

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

July 2020

"Behold, there come seven years of great plenty throughout all the land of Egypt."

(Genesis 41:29)

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 prisons.

From an unpublished Bible meditation by late Reverend Richard Wurmbbrand

LOVE IS STRONG AS DEATH!

In this biblical record of the history of Joseph (Genesis Chapters 39-46) you can find the three secrets of a successful Christian message. Joseph, from being sold as a slave, from being in a prison, became the prime minister of Egypt. How did this happen? Why this exceptional blessing over Egypt? Why should it have great plenty and be warned of famine in meager years to follow?

1. The Pharaoh of that time was every inch a king. He acted as a king not only when awake. His subconscious was also filled with concern for the welfare of his people and he would dream about it at night. Every Christian is a king. Luther said "A Christian is a perfectly free lord of all, subject to none." But a Christian is a loving king. Therefore, Luther adds, "A Christian is a servant of all, subject to all."

A Christian does not have to strive to be a soul-winner; it is no imposition to him to place the well-being of the church first. His Christian belief has pervaded his subconscious. He simply is a soul-winner, a man who puts God's Kingdom first. When he falls asleep, when the power of will disappears, the extension of God's Kingdom will be his dream. In my life, my dream from the first day of my conversion, has been to witness Christ to the Russians. Such dreams are always fulfilled.

2. Pharaoh, the dreamer of good, meets another dreamer of dreams, Joseph, and unites with him. When I came to the West after many years of dreaming in Communist prisons about reaching the Communist world with the Word of God, I met Western pastors and believers who had had the same dream but did not know how to fulfill it. We could unite.

3. Pharaoh was completely unprejudiced. He was advised to call to his court a foreigner with another color of skin, a man who worshipped only one unseen God, even a prisoner with a very bad reputation. The charge for which Joseph had been jailed, was assault on a woman with the intention to rape. Yet, who knew if the charges against Joseph were true? Slaveholders in Egypt often jailed their slaves without a fair trial.

For this Pharaoh, every man could be used for the welfare of the country. Men who had committed very bad deeds yesterday, could have become good men this morning. The fulfilling of these conditions gave Egypt a great plenty and provision for themselves and their neighbors in times of famine.

We, also, have not the slightest prejudice. Saint Paul had been a torturer of Christians. A torturer if repentant, can be a future apostle. We just love him and try to win him for Christ.

Is somebody a traitor of the Underground Church, or a church leader who compromises with Communism in the West? We don't wonder. The heart of every man is easily deceived. We love him and try to win him for the right attitude.

Communism wishes to dominate the white, black, yellow nations. But the wise Solomon wrote: "Love is strong as death" (Song of Songs 8:6). Death, and Communism, one of its harbingers wishes men of all races. So wishes Christian love! "God has made all men of one blood" (Acts 17:26) All men, good and bad, of all religions and races "live and move and have their being in Him" (Acts 17:28) The Chinese Communists torture Christians. Then we must make greatest effort preach them the Gospel. Rioting youth in America are destroying university buildings. Let us then preach to them the Gospel. We wish to win for Christ the Communists and those of all races oppressed or led astray by them. We must have inwardly the right attitude of love. The Communist torturers are themselves unhappy. A Communist police officer in Russia broke out in tears while beating a Christian and cried out to him: "You believe yourself a good man and forget about me. You become a martyr and go to heaven but I end up being a murderer. What about me? I beat you and I go to hell." Christian love can create from troubles, opportunities!



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)

Some pictures of Christians Imprisoned for the Faith, Helped with your Gifts!
Read their testimonies in our past newsletters at <http://helpforrefugees.com> (third column!)



Paiunov Feodor

was imprisoned 7 years in the former Soviet Union. He was persecuted by Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev because he was part of a delegation asking religious freedom. Read his testimony in the 7/2017 Newsletter.



Reverend Petru Pecican

suffered 11 years in communist prisons in Romania, because, as he described it: “saying a decisive NO with word and deed to atheism and communism.” He died when 96. Read his testimony in the 8/2017 Newsletter.



Rev. Augustin Prundus

suffered 11½ years of imprisonment for the faith in communist Romania. He met in prison Rev. Richard Wurmbrand. Died when 89. Read his testimony in the 8/2017 Newsletter.



Andrei Yuditsev

Was sentenced at age 19 to 3½ years of prison in the former Soviet Union. His crime? He participated in unregistered Baptist church meetings. Read his testimony in the 8/2017 Newsletter.



Christians Helped with your Gifts

5 Years Communist Sentence for Transporting Bibles!

I, Oliyynyk Lydia write as follows: “My husband, Peter Oliyynyk was born in 1931. We had 9 children, 2 died. My husband Peter was a member of the (Baptist) church of the city of Lvov, (in present Ukraine, formerly part of the Soviet Union.) At one time, he studied with youthful enthusiasm and zealously participated in the Church work. He preached the Word of God and helped transport (surreptitiously printed) spiritual literature!

Church services were often held in our apartment. In 1980, believers and sisters were tried in the Soviet courts of our city Lvov.

My husband and I also attended the trial. 2 years have passed. My husband was (wrongfully) accused at his trial to have beaten a policeman. At the trial, the policeman openly lied. On February 23, 1982, my husband was convicted to five years of prison for having preached the Word of God. At the same time, they searched our apartment, broke the front door, and confiscated a lot of spiritual literature. After an appeal, his sentenced was reduced by several years so that he served only one year and nine months.

He was condemned for believing in God, for preaching the Word of God. He led an active spiritual life, and was involved in binding the secretly printed literature. It was very difficult for me! But I accepted everything, as from the Lord. He worked diligently in prison and this affected the fact that he was released ahead of schedule. God miraculously maintained my husband even in prison, he was blessed and the prison guards ended up well disposed to him. When he was released though, he could not obtain a job unless he agreed to become an informer for the KGB (the Soviet secret police.) This he refused to do. God miraculously kept us, and I thank the Lord for everything. After the liberalization period named Perestroika (the liberal-reforms introduced at first by the Soviet president Gorbachev, N. Ed.) and the dismemberment of the Soviet Union, Peter participated in the construction of a house of prayer in Lvov. Later, he began to write poetry and translate Christian books.

In September 2017, my husband went into eternity*. I sincerely thank you for your help.”
 Oliyynyk Lydia 04/30/2020 * **The mission continues sending help to the surviving spouse.**

Christians Helped with Your Gifts

Bytin Alexander Fedorovich Eight Years of Communist Imprisonment for Christian Youth-Meetings



Bitina Nina Stepanovna, widow*, wrote to us: “Bytin Alexander Fedorovich was born in the Merkulevo village, Bryansk region, Russia, on May 12, 1934. His father Fyodor died, being only 40 years old. Alexander, five, and three siblings remained in the care of their mother, Mary Marthailovna, who devoted her whole life to parenting. Mother became a Christian soon after the death of her husband. Having been baptized, she wholeheartedly loved her Savior and conveyed a living faith in God to her children. Herself and children had to walk 12 miles to attend their church. Alexander, when becoming a young man, expressed much love for the meetings of God's people. After graduating from high school, Alexander, studied in a construction college. He had to be baptized secretly since the Soviet communist authorities would not approve baptisms of persons of his age. He was 19. After graduating from college, he was sent to Kazakhstan, formerly part of the Soviet Union. Then, he was taken into the army in the city of Konotop, Sumy region (in today's Ukraine, at the time part of the Soviet Union.) After the military service, he returned to Bryansk and became a member of the official Baptist church. In 1959. Alexander Fedorovich married Shchivisenko Nina Stepanovna. God blessed them with 3 sons and 6 daughters. Being much appreciated as an engineer, he found a place of employment in Kursk, where he showed himself as an exceptional specialist in construction engineering. In this new employment position, he was given excellent housing. Yet, the authorities made an unexpected, unpleasant request: He needed write and hand to authorities a statement renouncing his belief in God. Alexander Fedorovich categorically refused. As a result, he was promptly fired.

Returning to Bezhitsa, Bryansk region, he again became a member of the local registered church, a so-called Baptist church controlled totally by the communist government. Even this church though, was closed later on by the communist authorities. Thus, he and his wife joined the underground, unregistered Baptist church. He spoke of himself as follows: ‘This is the time of my awakening as a Christian.’ On September 8th, 1968 Alexander Fedorovich was ordained to become an elder, a ministry that he performed to the end of his life.

After Alexander Fedorovich led a youth gathering in the city of Orel, just for this Christian event, he was arrested and sentenced to 3 years imprisonment. He served the prison term in the Mordovia region, Russia. When freed he returned home, for only a period of 10 months as in 1972, he was again sentenced for his underground Christian activity to another two-years prison term, this time of a harsher regime. These prison conditions were very difficult for him. He served in the north of the Ural Mountains, beyond Solikamsk, close to Siberia. There he became seriously ill and thought that his life will end. But God was always close to those who suffer. When he ended this prison sentence, he ended up again being arrested and sentenced to 3 more years of prison. Though there were suspicions that this time he would betray the underground church, through fasting, prayer and the support of friends, God gave strength to Alexander Fedorovich to resist and all the designs of the evil one was shattered. He did not betray the brethren working surreptitiously printing Christian literature. After the major political changes brought about by the liberalization period named Perestroika (the liberal-reforms introduced at first by the Soviet president Gorbachev, N. Ed.) and the dismemberment of the Soviet Union, being a construction engineer, he took part in building many houses of prayer. On the early morning of Sunday, June 8, 2008, Alexander Fedorovich went to eternity*. His family wrote, We were deprived of a father, a mentor, of a counselor but the word of God comforts us with the words found in Hebrews 13:7: ‘Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation.’ Amen.”

* The mission continues sending help to the surviving spouse.

Orphans Helped with Your Gifts



Above, Elena V. when eight

Now twelve, Elena wrote: “We (with sister Diana, 9) arrived at Agape due to the fact that mother had serious health problems which prevented her raising us. We were raised by our grandmother till she passed away.

I was only four when I arrived at Agape and therefore, I cannot remember much about my old home. I would like in the future to become a doctor since I like to be of help to people. Here, at Agape, I feel good and I learned about God and can prepare for what I would like to be. I feel like being in a real family! Ela”

Elena - 12

*Am ajuns la Agape deoarece mama
avea probleme puternice de sănătate
și nu a putut să ne crească. Pe noi ne-a
crescut bunica până când a decedat.
Când am venit la Agape și mi
mi amintesc prea bine cum era aici.
Le mulțumesc din toată inima medicilor deoarece
se îmi place să ajut oamenii. Aici la AGAPE
este foarte bine și învăț despre Dumnezeu
și mă pregătesc pentru ceea ce vreau să devin
Mă simt ca într-o adevărată familie*

Ela.

Christians Helped with Your Gifts

409	Власенко	Валентин	Мефодьевич	1958	Украина
410	Вольф	Андрей	Корнеевич	1958	Казакстан
411	Куркин	АЛЕКСЕЙ	ЯКОВЛЕВИЧ	1958	Россия
412	Левин	НИКОЛАЙ	ВИКТОРОВИЧ	1958	Казакстан
413	Романко	Владимир	Николаевич	1958	Украина
414	Тиссен	Давид	Давидович	1958	Россия
415	ТУРКЕВИЧ	Василий	Тарасович	1959	Украина
416	Бячнев	Степан	Павлович	1959	Украина
417	ДРИСВЯННИКОВ	АЛЕКСАНДР	АЛЕКСАНДРОВИЧ	1959	Россия
418	СКВОРЦОВА	ЛЮБОВЬ	НИКОЛАЙВНА	1959	Россия
419	Варавин	Виталий	Федотович	1959	Россия
420	Дубицкий	СЕРГЕЙ	АДАМОВИЧ	1959	Россия
421	Лашенко	Борис	Владимирович	1959	Украина
422	Татченко	ИВАН	ИВАНОВИЧ	1959	Казакстан
423	МАРЧЕНКО	Станислав	Павлович	1960	Украина
424	Донченко	Александр	Максимович	1960	Украина
425	Смаков	Венедикт	Александрович (Валерианов)	1960	Узбекистан
426	Савченко	Михаил	Михайлович	1960	Эстония
427	Федеева (ШВЕЦОВА)	ДИНА	ВЛАДИМИРОВНА	1961	Австрия
428	ШВЕЦОВА	АННА	ВЛАДИМИРОВНА	1962	Австрия
429	Богородице	Александр	Валерьевич	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:** <https://helpforrefugees.com>

Help for Refugees, Inc. PO Box 5161, Torrance, Ca. 90510, USA. Email: hfr@helpforrefugees.com, website: http://helpforrefugees.com (EIN: 95-3064521) is listed in Publication 78, Cumulative List of Nonprofit Organizations described in Section 170(c) of the Internal Revenue Service. Gifts to Help for Refugees are US tax-deductible.