

HELP FOR REFUGEES, INC.

A tax-exempt, non-profit corporation

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Late Reverend Richard Wurmland with
wife, Sabina

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" As we have heard, so have we seen in the city of the Lord of Hosts, in the city of our God: God will establish it for ever." (Psalm 48:8)

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

From an unpublished Bible meditation by late Reverend Richard Wurmland:

God's Disappointment in Us, His Children!

Everyone of us, during our lifetime, is bound to be bitterly disappointed. You trust a person who turns out to be unreliable. You count upon riches and such disappear. Jacob of the Old Testament worked hard for seven years to obtain the hand of his beloved Rachel only to find out on the wedding-day how he was tricked by his father-in-law Laban. He was not about to be embracing Rachel but her less beautiful sister Leah (Genesis 29:25.) We grew up, we studied, obtained skills or a profession, only to find out how little appreciated is the work we do. Many a times we might be replaced by a machine. Sometimes people of less knowledge are taking our place. We raised children at great cost and nurture hidden hopes of counting on them in our old age. In best case, they just move away and get on with their lives. In worst, they cause us grief. We might have given our all for some political ideal, only to discover later, even though the ideal triumphed, it was just illusory. How many communists sincerely sacrificed to build the communist ideal society, only in the end to be killed by their own comrades.

The Bible teaches we are not alone in our being let down. Angels get disappointed too. Lord Jesus said, "there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth" (Luke 15:10.) How much angels might have been glad when Judah Iscariot became one of the twelve Apostles. How sorry they must have been finding out about his betrayal of the Son of God. Angels might have been thinking that Judas Iscariot, one of the twelve chosen Apostles of Jesus Christ, has the courage to go to the Chief Priests, that he will tell them about the Savior, Jesus Christ. The Angels will have thought that a man has had the courage to go to the Pharisees and take the defense of truth. The Angels, or perhaps even the colleagues of Judas Iscariot, the other Apostles, may have believed that Judas was going for this purpose to the Chief Priests. For comparison Elijah went to King Ahab to tell him of his unrighteousness. St. John the Baptist condemned King Herod to his face and Lord Jesus openly called Pharisees in the Temple, "brood of vipers." So now, one of the Apostles of Jesus, Judas Iscariot, went to the Chief Priests. He did not go to witness to them for Christ but to betray Christ. Angels rejoice when a sinner repents and therefore how great must be their despair when this believer renounces faith.

God even ends up disenchanted. We read in Isaiah 1:2 “Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth: for the Lord hath spoken, I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me.” Isaiah writes further, “My well-beloved hath a vineyard in a very fruitful hill: and he fenced it, and gathered out the stones thereof, and planted it with the choicest vine, and built a tower in the midst of it, and also made a winepress therein: and he looked that it should bring forth grapes, and it brought forth wild grapes.”(Isaiah 5:1-2) In the Parable of the Laborers in the Vineyard (Matthew 21:33-41) the owner of the vineyard having to deal with rebellious, even criminal workers, sent his own son to pacify them. He told himself, “They will reverence my son.” Yet the Parable continues, “When the husbandmen saw the son, they said among themselves, This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and let us seize on his inheritance. And they caught him, and cast him out of the vineyard, and slew him.”

The Son of God knew the darkness which surrounds you in moments of despair, as He cried, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?". Many Christians in despair have cried like this, and, knowing human life from the human point of view, He became a most merciful High Priest, one who understands us. When the Devil accuses us before the judgment of God, Jesus is our Mediator and says to the Devil, "Have you ever been a man? What do you know about man? I know because I have been a man." And He even ascended in a glorified human body. He knows the power of temptation and how difficult it is to walk in the ways of the Lord. Even if a man has sinned, has made mistakes, if he has a spark of faith in his heart and turns to the Lord, God will look on him with love. Our Lord discovers everything which is beautiful in us and He makes us beautiful by His love,

God keeps covenant and mercy to them that love Him. Christians have a hope that “maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.” (Romans 5:5)

I have lived and seen this miraculous love shed abroad in the hearts of Christians. Together with many Christians I suffered 14 years in Romanian communist prisons. This heavy cross gave us the possibility of knowing a love which we had not known before. I was in the communist prison of Tirgul-Ocna, Romania. On my right was the Abbot of a Monastery, named Iscu. He had been so beaten and tortured that now he was dying in agony. On my left was a communist torturer, the one who was the cause of the death of the Abbot. It is not true that the Communists are anti-Christian or anti-Semites. They are simply “anti.” It is a “religion of hatred.” They are anti-everybody, even their own comrades. I have been in the same cell, as the Officer of the Secret Police who had interrogated me. His comrades had beaten him on the bottom of the feet. Now the murderer of the Priest was on the other side. He had been also so horribly tortured that he was dying too. The Abbot was quiet, so happy, confident that he was going to heaven. The murderer woke me up during the night and said, "Pray for me, what shall I do?". And I saw the priest, in agony, leaning on two others, going slowly, with great difficulty, to the one who had tortured him. He caressed him on his head and said, "You have been young. You have not known what you have done. I forgive you with all my heart, and Jesus is surely better than I. If I can forgive, Jesus can forgive even more than I. Only believe, only repent." The murderer received Our Lord. The Priest received his Confession and gave him Absolution, then he gave Holy Communion to his murderer. They kissed each other and they died on the same day, going hand in hand to heaven. The Psalm writer exclaims: “**As we have heard, so have we seen,**” thus no disappointment. “Apostle John wrote: “That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you.” (1 John 1:3) When stoned to death, Saint Stephen “being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up steadfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God” Stephen uttered his last words as to his tormentors, “ Lord, lay not this sin to their charge.” (Acts 7:55-60) In our disappointments, like the Christians persecuted today we are encouraged to strive to enter into the City of our God, the Heavenly Kingdom.



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 Wurmbbrand 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)

Christians Helped with Your Gifts!



The Victor FILIPSHIN Family

Brother Filipshin writes; "I was born in 1939 in a village called Zavali, Khmelnytsky Region in Ukraine, Soviet Union. Though my parents were Christians, I became a Christian only at age 25 in the year 1964 when I married. We have eight children, four sons and four daughters. In 1977 we moved to the city of Khotyn, the Chernivtsi Region also in the Ukrainian part of the Soviet Union. Together with us, a number of other families formed an underground church gathering in different homes. We did not have a formal minister. The communist authorities did not stay indifferent to our Christian witnessing. The communist police started persecuting us. One of our Christian brethren ended up sentenced to 2½ years of communist prison as the KGB considered our Christian witness a slander of the Soviet state. The police frequently arrested many of us, fined and sometimes imprisoned us for short terms without any formal sentencing. I was thus arrested twice and fined 50 rubles (about a third of a monthly salary.) One morning in 1982 the communist police descended upon my home and confiscated all the Christian literature I stored. After two months of interrogations, I was sentenced to two years of prison for insubordination to the communist authorities. My wife remained alone to take care of five minor children. Even I was imprisoned, my wife was continuously being fined. Christians in our underground house-church were able to be of some financial help. While imprisoned I had great problems with the prison guards. I was skipping communist indoctrination classes and refused to work on Sundays. In the 1980s it was usual for the communist Soviet authorities to just add 2-3 more years imprisonment to an existing sentence. The authorities were constantly threatening, yet without compromising, I was freed in 1984. After the fall of communism, in 1995, I was appointed to minister the local church in which I am still active to this day. All my thanks to the Lord."

Christians Helped with Your Gifts!

Christian Threatened with Imprisonment in a Psychiatric Ward

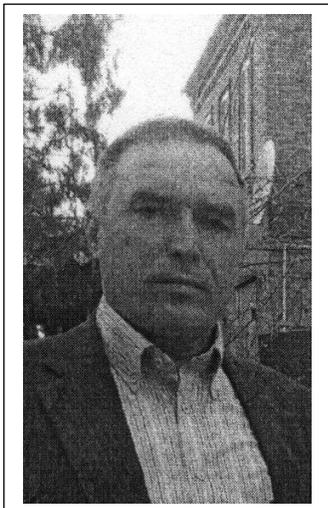
Peace! My name is Panfilova Alevtina Alexeevna and was born 1936. My mother was a Christian and raised me according to God's Word. She taught me to love God. My father left us when I was 9 years old only. My mother was a very active Christian. She took care of orphans, widows and visiting especially sick persons on their death bed. She urged them to make peace with God and become believers.

Our Christian gatherings were in the underground. As my mother participated in many such meetings she was constantly under KGB surveillance and threatened with prison. I prayed hard not to be left an orphan and she should not be arrested and indeed she never went to prison. I was baptized when 18. I was the tenth child in our family. Unfortunately all my other siblings are now dead.

In 1961 when 25, a great Christian revival occurred in the Soviet Union. This brought about with it a lot more intense persecutions from the communist authorities. The underground church entrusted me with teaching young kids, something I did during the day. At night I was participating in the printing and spreading of the underground publication Khrestianin (The Christian) containing information about many Christians who had been arrested. I placed our home at the disposal of such underground Christian activity so the above publication could be reproduced surreptitiously in our house. (A study showed that if all sentences of only imprisoned Baptists in the Soviet Union had been added up, the total would show more than 5,000 years of prison – NT.) On the 27th of May 1983 I ended up arrested and sentenced subsequently to 2 ½ years of forced labor in the city of Odessa, the Soviet Republic of Ukraine. I thank the Lord I was found worthy to suffer for His sake. The KGB tried to threaten me with imprisonment in a psychiatric ward. This was extremely dangerous since those who ended up in psychiatric wards received no visitation rights and could remain imprisoned there for life. Being examined by some doctors, I started praying intensely in a loud voice. God had really strengthen me. While deciding what to do with me, the prosecutor conceded, "let her pray" and left abruptly the hospital. I felt a perfect peace. The Soviet doctors let me go.

I thank you now for your help. God reward you. I gladly would welcome you as my guests if you shall visit me.

5½ Years of Communist Prison for Spreading God's Word!



Brother Victor PEREDEREV writes: I greet you wishing you the peace of our Lord Jesus Christ and pray God's blessings be poured upon you all. Following is a testimony in short of my suffering under the communist regime in the Soviet Union. I was born in 1958 in a family of Baptist Christians. My father who was a Baptist minister was imprisoned twice by the communists. I confessed my faith and was baptized at only 15. In 1977 when drafted into the Soviet communist army I was required to give an oath to the atheistic state. As a Christian I refused and as a result was sentenced to a three years prison term. After these three years of Soviet prison, when freed in 1980, I involved myself even more in the life of the underground church. As a result I was arrested again in 1982, together with two other brethren. We were transporting surreptitiously printed Christian literature for distribution in different churches. Again I was sentenced to another 2 ½ years-term imprisonment. I was shut up in a maximum security prison. I married in 1992 after having been freed. My wife was as active as myself in the underground church printing and spreading of Christian literature. Now after communism, I am ministering in our church. I remain thankful to God for all his blessings in my life. With great Christian love, your brother Perederev.

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
Christians Considered Dangerous Criminals**



Brother Lacatosh Pavel wrote: "You shall remember that the Lord your God led you all the way." (Deuteronomy 8:2)

"Much love to you dear sisters and brethren. I am thankful to God for the unusual path God guided me upon, even to this day. At the end of the year 1980, the KGB made a thorough house- search where myself together with my family were living. All our Christian literature was confiscated. I was brought in front of a judge in January of 1981 and sentenced to 3 years of communist prison based on Article 187 of the Soviet Penal Code (my Christian testimony was considered a slander of the communist Soviet state.) I spent these three years of prison, in the Ukrainian part of the Soviet Union. I was freed in 1984. We, who were sentenced based on Article 187 of the Soviet Penal Code, were considered the most dangerous criminals. We were subjected to very hard labor. We hardly had what to eat. God supported me these three years. In our family we have six children.

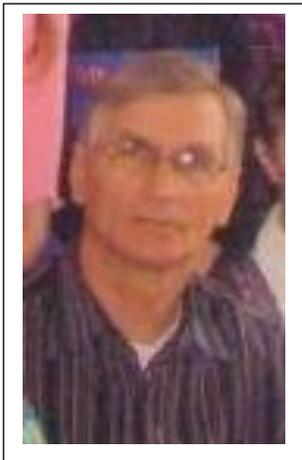
**Christians Helped with your Gifts
Only \$48 a month Pension**



Brother Yurii Meshko writes: "Dear brothers and sisters we greet you in peace. Our family lives in the Karpatian Region of the Ukraine and we have five children and seven grandchildren. During the time of communism we were persecuted because of laboring for the Lord. Our Christian services were considered illegal since we had underground gatherings in home-churches. Though we applied for, the communist authorities simply refused to allow us any church construction. In 1982, we invited the entire church to hold the service in our home. This was the first time I used my home and was therefore promptly arrested by the Soviet KGB and sentenced to 2½ years of hard labor. After I served this term, I continued unabashed use our home for such underground church meetings. After the fall of communism in Russia, our church ended being 150 souls strong. God proved faithful in His promises: "the gates of hell shall not prevail against his church." (Matthew 16:18) Now I am a pensioner, obtaining a pension worth about US \$48 per month. I remain thankful to God for all He did in my life. With great love, your brother Yurii Meshko.

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/> (To find, enter the EIN!)

**Christians helped with your gifts
Walking with God is Beautiful,
Regardless of Imprisonment!**



Brother Petru Vasile URSUL

Brother Ursul writes: "I was born in a family of Christian Baptists in the Chernivtsi Region of the Socialist Soviet Republic of Ukraine, Soviet Union. I received a beautiful education from my parents. From childhood we were taught to love God.

I confessed my faith and was baptized in 1972. At the same time I involved myself very actively in the life of the church. This was a church unrecognized by the communist authorities. Any Christian activity in the church was forbidden by the communist government. Regardless, in 1979 I was ordained as the church minister. The KGB would often arrest us without formal charges and keep us imprisoned for up to 15 days. One time I was kept imprisoned for two months. In 1981 however, I was sentenced to two years imprisonment. I served this prison term in the Rovno Region, Ukraine. My Christian activity was considered under the Articles 138 and 187 of the Soviet Penal Code slanderous to the Soviet state. I did hard labor in a granite stone mine. This was an extremely difficult (and dangerous) work. The communist prison authority unceasingly mocked us Christians. I was set free in 1981 but continued being harassed by the Soviet KGB and be fined very many times,. I thank God for strengthening us to remain faithful to Him. The fines each time represented as much as a third of a monthly salary.

Since the fall of communism I continue my activity of ministering to the church. We have eight children and 24 grandchildren in our family. My life testimony is: a life in which we walk with the Lord is beautiful.

**Christians helped with your gifts
Communists arrest Christian Choir
Conductor**



Brother Nikolai RUSNAK

He writes: "Dear brethren and sisters: I am thankful to God for you because you have not forgotten us. I was born in 1954.

I confessed my faith, subjected my life to the Lord and was baptized when twenty years old. I involved myself deeply in the youth activity of the local church. I organized Bible studies, choirs and Sunday Schools.

We were an underground church. We did not allow the communist authorities to interfere with our Christian activities. As a result the KGB searched our home in 1981 and confiscated all our Christian literature. I ended up arrested following this house-search. After several months of interrogation I was sentenced to three years imprisonment. (Soviet authorities considered Christian hymns, the Bible even, slanderous to the Soviet state - NT.) I was constantly offered the "bait" to be freed, should I join the communist officially-sanctioned "church" (a communist propaganda ploy - NT.) I steadfastly refused and remained imprisoned in the Ukraine. I thank God for His guidance during all these years of our lives. He gave us a beautiful family. We have five children. All are members of our church. God's love be upon you all. With much love, the Rusnak family."