the whole winter. We soon became friends with a family who lived next door. I visited them often and learned that the father of the head of the family, had been killed many years ago for preaching the gospel. I also learned that they knew Yevgeny Rodoslavov, (**also helped by this mission**, N. Ed.) a Christian who had been exiled in the neighboring village of Bogorodskoye. Through his testimony, several of their family members turned to the Lord. When the head of the local party committee heard, he said: "Look, this Baptist outwitted us. Even here he has paradise!" (*Continuation about his second 3-years imprisonment for the faith, in the June 2021 newsletter! Adapted excerpts from a published autobiography in Russian, sent to the mission by brother Stepan Germaniuk.*)

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|-----|-------------------|-----------|----------------------------|------|------------|
| 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 | Романюк | Владимир | Николаевич | 1958 | Украина |
| 414 | Тиссен | Давид | Давидович | 1958 | Россия |
| 415 | ТУРКЕВИЧ | Василий | Тарасович | 1958 | Украина |
| 416 | Барнов | Степан | Павлович | 1959 | Украина |
| 417 | ДРИСВЯННИКОВ | АЛЕКСАНДР | АЛЕКСАНДРОВИЧ | 1959 | Россия |
| 418 | СВЯТЦОВА | 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 | Украина |
| 428 | ШВЕЦОВА | Анна | ВЛАДИМИРОВНА | 1962 | Украина |
| 429 | Богодирков | 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>**

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