

HELP FOR REFUGEES, INC.

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Late Reverend Richard Wurmland with
wife, Sabina

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“And it came to pass, that, as He was praying in a certain place, when He ceased, one of his disciples said unto Him, Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples.”

(Luke 11:1)

Late Reverend Richard Wurmland spent 14 years in Romanian communist prisons. Mrs. Wurmland was imprisoned nearly three years also for her Christian faith in same prisons.

From an unpublished Bible meditation by late Reverend Richard Wurmland:
The Three Right Prayer Requests

Like little children learning to talk, people learn to pray by praying, not by reading a book on the subject.

Is "prayer time" a religious illusion? A man making his way across the desert became terribly thirsty. At a certain moment, he passed by an oasis with palm trees, a fountain, and a woman drawing water, but he was no fool. He had read about seductive mirages that appear in the Sahara. So, he passed by this pleasant place without stopping. Why should he waste time investigating a mere illusion? He was found dead of thirst not far from the place.

Many doubt that prayer has any practical value. Some think one gets what one wants by going after it or by speaking to others about his wants, not by appealing to an unseen or perhaps nonexistent God. The history of human thought is a cemetery full of stupidities once considered certainties. For instance: Daniel Webster, Senate speech, 1848 on the acquisition of California: "I have never heard of anything, and I cannot conceive of anything more ridiculous, more absurd, and more affrontive to all sober judgment than the cry that we are profiting by the acquisition of New Mexico and California. I hold that they are not worth a dollar!" Admiral William D. Leahy to President Truman, 1945, on the Atomic Bomb: "That is the biggest foolish thing we have ever done. The bomb will never go off, and I speak as an expert in explosives." The Nobel Prize-Winner Albert Einstein was denounced at first when enouncing the well-proven Theory of Relativity as a fraud and scientific philistine. Could the negation of prayer fall into the same category of humans being blind to its power? Curiously, the Bible speaks about a rare and exquisite virtue: to hope against hope. (Romans 4:18)

In prayer, as in other matters, it is not necessary to understand everything. God has hidden from us many truths. Saint Paul wrote "If anyone thinks that he knows anything, he knows nothing yet as he ought to know." (I Corinthians 8,2)

Prayer is greatly valued by those who practice it. One of the church fathers, Tertullian, wrote: "Prayer is the one thing that can conquer God." Scientist Isaac Newton says about prayer: "I can take my telescope and look millions and millions of miles into space, but I can lay my telescope aside, go into my room, shut the door, and get down on my knees in earnest prayer, and I see more of Heaven and see more of God than I can assisted by all the telescopes and material agencies on earth." Furthermore, he said, "All my discoveries have been made in answer to prayer." During the days of the Civil War in the United States one of President Lincoln's guests had difficulty sleeping. Hearing muffled sounds coming from the room to which he believed the president had retired, he went to investigate. The door was ajar, and he could see Lincoln kneeling before an open Bible pleading with the Lord: "O God, Thou didst hear Solomon when he cried for wisdom. Hear me and save this nation!" So prayed the man who abolished slavery.

The Lord's Prayer teaches us how to genuinely pray. Let us pay close attention to it. Imagine an angel were to appear and grant you, your three foremost wishes. Though we often repeat the Lord's Prayer, how many of us would express honestly to such a wish-granting angel their top wishes:

- the hallowing of God's Name;
- the coming of His Kingdom;
- and the fulfilling of God's Will?

Saying just the words of "Our Father" and just in this order, though they don't express faithfully our state of mind in the moment of prayer, will teach us the right priorities. Repeating this prayer again and again, our thoughts will become orderly and we will get the right state of heart.

Elihu advises the suffering Job of the Bible, "Remember that thou magnify God's work" Starting with praising God's Name we stop being impressed by man's achievements. We realize we are sinners. We can end up repeating with Job when becoming aware of God's absolute supremacy, needing God's undeserved mercy, "I uttered that I understood not; things too wonderful for me, which I knew not... Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes." (Job, Chapter 42)

An artist wanted to paint an illustration of the Parable of the Prodigal Son (Luke 15, 11-32.) This son returned to his rich father, whom he had forsaken willfully, after wasting his inheritance. The painter hired as a model a vagrant in rags. This poorly dressed homeless would show how the son returned from many days of suffering hunger, having been a menial watcher of pigs. The next day, the hired beggar after receiving some money as an advance, came to the studio with a haircut and in decent clothes. The painter promptly dismissed him. He no longer had value as a model.

Grace is only for sinners.

When we ask in prayer for God's Kingdom to come, we understand Lord Jesus' words "My kingdom is not of this world" (John 18:36) and further Him saying "God is spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." We raise above our wishes for the material world.

Finally, accepting God's Will, we realize how we are part of God's miraculous creation. Start saying the Lord's Prayer with the belief that God exists and that He rewards those who seek Him. (Hebrews 11:6)



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 Jilava.

For the past 40 years, HELP FOR REFUGEES, INC. has extended financial support to Christian refugees from communist countries, orphans and Christians who had been imprisoned for their faith in present and former communist countries. Also helped is the Richard Wurmbrand College, a high school in Iasi where many children of disadvantaged families are able to study. See <http://helpforrefugees.com>. Anyone may use a "DONATE" button on site. "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world." (Apostle James Epistle 1:27)

Helped with your Gifts, Student Becomes a Christian High School Math Teacher Iustina Svartz



"As of 2014, I am a math teacher at the Richard Wurmbrand College (the high school in Iasi, Romania.) I was born in a Christian family of 6 and grew up in a village about 125 miles away from Iasi. When finishing 8th Grade back in my home village, I had to choose to go to a new school for my high school studies. The Richard Wurmbrand School choir came to our church and I remember how they presented the school and I liked the idea. Being however aware of all the costs, I didn't consider it an option. I applied with a school in a city close to my home. Then my parents were informed that I could go to the Wurmbrand school and that someone would sponsor my studies there. I prayed about it with my family and in the autumn of 2007 I decided to move to the city of Iasi and go to the Wurmbrand school. I was nervous and even scared at times, but I don't regret the choice I made!

As a Wurmbrand student, I had great opportunities to develop and learn. I enjoyed the Character classes, the projects we could attend (such as the Truth Project) and I could see how the teachers were really interested in all of us and they cared both for the theoretical knowledge but also for our souls. I would hear rumors about how they are not paid on time, but I never heard any of them complaining*. They always came prepared to the class, and even bought us gifts for Christmas and books for our final day of school. I don't know how they made it, but I could see the sacrifice and endurance they all had. Nowhere in an ordinary school would you see teachers sharing their resources with their students, especially when their own resources were limited or challenged.

As a little girl, I dreamt becoming a doctor. But in 2010 I attended a conference in the school. It was then when I heard this quote: "If I'm not consumed, if you are not consumed by a "fire," then who will light up the darkness around us?" This really got me thinking and I decided that the best way I could continue what my teachers started in this city was to become a teacher myself. I wished I could be a teacher at the Richard Wurmbrand high school, but I prayed that God would open the right door at the right time.

I applied and finished the Math and Computer Science Faculty here in Iasi. I was extremely happy and honored to come to an interview for a job at the Wurmbrand school and be accepted.

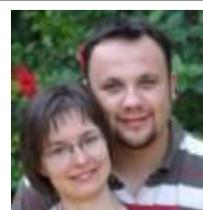
It is amazing to work with my former teachers. I love how they are still dedicated to invest in my life, how they still care about my relationship with God and how they help me become a better teacher. More than that, I can now see from the other side of the bridge – I can now pray for my own students, share in their troubles, walk along them when they hurt and when they have victories. Being a teacher at Wurmbrand is a dream that came true. It is an answer to my prayers and a wonderful opportunity for me to give what I received. I can truly say I am now paying it back! To God be all the glory!"

(*Romania is in the European Union (EU) yet a Romanian high school teacher has to work a whole year to earn what a teacher from Luxembourg EU, makes in two weeks.)

Disadvantaged Family Child, Now a Christian Teacher at The Richard Wurmbrand College in Iasi, Romania



Marta (left) doing what she loves



Cristian Lucaci,
principal of the
Richard
Wurmbrand
College
and wife
Rebeca, an
English teacher
in same high
school

This high school has
had for years, 100%
passing-results for all
its students on the 12th
Grade end-of-year
Baccalaureate State-
Administered Exam

My name is Marta Enache and I am 24 years old. I was born in the city of Negresti, Vaslui county, in a family of believers. I have two sisters and five brothers. I am the third in the family and the oldest among the sisters. In 2007, I was a student at the school in my city. I didn't care much about the environment I lived in, but one day this changed. I came back from school and heard my parents talking about a Christian school in Iasi. After a while I found out that my elder brothers were enrolled to study at this school in Iasi. A couple of days passed and a cousin of mine, very close to me, told me that she wanted to study at that same school. I became intrigued and I wanted to go study there too. I had never imagined that I would be given the chance to go out of the environment I was so used to. I remember wishing to meet new people and I was so curious to see what a Christian school would be like. In Negresti I was the only one in school who was a Christian and I remember being mocked and laughed at. Teachers and classmates alike laughed at me and always tried to pick on me.

I remember being 13 and leaving home with my two brothers. I started packing the few things I had. I knew that there was no way my parents could afford to send my brothers and I to a private school. I am so thankful for all the people who made my education possible!

I was so nervous to meet new people, teachers and classmates alike. I was thrilled by my teachers and the focus they had on character and instilling biblical values in my life. It was not easy to leave home at such an early age, but it was one of the best decisions in my life. I made long lasting friends among the teachers and my classmates. I had a lot of issues growing up... I was troubled and had no self-confidence. I felt worthless and unimportant... but the entire culture of the school, the teachers, the events, all the other students prompted me to get out of my shell. I discovered my beauty in God's eyes. I remember we were encouraged to read all the books Richard Wurmbrand had written. I received one of the Richard Wurmbrand titles published in Romania as a present from my homeroom teacher. It was through the Wurmbrand books that I became aware of my need to develop a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

Years passed, I graduated high school and university and here I was again, this time with a resume in my hand, nervous and shy to apply for a job at my former high school. I wanted to come back as a primary school teacher. How thrilled I was when the leadership team gave me an affirmative answer! This is the place where I learned to always depend on God. It is in this school that my character is tested and shaped. I have wonderful coworkers who are eager to walk by faith and not by sight.

Due to tax laws inside Romania and Eastern Europe, some help needs be sent through the local Romanian nonprofit Sabina Wurmbrand Christian Association. The financial support is distributed in turn as financial aid to Richard Wurmbrand High School, the Agape Orphanage or to many Christians in Eastern Europe, most of them now 70 to 90 years old. We help the families of those who endured many years of communist prison.

Christians Helped with your Gifts

Romanian Minister Made 11 Years of Communist Prison



Reverend Petru Pecican

He completed theological studies and a degree in philosophy. He was arrested by the communist government on 6/3/1953 and sentenced to 11 years of hard labor for “plotting against social order” according to the Communist Romanian Penal Code of that time, article 209, for his religious activities. As he describes it, “for saying a decisive NO with word and deed to atheism and communism.”

He passed through some of the most horrendous communist jails of Romania in Arad, Jilava, Gherla (where Rev. Richard Wurmbrand was imprisoned as well) Aiud, Noua Culme, Periprava where he states to have had God’s grace to personally meet a staunch representative of Romanian Christianity, a saint, Bishop Vladimir Ghika (died in the Jilava prison 1954.)

Through him and others he learned “to pray and live to practice the Christian truths in all social and political activities.” He served ALL his 11 years of prison and was freed only in 1964. He continued his underground Christian ministry until 1989 when the communist regime was overturned. He wrote to us: “with love for Jesus and profound respect and to the glory of our church!” (Died in 2015 at age 96.)

Help for Refugees, 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 Organizations described in Section 170(c) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, a list of organizations eligible to receive tax-deductible charitable contributions. May be checked online at: <http://www.irs.gov/app/pub-78/>

Christians Helped with your Gifts

Sisters Underwent Together 16 Years of Communist Prison for Their Faith



On left Prefit Olimpia, 87 years old. On right Prefit Antoneta, 90 with two other Christians.

These two sisters, gave shelter in 1950 to several ministers that were about to be arrested by the Romanian communist secret security (secret police) service. Eventually they were discovered and both sisters ended up arrested. Olimpia was sentenced to 3 years of communist prison and her sister to 7. After completing the sentence, Olimpia typed in 1967 a religious teaching booklet for children. For this alleged “crime” she ended up being again sentenced to 6 years of communist prison. Thus, Olimpia made a total of 9 years of communist prison while her sister 7 years for their Christian activities.

Christians Helped with your Gifts

Reverend Augustin Prundus
(Deceased at age 89.)

This minister was imprisoned under communism in Romania for a total of 11 ½ years (between 1948 and 1964.) The communist



government offered him to be named a figurehead-bishop were he to compromise his Christian faith. He continuously refused! After the fall of communism 1990, he wrote a very detailed book about over 300 ministers imprisoned in Romania under communism. He wrote that he met Rev. Richard Wurmbrand (most likely in prison.)

Christians helped with your gifts

Sentenced to 3½ Years of Communist Prison at age 18.



Heroes of Christianity: Andrei Yudintsev when 18 with his mother Serafima Anatolievna

Testimony of Brother Andrei Yudintsev

I thank God for He took me in His strong arms right on from my youth.

At age 18, in 1982, I was returning by train on an early Sunday morning, to my home in the city of Khartsyz'k, Soviet Union (presently in the disputed Donetsk Region, Ukraine.) I had finished a three-year carpentry technical college. Being a Sunday, I went to attend the 9AM church service. This was an illegal Baptist church unauthorized by the communist regime. Its minister E. N. Pushkov had been already sentenced to 3 years imprisonment.

Hardly 1/2 hour after the service started, communist police was at the church door. They shouted for us to get out, it is an unauthorized service. Without a judicial proceeding, the KGB used to disrupt such church services and detain most attendees for only 10-15 days. Though I knew of this church persecution, being young, I was unprepared to be harassed or arrested. I looked upon it as some kind of an adventure, being arrested 10-15 days only for my Christian faith. Anyone under the pretense of having resisted arrest, was handcuffed and placed in a special prison bus parked up the street.

Once at the communist police headquarters, we were placed in a room with some of the believers and interrogations started.

The police officer inquired my name and age and appeared delighted having gotten hold of me. I was not aware at the time that the KGB had been under orders to arrest my parents. My mother had annoyed greatly the communist police because she helped repeatedly to publicize all the names of the persecuted believers in that region of the Soviet Union. According to Soviet laws at the time, the KGB could not perfunctorily detain my mother because she had several underage children.

Anyhow, I thought I was going to be arrested for only a few days. Yet, I was sentenced hurriedly to three and a half years of prison under the "fingering" charge of having supposedly resisted arrest as a group. Actually, it was for our illegal Christian activity. By sentencing me, they revenged for the publicizing activities of my mother.

Once in the prison cell, thirty pairs of eyes looked upon me. An inner voice advised me be as polite and humble as possible. I humbly asked for a cot, for a dish, a cup. I was placed in a cell with common-law inmates, some of them violent. They pestered me with questions since they did not understand or believe how and why I wound up in prison so young, with such a sentence, if I had not committed some major crime. An inner voice told me to answer to all questions quoting Scripture as much as possible. Myself was surprised by the power of the Word of God. All of a sudden, many passages from the Bible, I heard about in Sunday School or at church, appeared in my mind.

Among the questioners were many KGB provocateurs. By obtaining information (of the underground church activities) they were hopeful to reduce their own prison terms. Someone, not liking my answers asked: "How come you do not answer with a personal opinion?" I told him, "I am 18 only, so not much experience but God speaks through the Bible." This quieted down one and all questions.

It is hard to believe even for myself how God miraculously guided and protected me. Like the three friends of Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, (Daniel 3:8-30) I also came out unharmed from the burning cauldron of the KGB.