

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 Wurmbbrand with wife, Sabina

June 2021

“Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbour unto him that fell among the thieves? And he said, He that shewed mercy on him. Then said Jesus unto him, Go, and do thou likewise.” (Luke 10:36-37)

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From an unpublished Bible meditation by late Reverend Richard Wurmbbrand

A DIVINELY INSPIRED CHOICE

Lord Jesus, the Son of God, owed us nothing. But He condescended to be our friend and to save us, though this cost him a whole life of suffering and dying on a cross. This was an act of kindness toward the entire humanity.

He expects us also to be kind.

To be born a Jew, a Samaritan, a Catholic or Protestant does not depend upon us. It did not depend upon us to be born in a free country or in one enslaved by the Communists. It is not in our power to be white, black or yellow, handsome or ugly, even most of the time, being poor or rich, healthy or sick. But to be forbearing and kind are matters of our own choice.

The Samaritan in Jesus' parable had been born in a false religion. He worshipped what he knew not. (John 4.22) On purpose the Parable of the Good Samaritan shows how those knowledgeable of the right religion, the priest and the Levite passed on the other side when suddenly shocked by the sight of an apparently near-death body. A man robbed and left for dead by thugs. They realized the location was infested with dangerous criminals. For their own safety, they hurried away.

The Samaritan, though aware of an impending danger to himself, stopped not just to take a look at the dying man but the Bible text adds "he went unto him" and out of compassion, took charge. He was kind toward a man fallen in mischief. And Jesus tells us to do like him.

The kindest thing which I can do for a fellow man is to help him become a child of God. Soon the Lord will return together with His mighty angels to give rest to the believers. (2nd Thessalonians 1:7-8) It is our duty to do as the good Samaritan, to be kind, to warn people and to give them the wisdom for salvation.

The great problem is not if Christianity will be destroyed by its persecutors. The problem is if Atheism will survive its inner weakness, that mortal godlessness. Atheists have to forget about death and the promise of eternal life in order to be able to deliver their weak and unconvincing lectures, which they themselves don't believe wholeheartedly.

"VISHKA", a newspaper of the communist party organization of BAKU, in the former Soviet Union wrote on October 16, 1971, an interesting article about the failure of the atheistic indoctrination efforts of Soviet communists, indoctrination efforts that went on for more than 50 years. The writer points out, "Not many of the inhabitants of BAKU know that we have since four years a museum of Atheism." The author of the article visited it. He continues, "the museum propagandists here were not used to visitors. The museum has 17 workers. But they have no work to do, because nobody buys what they would like to propagate. . . . The library of the museum is locked. The exhibits of the museum rot, though their designation is for broad propaganda of scientific Atheism . . . It is no secret that the scientific Atheist propaganda efforts in KIROVABAD, NAKHCHIVAN, AGDAM and other (Soviet) towns are on very low level."

Atheists will never understand that the three greatest Christian virtues remain: faith, hope and charity. Apostle Paul wrote in 1st Corinthians 13:13, "And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity." These three virtues cannot appear other than together. Where there is no faith, hope and charity do not appear. Nobody shows interest to read that we descend from some apes, that we have no Heavenly Father and that after death everything will be finished.

Christ has shown you kindness. Imitate the example of the good Samaritan. Show kindness toward your fellow man by telling one and all the story of Christ and of those who suffer intense persecution for their Christian faith. Bring those around you to become believers, whose heart will find rest in Christ.



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!)



**Constantin
CARAMAN**

Suffered 5 years imprisonment for the faith, in communist Romania. After the fall of the communist regime, he opened a Christian printing press in one of the prison cells pastor Wurmbbrand had been held in during his 14 years imprisonment. **Read his testimony in the 6/2018 Newsletter.**



Ilie NEAMTU

On the 1st of July 1985 this Pentecostal minister was kidnapped off the streets by the Romanian communist secret police. His wife and seven children remained without subsistence. Imprisoned 15 feet underground in a dark and freezing cell, his life was saved by a vision! **Read his testimony in the 6/2018 Newsletter.**



Baptist Traian BAN

Sentenced to 20 years of hard-labor prison in communist Romania, the communists claimed at his trial, he tried to overthrow the communist regime “through prayer!”

Read his full testimony in the 7/2018 Newsletter.



Teodor BABUT

Sentenced to 20 years of hard-labor prison in communist Romania, he met a Calvinist minister who told him: “Lord Jesus joined me bearing same chains, riding with me in the same car of the communist police.” **Read his full testimony in the 7/2018 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, April and May 2021 newsletter!

My Second Imprisonment

“After having been held during the three years of banishment on the farthest shores of eastern Siberia, in the small village of Chumikan, the authorities did not like the fact that myself and family returned to the Ukraine and bought one humble unit in a two-units building in Tsupovka. The deputy chief of police said that he would take all measures to terminate the sales contract and evict me with my family. “We don't need you here at all! Get out wherever you want! ...” - he shouted in anger.

The KGB (Soviet secret police N.T.) were not slow to enforce the threat. On behalf of the owner of the second half of the house, a lawsuit was filed as if she was the one who had tried to buy the part of the house we had purchased. We were invited to court to terminate the contract. The entire church prayed the Lord should to protect us. I went to my neighbor, and she with tears (apparently, her conscience bothered her) said: “You are good people, but for two weeks every day KGB workers came to me and demanded to start a lawsuit. They even promised to give me money, so long as you don't live here.” At my request, the neighbor wrote a counter statement that she had no complaints against us and was not against our living next door to her.

My wife Asya and I wrote a cover letter, indicating that the lawsuit from a neighbor is a scam and if our sale and purchase agreement is terminated, the whole world will know about it. We handed over our letter and the counter statement from our neighbor to the judge. The case was closed. We could remain to live in Tsupovka.

The local authorities were very angry with me. Each time a church service was violently dispersed by the KGB, I was imprisoned for fifteen days. In 1981, before the summer came, I was imprisoned four times just because I attended a meeting of believers.

Once all brethren of our church were taken to the police station. All authorities gathered there: the chairman of the executive committee, the head of the police and others. One man wearing civilian clothes only pestered me:

"You taught the children (religion.) What right do you have to do this?"

"Who are you?" - I could not resist.

"A teacher" he snapped.

"You are not a teacher at all, you are a KGB-ist (secret communist police officer N.T.), and my conversation with the KGB ended long time ago!"

A criminal case was brought against me again. Brothers from the Nonregistered Baptist Regional Council offered me to go in an "underground" mode and continue to work in God's field. I accepted this offer, and after the marriage of my eldest daughter I left home. In October 1981, I was inducted into the Council of Churches with the right to ordain. So, I began to serve in all associations where circumstances required it. The illegal situation naturally created its own difficulties. At that time there were problems in the Central Asian (Baptist) Union, where one of the ministers hatched a plan to separate the churches from the brotherhood. Gennady Konstantinovich sent me to Central Asia to help the ministers resolve difficult issues. For me, this was a very difficult assignment, since for a long time I had no communication with the people of God and myself still needed spiritual support.

Boris Yakovlevich Schmidt was sent with me. He was a courageous, experienced minister, well versed in Christian teaching.

I was shy in front of him. However, he did not want to be in front.

"You were put first, you lead," - he said, - "and I will be the second."

No matter how I begged him, he never gave up. He helped me a lot in the ministry.

When Boris Yakovlevich was arrested, Nikolai Abramovich Cracker came to help me. He was not as strong in dogmatics as Boris Yakovlevich, but he was a man of prayer. God blessed him abundantly. We held talks, explained in the communities the position of the Council of Churches, and there was no division in Central Asia. However, we have had to endure a lot of ridicule and humiliation from carnal Christians who were determined to divide the church. All these difficulties helped us know our Lord, the need for the power of the Holy Spirit. As we received the gift of grace from the Heavenly Father, we were sincerely happy and willing to serve Him with a greater zeal.

In 1982 my son Fish decided to start his own family. He was a special child among my children. I've always missed him in a special way. When he grew up and entered into a covenant with the Lord, I began to like him even more with his striving for God, his desire to live holy.

The chosen one was Valentina - a Christian from a small village in the Luhansk region. The wedding was planned to be held at the bride's parents. In those years, in the Luhansk region, a certain Babushkin was the authorized representative of the Soviet Minister for Religious Cults - a man who terribly hated believers. On the day of the wedding, he set up police posts at all entrances to the village, giving the command not to let any of the believers through. Babushkin was sure that I would appear at this family celebration and that I could be arrested.

I actually arrived for the wedding, but no one touched me - God did not allow them, my time had not come yet. I came to the village a week before marriage to help my relatives put up a large tent. We expected many guests for the wedding celebration. During the week the authorities did not disturb us. But on Sunday, Babushkin himself directed the operation to intercept believers. Fish, my son, went to him, asked him not to darken the wedding celebration and let his friends pass, but he was relentless.

"Your father is an anti-Soviet!" Babushkin shouted furiously. "And you are the same! You all need to be exiled to Siberia so that they don't lead astray our heads here!"

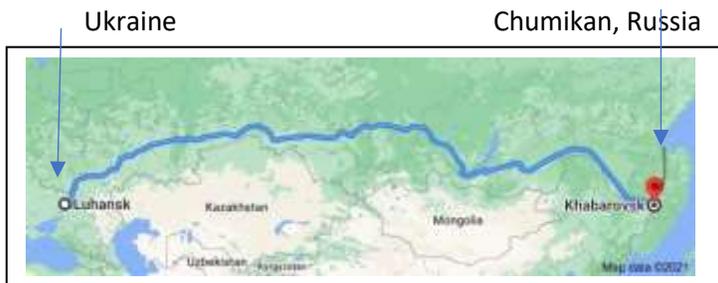
Despite all hindrances, some brothers and sisters still succeeded to arrive at the place of worship. The Lugansk choir was in full force. The wedding was performed by M.I. Azarov from Belgorod. (Baptist minister Azarov was sentenced eventually to 5 years imprisonment for the faith. He has also been helped by our mission. N. T.) When the time came to pray, I prayed without leaving the choir, where I had been sitting from the very beginning of the service. Hearing my prayer, Babushkin said: "Look what is being done!" He claimed I had recorded the prayer on a cassette and played it! He didn't realize he was hearing a real voice, not a tape recording! Asya was very worried about my well-being and after the prayer she began to ask me to leave as soon as possible, otherwise they would arrest me. For her sake, I left, and no one touched me. The wedding feast was remembered not only by me. That day it was raining so hard that I, hiding in a friend's house, could not find peace. I constantly cried out to God, asked for His mercy, but the rain did not stop. Everything on the tables ended up damp and spoiled. This was the greatest challenge for me. I could not understand why it all happened this way? I have known dozens of times when God clearly intervened and changed the weather conditions, but this time it was not part of His plans. And we only had to humble ourselves before His holy will and learn precious lessons for ourselves.

In 1983, having returned one day from Central Asia, I decided to visit my native Luhansk region, to visit friends. I traveled all over the region, in many communities I made a breaking of bread, since it was before Easter, and there were not enough ministers. I intended to celebrate Easter in Lugansk. On Saturday I was in communication with the regional council, then went to Pavel Rytikov (the son of Pavel Timofeevich). (Suffered 3 years imprisonment. Now helped by our mission. N.T.) We talked a little with him, prayed and got ready for the festive service. Of course, no one knew that our brother's house was being bugged. This became clear only when Alexander Vasilyevich Krugov (sentenced for the faith to 10 years imprisonment. Now helped by our mission. N.T.) were arrested there, and then Mikhail Sergeyevich Krivko (sentenced for the faith to 10 years imprisonment. Now helped by our mission. N.T.)

At midnight, Pavel and I took a taxi to the place of worship. We went out at a distance from the house where they planned to hold the underground church service. As soon as we got out of the car, two people jumped out from around the corner and imperiously demanded to show the documents. "Show yours first," I said. They flashed their identity cards of the State Security Committee, grabbed me and did not release me. It was on the night of May 8, 1983. They took my bag and, putting me in a car, took me to the Artyomivske police station of the city of Lugansk. With me was a cassette with a speech by Georgy Petrovitch Vins, a sound sermon by Gennady Konstantinovich Kryuchkov to the Dzhabul Church, a tape recorder and cassettes with sermons of Jarl Nikolayevich Peisti about discipleship, as well as a commentary on the Epistle of the Apostle Paul to the Corinthians. The KGB-ists took all these and openly triumphed because they had arrested me on the eve of Easter.

I had to meet the bright holiday of the resurrection of Jesus Christ in the "bullpen," a large cell where prisoners are detained until brought into court - no joy, only pain and sadness. Moreover, it was as if an incredibly heavy stone crushed me. I could neither sing, nor pray, nor cry. I have never felt such heaviness in my life. A drunk was lying in the corner of the cell, muttering incoherently.

(Over)



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! **Upon his return to Ukraine, he was imprisoned again for his Christian activities.**

At six in the morning, quite unexpectedly, singing was heard: “He is alive! He's alive! He trampled death!” I became alert. The essence of what I heard reached the depths of my soul, and streams of tears gushed from my eyes. A heavy stone fell from my soul. The heart again reached out to God, finding in Him both consolation, and strength, and joy. Luganskan youth sang. When they learned that I was arrested, they came to the bullpen building with a song. I really needed this consolation, and the Lord was quick to support me. A lot of young people came. This caused alarm in the police station, and I was urgently taken to the regional prosecutor's office. There a certain Ryabov, a deputy regional prosecutor, came to me and he had been the prosecutor at my first trial. Our interview was not over yet, and friends were already at the building of the regional prosecutor's office and sang a solemn song about the victory of life over death, about the resurrection of our Lord and Savior.

Dear Church! How beautiful she is in her love, in her desire and readiness to lay down her soul for her neighbor! Friends brought me food and clothes: a coarse wool jacket, which I did not part with, all the time, as well as boots, a shirt. The brothers and sisters accompanied me all the way back to the detention center. They sang, wishing me to stand in the truth and remain faithful to God.

So, I was deprived of my dear freedom and my second stage of wanderings through Soviet jails began. The places are already familiar - either a special detention center, a pre-trial detention center or a prison, as it is usually called. I was a little surprised that in the ten years since my first time in the (Soviet) prisons, nothing had changed. I still thought there had been some kind of change for the better. But alas!”

(Adapted excerpts from a published autobiography in Russian, sent to the mission by brother Stepan Germaniuk.)

(Brother Germaniuk’s wife Asya was also imprisoned for several months and died 2 months after release, while Germaniuk was still imprisoned during his second three-year term. N.T.)

409	Власенко	Валентин	Медведевич	1958	Украина
410	Вольф	Андрей	Корнеевич	1958	Казакстан
411	Курбан	АЛЕКСЕЙ	ЯКОВЛЕВИЧ	1958	Россия
412	Левин	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	СВЕРЦОВА	ЛЮБОВЬ	НИКОЛАЕВНА	1959	Россия
419	Варовин	Виталий	Федотович	1959	Россия
420	Дубицкий	СЕРГЕЙ	АДАМОВИЧ	1959	Россия
421	Лашенко	Борис	Владимирович	1959	Украина
422	Тыченко	ИВАН	ИВАНОВИЧ	1959	Казакстан
423	МАРЧЕНКО	Станислав	Павлович	1960	Украина
424	Донченко	Александр	Максимович	1960	Украина
425	Омзиков	Венедикт	Александрович (Валерианов)	1960	Узбекистан
426	Савченко	Михаил	Михайлович	1960	Эстония
427	Федеева (ШВЕЦОВА)	ДИНА	ВЛАДИМИРОВНА	1961	Алания
428	ШВЕЦОВА	Анна	ВЛАДИМИРОВНА	1962	Алания
429	Богодирмов	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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